



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Dear Councillors

Your attendance is requested at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held in the Council Chambers, Southern Downs Regional Council, 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on **Wednesday, 19 November 2025** at **9:00AM**.

Notice is given of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

Rachel Brophy

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

14 November 2025

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WEDNESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting

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1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
2. **PRAYER & CONDOLENCES**
3. **ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**
4. **READING AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
- 4.1 **Ordinary Council Meeting - 15 October 2025**

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15 October 2025 be adopted.

5. ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL MEETINGS

5.1 Actions from Council Meeting 15 October 2025

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Chief Executive Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council receive the report.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of Actions resulting from resolutions from the Ordinary Council Meeting held 15 October 2025.

A copy of the Actions Report is attached.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Actions Ordinary Council Meeting 15 October 2025[↓](#)



ACTIONS FROM ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 15 OCTOBER 2025

MEETING DATE	ITEM NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION OFFICER	ACTION TO DATE	COMPLETED
15/10/2025	3.1	Apology - Cr McDonald	Brophy, Rachel	05 Nov 2025 11:21am Seymour, Marion - Completion Completed by Seymour, Marion on behalf of Brophy, Rachel (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:21:34 AM - Noted.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	5.1	Actions from Council Meeting 17 September 2025	Brophy, Rachel	05 Nov 2025 11:21am Seymour, Marion - Completion Completed by Seymour, Marion on behalf of Brophy, Rachel (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:21:53 AM - Noted.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	9.1	Correspondence	Brophy, Rachel	05 Nov 2025 11:23am Seymour, Marion - Completion Completed by Seymour, Marion on behalf of Brophy, Rachel (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:23:36 AM - Noted.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	12.1	Chief Executive Officer - Status Report	Brophy, Rachel	05 Nov 2025 11:23am Seymour, Marion - Completion Completed by Seymour, Marion on behalf of Brophy, Rachel (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:23:50 AM - Noted.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	13.1	Financial Services - Financial Report as at 30 September 2025	Betts, Melissa	17 Oct 2025 8:10am Betts, Melissa - Completion Completed by Betts, Melissa (action officer) on 17 October 2025 at 8:10:31 AM - September Finance Report Noted	17/10/2025
15/10/2025	13.2	Operational Plan 2025/26 - First Quarter Update	Keir, Dianna	17 Oct 2025 8:18am Keir, Dianna - Completion Completed by Keir, Dianna (action officer) on 17 October 2025 at 8:18:17 AM - Council resolution noted.	17/10/2025
15/10/2025	13.3	Minutes of the Audit & Risk Management Committee held 18 September 2025	Keir, Dianna	17 Oct 2025 8:18am Keir, Dianna - Completion Completed by Keir, Dianna (action officer) on 17 October 2025 at 8:18:28 AM - Council resolution noted.	17/10/2025
15/10/2025	15.1	Change Representations for Realignment of boundaries (Two (2) lots into two (2) lots - 11412 Cunningham Highway and Freestone Road, Clintonvale - RC\02052	Hay, Mitchell	11 Nov 2025 9:19am Verney, Prue - Completion Completed by Verney, Prue on behalf of Hay, Mitchell (action officer) on 11 November 2025 at 9:19:46 AM - Negotiated Decision Notice has been issued on 22 October 2025.	11/11/2025



ACTIONS FROM ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 15 OCTOBER 2025

MEETING DATE	ITEM NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION OFFICER	ACTION TO DATE	COMPLETED
15/10/2025	15.2	Material Change of Use - Consideration of Change Representations - 10 Deutscher Road, Mount Tully - MCU\02647	O'Mara, Angela	05 Nov 2025 11:28am O'Mara, Angela - Completion Completed by O'Mara, Angela (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:28:14 AM - Decision Notice issued.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	15.3	Material Change of Use and Reconfiguring a Lot: Gary Hayes Partners Pty Ltd - 1-13 Baguley Street, Warwick - MCU\02268 & RC\01860	O'Mara, Angela	17 Oct 2025 6:03am O'Mara, Angela - Completion Completed by O'Mara, Angela (action officer) on 17 October 2025 at 6:03:59 AM - Matter deferred to November Ordinary Council Meeting at the applicant's request.	17/10/2025
15/10/2025	15.4	Material Change of Use: Adrian P Bakker C/- Revolution Town Planning - 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen - MCU\02648	Hay, Mitchell	05 Nov 2025 12:15pm Verney, Prue - Completion Completed by Verney, Prue on behalf of Hay, Mitchell (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 12:15:14 PM - Agenda Item 15.4 is to be deferred to the November Ordinary Council Meeting in accordance with the Applicant's request.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	15.5	Operational Works: Warwick Finance Professionals Pty Ltd - 6/109 Palmerin Street, Warwick (Advertising Device) - OPW\0002887	O'Mara, Angela	05 Nov 2025 11:28am O'Mara, Angela - Completion Completed by O'Mara, Angela (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:28:23 AM - Decision Notice issued.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025		Meeting Adjournment	Brophy, Rachel	05 Nov 2025 11:24am Seymour, Marion - Completion Completed by Seymour, Marion on behalf of Brophy, Rachel (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 11:24:08 AM - Noted.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	17.1	Sale of Land for Overdue Rates and Charges	Smith, Amanda	05 Nov 2025 1:02pm Smith, Amanda - Completion Completed by Smith, Amanda (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 1:02:44 PM - COMPLETED	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	17.2	PID: 143610 - Rate Exemption/Concession	Reid, Nellie	05 Nov 2025 12:24pm Reid, Nellie - Completion Completed by Reid, Nellie (action officer) on 05 November 2025 at 12:24:16 PM - Concession to be applied and letter posted.	5/11/2025
15/10/2025	17.3	Draft Planning Scheme Submission Consideration	O'Mara, Angela	17 Oct 2025 6:06am O'Mara, Angela - Completion Completed by O'Mara, Angela (action officer) on 17 October 2025 at 6:06:10 AM - Noted for actioning in the draft planning scheme and for responses to submitters.	17/10/2025



ACTIONS FROM ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 15 OCTOBER 2025

MEETING DATE	ITEM NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION OFFICER	ACTION TO DATE	COMPLETED
15/10/2025	17.4	Planning & Environment Appeal No. 527 of 2025 - REL Events Pty Ltd - 396 Keoghs Road & Hopgoods Road, Elbow Valley	O'Mara, Angela	17 Oct 2025 6:04am O'Mara, Angela - Completion Completed by O'Mara, Angela (action officer) on 17 October 2025 at 6:04:56 AM - Council's solicitors notified and letter sent to Appellants solicitors advising of the outcome.	17/10/2025

6. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

7. MAYORAL MINUTE

Nil

8. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

9. READING AND CONSIDERATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 Correspondence

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Chief Executive Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT the report of the Chief Executive Officer in relation to Correspondence be received.

REPORT

1. **Mayor Hamilton to Minister for Primary Industries** in relation to funding opportunities for Stage 3 of the Warwick Saleyards upgrade (copy attached).
2. **Minister for Primary Industries** in response to correspondence from the Mayor in relation to funding for Stage 3 of the Warwick Saleyards upgrade (copy attached).

Action: Referred to officers for possible funding opportunities.

3. **Pikedale Cluster Fence Association Inc** expressing thanks to Council's staff for the installation of the replacement grid on Springdale Road, Pikedale (copy attached).

Action: Referred to General Manager Infrastructure, Assets and Projects.

4. **Mayor Hamilton to the Director-General Department of Transport and Main Roads** in relation to a recent media article published in the Town & Country Journal in relation to Condamine River Road (copy attached).

5. **Director-General Department of Transport and Main Roads** in response to correspondence from the Mayor regarding ongoing concerns surrounding Condamine River Road (copy attached).

Action: Noted.

6. **Mayor Hamilton to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services** regarding the temporary closure of the Warwick Hospital Helipad (copy attached).

Action: Noted.

7. **Mayor Hamilton to Lifeflight** regarding the temporary closure of the Warwick Hospital Helipad (copy attached).

Action: Noted.

8. **Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations** advising of the State Government's *Destination 2045* initiative which includes a boost to agritourism including promoting support for this sector from Councils through planning schemes and includes the development of a Guide for Local Government to assist with this support (copies attached).

Action: Noted.

9. **Mayor Hamilton to Minister for Education and the Arts** extending thanks to the Minister for visiting the Southern Downs for the Warwick East State School 175th anniversary celebration and highlighting concerns raised with you and discussions about proposed changes in 2026 where students in Years 10 to 12 would be unable to undertake a VET in Schools program or a school based apprenticeship or traineeship concurrently (copy attached).

Action: Noted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Correspondence from Mayor to Minister for Primary Industries[↓](#)
2. Correspondence from Minister for Primary Industries[↓](#)
3. Correspondence from Pikedale Cluster Fence Association Inc[↓](#)
4. Correspondence from Mayor to Director-General Department of Transport and Main Roads[↓](#)
5. Correspondence from Director-General Department of Transport and Main Roads[↓](#)
6. Correspondence from Mayor to Minister for Health and Ambulance Services[↓](#)
7. Correspondence from Mayor to Lifeflight[↓](#)
8. Correspondence from Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning[↓](#)
9. Correspondence from Mayor to Minister for Education and the Arts[↓](#)

Office of the Mayor



14 August 2025

Hon Tony Perrett MP
Minister for Primary Industries
GPO Box 46
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: primaryindustries@ministerial.qld.gov.au
CC: southern.downs@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister Perrett

I look forward to meeting you on 20 August and thank you for making the time to visit our region.

During your visit I would like to discuss with you how to secure State Government funding for the balance of Stage 3 of the Warwick Saleyards upgrade. Following the announced closure of the Toowoomba Saleyards, the ongoing upgrade of the Warwick Saleyards ensures modern facilities for primary producers across the South West and Darling Downs, as well as New South Wales.

The Warwick Saleyards makes a significant contribution to the local economy and provides employment here in Warwick and across the wider Southern Downs region. The broader agricultural sector has an economic output of over \$500 million per year in the region, with a value add of over \$260 million to the Southern Downs economy and over \$280 million in exports in 2023-24.

Council continues to receive strong feedback from buyers and agents that the lack of a roof is hindering the continued growth of the Saleyards. Due to budget constraints, Council was forced to delay provision of a hard roof cover over the new selling pens (approx. \$5M). The support posts for the roof have been installed during construction of the new selling pens and completion of the roof will extend the life of the surface, new pens and equipment, will improve animal welfare and worker outcomes and will increase buyer attendance.

I invite you to watch this short briefing video ahead of your visit - <https://youtu.be/3V6KJw2DOLU>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Hamilton', written in a cursive style.

Melissa Hamilton
Mayor

CC: Mr James Lister MP, Member for Southern Downs

The Hon Tony Perrett MP
Minister for Primary Industries



Our ref: CTS 20857/25

1 William Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 46 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7530
Email primaryindustries@ministerial.qld.gov.au

13 OCT 2025

Councillor Melissa Hamilton
Mayor
Southern Downs Regional Council
mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au

Dear Cr Hamilton

Thank you for your correspondence of 14 August 2025 and for taking the time to meet with me and Mr James Lister MP, Member for Southern Downs, on 20 August 2025.

I greatly appreciated the opportunity to discuss the Warwick Saleyard upgrades, the proposed Protein Hub, and the important issue of 'Right to Farm'. These discussions provided valuable insights into the critical role agriculture plays in the Southern Downs region and the challenges and opportunities facing your community.

The Member for Southern Downs has been a strong advocate for these projects and has emphasised their importance to the region's economic and social fabric. I acknowledge his ongoing support and advocacy for these initiatives.

Warwick Saleyards

The Warwick Saleyards are not only a vital economic driver but also a key community hub, fostering social connection and resilience among producers, particularly during times of hardship, drought, and disaster. As you highlighted in the video shared with me, the proposed roof would enable all-weather operations, reduce environmental degradation, and improve animal welfare outcomes.

While there are currently no specific infrastructure funding programs available for this type of project, I encourage you to explore opportunities through the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. The Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Program, including the Queensland Betterment Fund announced in the 2025 State Budget, may provide a pathway to secure funding. These programs aim to assist communities in mitigating and managing risks associated with natural disasters, and the saleyard roof project could align with these objectives.

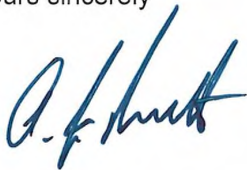
Proposed Protein Hub and Exclusion Fencing

Regarding the proposed Protein Hub and the sheep and goat industries, I am pleased to note the Department of Primary Industries' recent announcement of the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative - Exclusion Fencing Grants Scheme. This \$3 million program offers grants of up to \$250,000 for exclusion fencing projects, supporting primary producers in protecting their livestock and enhancing productivity. Applications are open until 31 October 2025, and I encourage your community to consider this opportunity.

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with both me and the Member for Southern Downs. I wish you every success with the saleyard development and the proposed Protein Hub, and I look forward to seeing these important projects progress.

If you require further information, please contact Mr Matt Jensen in my office on 07 3719 7530.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Perrett', is positioned above the printed name.

TONY PERRETT MP
Minister for Primary Industries
Member for Gympie

CC: Mr James Lister MP
Member for Southern Downs
Southern.Downs@parliament.qld.gov.au

Pikedale Cluster Fence Association Inc.

QLD IA59367 ABN 55 841 514 893

email: pcfai@pobox.com
Phone: 07 4524 6299

Registered and postal address:
1116 Springdale Road,
Pikedale,
QLD, 4380.
9 October 2025

The Mayor and Councillors,
Southern Downs Regional Council,
PO Box 26,
WARWICK, QLD 4370

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

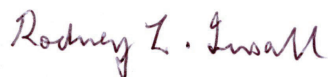
Grid on Springdale Road, Pikedale

You may remember that the Council agreed at its meeting in February 2025 to install a new stock grid at chainage 9.18 on Springdale Road, Pikedale, purchased by our Association. The grid forms part of the wild-dog exclusion fence constructed by the Association with government assistance and the old one was in poor condition.

The Council's staff recently completed installing the replacement grid and have carried out an excellent job. We are most grateful to the Council staff for this assistance.

At our recent annual general meeting, the members of the Association agreed that we should express our thanks to you, the Mayor and Councillors, for agreeing to make an exception to the normal policy in such cases thereby allowing the Council staff to help us in this way. Your support for the pastoral industry is most welcome.

Yours sincerely,



Rodney L. Insall, Secretary
for and on behalf of the Management Committee.
0410 248 119

Office of the Mayor



16 October 2025

Ms Sally Stannard
Director-General
Department of Transport and Main Roads
GPO Box 1549
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: director-general@tmr.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Stannard

I am writing in response to a recent media article (attached) published in the Town & Country Journal on 9 October 2025 regarding Condamine River Road (CRR) in the Southern Downs region. Specifically, the article references a TMR spokesperson stating the following:

"As this road is managed by local government, SDRC is the road authority responsible for setting of speed limits on this road. If SDRC wishes to impose a speed limit on CRR, there is a formal process in place which reviews the function of the road and the safety of all road users."

"We advise residents impacted by 4WD activity on the CRR to raise their concerns directly with SDRC, as the responsible road authority".

By way of background, CRR is a Council-owned road that crosses the Condamine River 14 times, with adjacent properties being a mix of cattle grazing, tourist accommodation and residences. The road has evolved as a natural tourist attraction for visitors and 4WD enthusiasts who come to experience the beauty of the freshwater crossings and the gorge environment. Unfortunately, these users often damage the crossings and negatively impact the environment. There are also a number of safety concerns about the road and crossings' depths vary throughout the year, depending on rain events.

The residents, various local community groups and other stakeholders have a diversity of opinion on how to manage the road and Council has worked tirelessly over many years to consult with those impacted, resulting in the CRR Working Group. The goals of the working group are to preserve the beauty of the road while addressing the diversity of values and providing a functional road, that adheres to good engineering practice.

Council has dealt directly with TMR for many years to determine whether a low speed limit can be applied, or access restricted, to this road. The consistent advice from TMR has been that as CRR is an unsealed road TMR would not support or endorse a lower speed limit being applied.

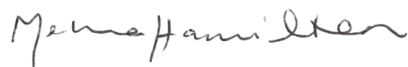
As such the public comment from your department to the media is unhelpful and contradicts this previous advice. The spokesperson also fails to mention that TMR representatives are on the Speed Review Committee.

As a result of these comments both the Mayor and Council staff are being publicly accused of lying to residents and misleading them. It undermines the significant work I and staff have done over the last 18 months to rebuild trust with this group of residents.

In light of the comments made in this statement, I would like to seek your clarification as to whether **TMR now supports the installation of speed limits on unsealed roads.**

I appreciate your consideration of this request and for assisting us in providing some clarity to our community.

Yours sincerely



Melissa Hamilton
Mayor



Office of the
Director-General
Department of
Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: DG48468

31 October 2025

Councillor Melissa Hamilton
Mayor
Southern Downs Regional Council
melissa.hamilton@sdrc.qld.gov.au

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your letter of 16 October 2025 about the recent article published in the *Town and Country Journal* and the ongoing concerns surrounding Condamine River Road.

I acknowledge the significant efforts undertaken by Southern Downs Regional Council (SDRC) and the Condamine River Road Working Group to manage the complex and evolving challenges associated with this unique road corridor.

In relation to the statement to the media, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) initially attempted to redirect the journalist to SDRC as the appropriate road authority for Condamine River Road. However, the journalist subsequently returned to TMR requesting a formal response.

The intent of the statement was to clarify the formal process available to local governments, including SDRC, should they wish to pursue a posted speed limit on a local road. It was not intended to contradict previous advice or diminish the collaborative work between our agencies.

However, TMR is not the legislative delegate for the setting of speed limits on local roads. The final decision rests with the Chief Executive Officer of SDRC. Should SDRC wish to formally pursue a speed limit for Condamine River Road, the appropriate pathway is through the Speed Management Committee, where TMR, the Queensland Police Service and SDRC representatives can collectively review the proposal. A unanimous endorsement is not required to allow SDRC to proceed with a proposal to impose a speed limit.

In saying that, TMR does not generally support the posting of speed limits on unsealed roads due to the variability in surface conditions and the challenges in maintaining roads to a standard that aligns with a posted limit. This position remains consistent with advice previously provided to SDRC and aligns with the *Queensland Road Safety Technical User Volume (QRSTUV): Guide to Speed Management*.

1 William Street Brisbane
GPO Box 1549 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3066 7316
Website www.tmr.qld.gov.au
ABN 39 407 690 291

I appreciate your concerns regarding public perception and the importance of maintaining trust with your community. TMR remains committed to working constructively with SDRC and welcomes further engagement to support your efforts in managing Condamine River Road.

If you require further information or would like to arrange a meeting with relevant TMR officers, please contact TMR's Southern Queensland Region at SQR_Communications@tmr.qld.gov.au.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'sstl', written in a cursive style.

Sally Stannard
Director-General
Department of Transport and Main Roads

Office of the Mayor



3 November 2025

Hon Tim Nicholls MP
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
GPO Box 48
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: health@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister Nicholls

I am writing in regards to the recent temporary closure of the Warwick Hospital Helipad.

Warwick Hospital is our region's largest hospital and services not just the town of Warwick, but the numerous adjoining rural towns and villages, which do not have a hospital of their own. Many residents have expressed their concerns to me over the closure; the continued operation of this service remains critical to our community, particularly as we have an ageing population.

Current arrangements which are diverting retrieval services to the Warwick Aerodrome in Massie (13km away) may not be the most appropriate solution in a medical emergency situation, where time is of the essence. Each transfer takes a QAS team and nurse out of action, and would not be feasible with an accident which had multiple patients to airlift.

Further, access from Massie to Warwick hospital is cut off in flood events, as the Condamine River cuts access between the hospital and Massie at the O.O. Madsen bridge, Victoria Street and Wallace Street. This issue was raised in our October Local Disaster Management Group meeting and we are still waiting on a resolution from the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service.

I understand the need to ensure the facility and aircraft meet safety standards and ask that any safety assessment is acted upon as soon as possible to reinstate use of the helipad at or closer to the hospital. I appreciate your consideration of this matter and helping to make the Southern Downs a safe and liveable region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Melissa Hamilton'.

Melissa Hamilton
Mayor

Office of the Mayor



3 November 2025

Ashley van de Velde OAM
Managing Director (Executive) and Chief Executive Officer
Lifeflight
GPO Box 3105
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: info@lifeflight.org.au

Dear Ashley

I am writing in regards to the recent temporary closure of the Warwick Hospital Helipad.

Warwick Hospital is our region's largest hospital and services not just the town of Warwick, but the numerous adjoining rural towns and villages which do not have a hospital of their own. Many residents have expressed their concerns to me over the closure; the continued operation of this service remains critical to our community, particularly as we have an ageing population.

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I have also written to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services on this matter. I understand the need to ensure both the facility and aircraft meet safety requirements and have asked that any safety assessment is acted upon as soon as possible to reinstate use of the helipad at or closer to the hospital. I appreciate your support and consideration of this matter and helping to make the Southern Downs a safe and liveable region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Hamilton', written in a cursive style.

Melissa Hamilton
Mayor

The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for State Development,
Infrastructure and Planning
Minister for Industrial Relations

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND



Queensland
Government

Our ref: MBN25/1177

6 November 2025

1 William Street
Brisbane Queensland 4000
PO Box 15009
City East Queensland 4002
Telephone: +61 7 3719 7100
Email: deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Email: industrialrelations@ministerial.qld.gov.au

ABN 65 959 415 158

Mayor Melissa Hamilton
Southern Downs Regional Council
melissa.hamilton@sdrcl.qld.gov.au

Dear Mayor Hamilton

The Crisafulli Government is securing Queensland's tourism future with *Destination 2045*. It includes an important initiative to boost agritourism with more farm stays and experiences, helping farmers diversify and improve on-farm profitability. Agritourism offers the opportunity to foster a sense of community identity, to promote a greater understanding of agriculture and sustainable environmental practices, and to boost the local economy.

Many Queensland Local Governments are already benefiting from agritourism initiatives and events. For example, the Scenic Rim Eat Local Month 2024 brought \$1.72 million to the community, attracted 12,993 visitors, generated \$3.9 million in regional promotion, and 93 per cent of surveyed visitors said it boosted the region's appeal.

The Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (the Department) has prepared the enclosed *Supporting agritourism through planning schemes – Guidance for Local Government* to assist you in considering the potential benefits of agritourism and how it can be encouraged through land use planning. A copy of this Guidance is available on the Department's website at <https://www.planning.qld.gov.au/planning-framework/planning-making/local-planning/assisting-local-government/boosting-regional-economies-through-agritourism>.

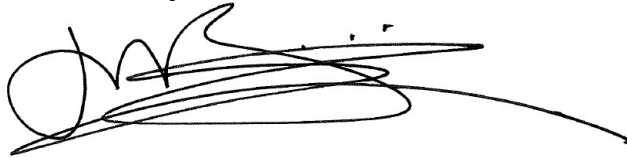
I encourage your Council to consider how your planning scheme facilitates agritourism in a way that responds and supports innovation, in particular small-scale agritourism as accepted development to allow farmers to diversify their income where impacts can be managed.

Should a planning scheme amendment be required, I encourage you to consider using the streamlined amendment process under section 18 of the *Planning Act 2016* and discuss with your local regional office.

2

If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact my Chief of Staff, Mr Nathan Ruhle, by email at nathan.ruhle@ministerial.qld.gov.au or by telephone on (07) 3719 7100.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jarrod Bleijie', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

JARROD BLEIJIE MP
DEPUTY PREMIER
Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
Minister for Industrial Relations

Enc

Supporting agritourism through Local Government planning schemes

Guidance for Local Government



What is agritourism?

Agritourism is a form of immersive tourism that connects people to agricultural products or produce, delivered on farming land through a direct “hands on” experience. Agritourism can be made up of a variety of elements including:

- combining tourism and agriculture into a product or service, such as “paddock to plate” dining
- products or services that attract members of the public to visit farms, such as events or accommodation
- providing recreation, entertainment and or educational experiences related to an agriculture enterprise.

Agritourism ventures can vary in scale and may include a wide range of experiences including winery visits, farm stays, retreats and camping, food experiences through cafes and farmgate stalls, and activities such as self-fruit picking, education, animal interactions, recreational fishing and nature-based experiences.

Why is agritourism important?

Agritourism offers a variety of economic benefits to local communities by creating jobs, diversifying income for farmers, and attracting visitors towards local businesses and services.

By offering unique local experiences like farm stays, local food tastings and events, agritourism provides opportunities to strengthen community identity through showcasing local knowledge and events, promotes sustainable environmental practices and support for agricultural uses. Agritourism may also help to address social isolation by encouraging connections across businesses, communities and visitors in regional areas.

While regulating agritourism, like other land uses, can be important to identify and manage impacts for local communities, the environment and existing agricultural operations, overregulation may be a disincentive and deter entrepreneurs from starting, innovating or expanding agritourism ventures because of costs, time, complexities and uncertainty.

Local Government planning schemes play an important role in encouraging agritourism in the right places.

Case study: Scenic Rim Eat Local Month 2024

- **Activities:** farm tours, workshops, master classes, local produce markets
- **Events and Attendance:** Over 100 events held in June 2024, attracting 12,993 visitors, mostly from outside the region
- **Economic Impact:**
 - \$1.72 million contributed to the local economy (49% increase from 2023).
 - 20% increase in average overnight spending and 29% increase in day-tripper spending
- **Media Reach:** 4.8 million people reached through media coverage, valued at \$3.9 million in regional promotion
- **Visitor Feedback:** 93% of surveyed visitors said the event enhanced the Scenic Rim's appeal
- **New Experiences:** 60% of program experiences were presented for the first time
- **Local Business Participation:** Over 90 local businesses involved

How can planning schemes support agritourism?

The State Planning Policy (SPP) supports opportunities for increased agricultural investment and diversification including value-adding activities such as farm gate sales and agritourism in appropriate locations and where agricultural productivity is not reduced. Regional plans may also identify specific important values that can influence where agritourism is supported.

Local Governments are encouraged to consider where agritourism may benefit local communities and how this can be supported. The SPP and relevant regional plans should be considered and appropriately integrated into the local planning framework. These elements should suit communities' unique needs, including the appropriate mix of land uses, scale and location of development, and how impacts are appropriately managed and mitigated.

Strategic framework

The strategic framework of a planning scheme can be used to promote agritourism by specifying when and where agritourism is encouraged, to guide the use of zones and overlays and matters that warrant impact assessment for large-scale agritourism development. The strategic framework may also provide a strategic basis for merits-based assessment to support agritourism projects where impacts can be managed appropriately.

The strategic framework should be informed by comprehensive community consultation, particularly seeking views of tourism operators and agricultural producers in the region to capture their aspirations and identify key tourism areas.

Land use definitions

'Agritourism' is not a defined land use term under the *Planning Regulation 2017*. Agritourism could encompass a range of defined land uses such as tourist accommodation, nature-based tourism, short-term accommodation, food and drink outlet, shop, educational establishment or tourist attraction. It is a matter for the proponent to determine the agritourism offerings they wish to provide.

Local Government may consider providing more clarity about different agritourism ventures by providing defined activity groups in planning schemes, or including administrative terms, or providing examples of agritourism activities that meet the relevant land use definitions.



Defined Activity groups

Activity groups can be used by Local Government to classify different types of uses that a Local Government considers to be agritourism in their planning schemes. These groups can be used to apply consistent requirements or category of assessment to land uses. For example, an agritourism activity group could include:

- tourism accommodation
- short-term accommodation
- food and drink outlet
- shop
- educational establishment
- tourist attraction

As an example, the 'agritourism' activity group could then be listed in the category of assessment table and made accepted development where the combined Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the uses does not exceed a certain size, such as 100m².

Land use examples

Planning schemes may also provide greater certainty that specific agritourism uses are land uses as defined in the Planning Regulation by including examples in the definition section of their planning scheme. For example:

- the definition of 'short term accommodation' may include 'farm stay' or 'glamping'
- the definition of 'home-based business' may include a 'farm stay bed and breakfast' (with limited guests)
- the definition of 'winery' may include 'cellar door'
- the definition of 'food and drink' may include a 'farm to plate dining experience'
- the definition of 'shop' may include 'farm gate stall'.

Administrative terms and ancillary uses

Local Government can make administrative terms for planning schemes to provide certainty about how they define different agritourism activities. These terms may clarify that the agritourism activities should be ancillary or subordinate to existing rural uses such as primary production or farming operations. This means that agritourism operations should be of a function and scale that do not have an impact on existing rural uses.

For example, an administrative term for a farm gate stall may be provided that specifies that any produce sold must predominantly come from onsite. A shop could be accepted development in the rural zone provided that it is used for agritourism as defined in the local government's administrative terms.

Categories of development and assessment

Agritourism uses can range from smaller scale and low impact ventures such as roadside stalls/camping to large scale activities involving multiple offerings such as events, accommodation, leisure and recreation.

Planning schemes can facilitate agritourism projects by specifying categories of development and assessment for different uses, depending on scale, impact and location.

When determining categories of assessment for agritourism uses, Local Government may wish to consider:

- Previous development applications and compliance issues for agritourism type experiences. Reviewing development applications that have been approved, or refused, the grounds for the decision and, where approved, any conditions of the approval, or compliance issues arising or not eventuating, can help determine relevant assessment considerations and thresholds.
- If in a rural zone, the agricultural focus or viability has shifted, the rural zoning may need to be changed to enable a different range of uses and activities in an area.
- The amenity impacts of existing rural uses. As noise, dust, odours and lighting are all impacts that can occur as a result of rural uses, it may be appropriate to allow similar impacts to occur as part of an onsite-agritourism use.
- Talking to local tourism and agricultural operators to understand their aspirations and experiences they would like to promote. This type of analysis may indicate what a level of regulation will achieve, whether it is appropriate for managing the level of risk and impacts, and whether current provisions facilitate agritourism as intended.



An option for low impact and low risk development may be to provide that agritourism development is 'accepted subject to requirements', meaning farmers can experiment with agritourism business ventures without needing a development approval.

Thresholds can also be used to limit the scale of use and assessment benchmarks can be included through nominated codes for different agritourism ventures to mitigate any foreseen impacts. Thresholds could be established for patron capacity and to ensure access and parking provisions are acceptable to protect the amenity of local residents.

Examples of agritourism type uses that could be accepted/code assessable development include:

Development	Accepted development requirements	Code assessable development
Recreational activities or educational/farm tours	- No more than 20 persons at one time up to a maximum frequency of 20 times per annum; and - Operates only between the hours of 7.00am and 6.00pm, up to 5 days per week.	- Where not meeting accepted development requirements and/or - No more than one 100 persons at one time up to a maximum frequency of 100 times per annum; and - Operates only between the hours of 7.00am and 6.00pm, up to 7 days per week.
Functions and events	- Up to but not exceeding 20 persons at one time; and - Up to but not exceeding twelve functions or events per annum.	- Where not meeting accepted development requirements and/or - up to but not exceeding 50 persons at one time; - Up to but not exceeding 24 functions or events per annum.
A winery, café or restaurant such as a cellar door	- Has a seating capacity of up to but not exceeding 20 persons; and - Gross floor area does not exceed 60m²; and - Operates only between the hours of 7.00am and 6.00pm, up to 5 days per week; and - Is situated no closer than 20 metres from an external property boundary or 40 metres from a sensitive use (whichever is greater).	- Where not meeting accepted development requirements; and/or - Has a seating capacity not exceeding 50 persons; and/or - Gross floor area exceeding 60m².
A shop such as a farm gate stall	- Gross floor area does not exceed 60m²; and - Operates only between the hours of 7.00am and 6.00pm, up to 5 days per week; and - Is situated no closer than 20 metres from an external property boundary or 40 metres from a sensitive use (whichever is greater).	- Where not meeting accepted development requirements; and/or - Gross floor area exceeds 60m² and/or - Operates outside the hours of 7.00am and 6.00pm, up to 7 days per week.
Short term accommodation, nature based tourism or tourist park such as a farm stay or glamping	- Involving the use of all or part an existing dwelling(s); or - Up to but not exceeding 5 self-contained cabins; or - Up to but not exceeding 5 tent / camping sites; and - Is situated no closer than 10 metres from an external property boundary or 30 metres from a sensitive use (whichever is the greater). - Providing accommodation guests do not stay for a continuous period of longer than 10 days.	- Where not meeting accepted development requirements; and/or - Not exceeding 20 self-contained cabins; or - Not exceeding 20 tent / camping sites.

Overlays

Overlays play an important role in identifying constraints, opportunities or features of land that require specific consideration, for example, a bushfire or flood overlay. However, these may add unnecessary requirements for small scale or low risk agriculture offerings such as a farm gate stall or cellar door.

There may be opportunities to include tailored requirements in overlays to make low impact and scale activities accepted development subject to conditions, or subject to code assessment. This could include requiring the proponent to develop specific risk mitigation requirements, plans or procedures.

For example, while more stringent requirements may exist for a new habitable short-term accommodation to establish in a bushfire or flood overlay to reduce the risk that visitors unfamiliar with the area and evacuation routes will be harm's way, a cellar door can easily be closed during a flood event and designed to be easily restored after a flood event. A short-term accommodation farm stay may be appropriate in a bushfire overlay area providing there is a robust event operations plan that ensures the farm host is always nearby and responsible for overseeing the safety of the visitors.

Assessment benchmarks

Local Governments may consider including additional assessment benchmarks for agritourism uses in existing codes such as a 'rural uses code' or 'rural zone code' or even provide a specific code for tourism or agritourism development to ensure that the scale and impacts from agritourism activities can be appropriately regulated including the management of potential waste, traffic and noise impacts.

This might include providing proportional benchmarks for:

- a site's location (on major tourist road routes larger scale agritourism might be supported)
- amenity impacts (noise, dust, lighting, traffic)
- built form appearance and typology (can existing buildings be repurposed?)
- how agritourism is associated with and ancillary to an existing agricultural use
- infrastructure such as roads, car parking and sewerage (can reduced requirements be specified for small scale operations?)
- separation from existing rural activities (can reduced boundary setbacks be provided to allow for greater separation from primary agricultural use on site?).

For example, the Scenic Rim Regional Council include an acceptable outcome for tourist accommodation sites in a rural zone in their tourism code, that cabins have a maximum Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 100m². This allows Councils to promote development that is small scale and compatible with existing character and amenity.

Amending planning schemes

Local Governments seeking to amend planning schemes to facilitate agritourism into their planning schemes are encouraged to use the streamlined amendment process under section 18 of the *Planning Act 2016*. This reduces the amendment process to as little as three months. The tailored process for plan-making supports Local Governments in co-designing a plan-making process that is flexible and responsive to the unique local context and communities within their Local Government areas.

Case study – Lockyer Valley Regional Council

The *Lockyer Valley Planning Scheme 2024* (the planning scheme) specifies categories of assessment for different uses as well as includes specific agritourism policy in their strategic framework to facilitate agritourism development. These policies signal Council's intention to encourage agritourism that aligns with the region's agricultural strengths, helping to attract visitors and stimulate the local economy.

Making agritourism uses accepted or code assessable development

The Lockyer Valley Regional Council's planning scheme specifies the below uses that may make up an agritourism project as accepted development, or code assessable development, where certain requirements are met in the table of assessment for the Rural zone. Uses that may be accepted subject to requirements or code assessable development in the Rural zone are Nature-based tourism, Roadside stall, Short-term accommodation and Tourist park.

The planning scheme also includes the Tourism Uses code, that provides accepted development requirements and assessment benchmarks for code assessable development for the above uses, specific to agritourism operations.

Figure 1.1 below is an excerpt from the Categories of development and assessment in a Rural zone – Material change of use. The figure highlights examples of requirements that can be used to specify when development is accepted or code assessable and how codes can be used.

Use	Categories of development and assessment	Assessment benchmarks for assessable development and requirements for Accepted development
Tourist park	Accepted development	
	If—	<u>Tourism uses code</u>
	a. no more than 5 caravan or tent <u>sites</u> on a lot more than 10 hectares;	<u>Building design code</u>
	b. no more than 20 people at any given time.	<u>Transport, access and parking code</u>
	Code assessment	
	If—	<u>Rural zone code</u>
	not accepted development;	<u>Tourism uses code</u>
	a. no more than 15 caravan or tent <u>sites</u> on a lot more than 10 hectares;	<u>Works codes</u>
	b. no more than 50 people at any given time.	

Supporting agritourism through the strategic framework

The planning scheme includes specific policy relating to agritourism in the strategic framework. This means that applicants have more certainty when developing agritourism projects about what Local Government will consider in their assessment and how they can design their projects to respond to relevant regional matters.

Examples of specific agritourism policy requirements in the strategic framework may include:

- that it builds upon the clean and green identity of the region and does not prejudice the productive potential of rural land
- farm trails and agritourism opportunities that increases the resilience of the region's agricultural and tourism businesses will be supported
- support tourism in the rural uplands that:
 - provides boutique and low scale short-term accommodation and facilities that contribute to widening the range of tourism experiences in the region and
 - increases the growth of creative and boutique industries and recreation activities that provide and increase economic diversity and resilience of existing farming operations.

Initiatives outside the planning framework

Incentivising strategies

Local Governments may adopt incentivising strategies to encourage proponents, especially small or family-owned businesses, to diversify into agritourism, for example:

- economic strategy development identifying areas of activity
- streamlined assessment processes
- localised marketing and tourism campaigns
- capitalising on state and federal government tourism initiatives such as the Queensland State Government's 'Holiday Highway' program that supports regional tourism from Gold Coast to Cairns
- clustering activity to amplify the existence of similar operators nearby and minimise impacts
- education and capacity building
- infrastructure funding to support increased agritourism in desired areas
- establishing pooled improvement funding schemes to support agritourism hub economic development
- lowering financial barriers (waiving or reducing development assessment fees or infrastructure charges)
- regular monitoring and review.



Case study - Far North Queensland

Marketing organisation Tourism Tropical North Queensland showcases the Tropical North by promoting campaigns in partnerships with Local Governments in the north. This includes campaigns and events such as:

- Drive North Queensland (Partnered with the Townsville, Mackay, Issac, Cairns, Whitsundays Councils)
- Cairns Unearthed (Supported by the Cairns Regional Council)
- Feast of the Senses (Sponsored by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council).

Campaigns are not only aimed at showcasing their region as an agritourism destination but helps creates opportunities for producers and makers. Local Government initiatives can help build industry capability through regional narratives that help align agritourism with economic and regional strategies.

How can planning officers advise proponents in preparing a development application?

Pre-lodgement

Some proponents have difficulty navigating the planning framework to understand the specific requirements and constraints related to their agritourism development.

Local Governments may assist by encouraging proponents to engage in pre-lodgement discussions and by providing clear and specific advice. Early engagement allows proponents and Local Government to discuss:

- the proposed development and relevant land use definitions
- categories of development assessment

- the impact of overlays and how they can be avoided, or how specific considerations and requirements in overlays can be responded to including responding to hazards such as bushfire, flood, or environmental protection
- other relevant planning scheme provisions
- potential challenges to address, such as traffic, noise, safety, waste and maintaining local amenity
- any additional information or studies that may be required in accompanying a development application.

This proactive approach helps proponents better understand the planning framework process, Local Government planning officers to understand the development proposal, and ensures their applications are well-prepared and aligned with local planning objectives.

Supporting material and guidance

Local Government may support proponents by offering resources such as checklists, guidelines, or examples of successful agritourism applications. These tools can help proponents anticipate and address common issues, such as preparing traffic management plans for increased visitor numbers or environmental management plans to protect natural resources.

Where appropriate, Local Governments may facilitate connections between proponents and other agencies, such as State Government departments or referral agencies, to ensure all relevant requirements are addressed.

Encouraging proponents to engage with the local community early in the process can also help identify and resolve potential concerns, building support for the project and reducing the risk of objections during the formal assessment phase.

State Assessment Referral Agency (SARA)

A development application for agritourism may warrant assessment by SARA if the development affects a matter of state interest under the Planning Regulation 2017, typically for proximity to a State-controlled road or clearing native vegetation. To support applicants, Local Governments should provide guidance to assist in streamlining assessment and consider avoiding implications that may prolong assessment timeframes. Guidance examples include:

- proximity to State-controlled road: providing access via a local road rather than developing access on a State-controlled road
- clearing native vegetation: avoid vegetation clearing of concern or significant vegetation or consider developing in areas with no mapped vegetation
- works in proximity to waterways and avoiding possible waterway barrier works.

Applicants should consider utilising the free pre-lodgement advice SARA offers to navigate the development assessment requirements efficiently and effectively.

Further information

Destination 2045

<https://destination2045.detsi.qld.gov.au/>

Guidance for planning schemes

<https://www.planning.qld.gov.au/planning-framework/plan-making/local-planning/assisting-local-government>

Office of the Mayor



11 November 2025

Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education and the Arts
PO Box 15033
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Email: education@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister Langbroek

I would like to sincerely thank you for visiting the Southern Downs region to attend the Warwick East State School 175th anniversary celebrations on 8th November. This was an important community event to celebrate a history we are proud of, and your attendance was most appreciated by the school and community.

As discussed with you on Saturday, many members of our community involved in education have raised with me their concerns about proposed changes for 2026 where students in Year 10, 11 and 12 would be unable to undertake a VET in Schools (VETiS) program or a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SAT) concurrently. This would negatively impact many of our students and potentially lead to a decline in their ability to be job-ready at the end of school. For example:

- Students who have already commenced a SAT—often through their part-time employment—may now be ineligible to undertake a VETiS program that aligns with their long-term career goals. In many cases, schools are unaware when students enter into these SATs.
- If students are no longer able to complete a VETiS program followed by a SAT, it could disrupt their employment pathway. For example, a student who completes a Certificate II in Electrotechnology (VETiS) in Year 11 may be unable to begin a Certificate III in Electrotechnology (apprenticeship) while still at school. This may mean students leave school early to pursue their apprenticeship.

It was very reassuring to hear that you and your Department have taken on board feedback from stakeholders, and will keep the funding model unchanged for 2026, allowing high school students to participate in a VETiS and SAT simultaneously. If the review of the funding model for the 2027 school year will include submissions or stakeholder engagement, please do let us know.

I thank you again for your support for the Southern Downs region and look forward to our continued partnership with the State Government on this and other initiatives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Melissa Hamilton'.

Melissa Hamilton
Mayor

10. RECEPTION AND READING OF PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Nil

11. PORTFOLIO REPORTS

11.1 Portfolio Report - Mayor Hamilton - Prosperous Communities

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Research and Advocacy Support Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council's Prosperous Communities Portfolio Report be received.

REPORT

Mayor Hamilton has submitted a Portfolio Report providing an update on the 2025 LGAQ Conference and Advocacy – Ministerial Visits.

Attached is a copy of the Portfolio Report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Portfolio Report - Prosperous Communities[↓](#)



PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES – NOVEMBER 2025

LGAQ CONFERENCE

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) held their annual conference over three days from 20th to 22nd October.

On the Sunday prior to the conference the Darling Downs and South West Council of Mayors met, joined by Minister Ann Leahy and Director-General Blaegov. We received updates from many agencies and discussed our advocacy goals.

I was a presenter at the conference, in a Resources Council segment with an update on our QCEP grant funding project for community engagement.

During the conference Council had a meeting with the Grants Commission to discuss the need for financial assistance grants to be increased to 1% of tax revenue to assist Councils in being financially sustainable, and the need for timing of payments to be certain for local government accounting.

The conference presents many opportunities to meet with Ministers, Assistant Ministers and Departmental staff. During the conference I had discussions with Minister Ann Leahy, Shadow Minister Nikki Boyd, Director-General Blaegov and Deputy Director-General Josh Hannon in relation to local government matters. I also discussed housing matters with Assistant Minister Rebecca Young.

ADVOCACY – MINISTERIAL VISITS

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education and the Arts

On 8 November, Minister Langbroek was the guest speaker at the Warwick East State School 175th anniversary celebration. Over 2000 people attended during the day, from across Australia and from overseas. The event was very successful, thanks to the enormous efforts of the P&C sub-committee and volunteers, all of whom should be applauded for their efforts.

I took the opportunity to discuss with the Minister the very encouraging enrolments in the Country University Centre (Uni Hub) in Warwick. I also raised concerns about the proposed changes in 2026 where students in Year 10, 11 and 12 would be unable to undertake a VET in Schools (VETiS) program or a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship



sdrc.qld.gov.au



1300 697 372



(SAT) concurrently, which would negatively impact many of our students and potentially lead to a decline in their ability to be job-ready at the end of school.

The Minister advised that the Government had listened to these concerns from many stakeholders and will keep the funding model unchanged for 2026 with a review before the 2027 school year.

The Honourable Daniel Purdie MP, Minister for Police and Emergency Services

On 12 November Minister Purdie officially opened the new upgraded Warwick Police Facility and attended the medal ceremony for the district.

My discussions with the Minister included:

- policing matters of relevance to our community;
- as an area which often experiences bushfires and floods, the need in Warwick for a dedicated local disaster control centre; and
- cross-border issues faced in local disaster management.



12. EXECUTIVE SERVICES REPORTS

12.1 Chief Executive Officer - Status Report

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Chief Executive Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council note the Chief Executive Officer's Status Report.

REPORT

1. Questions on Notice

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 15 October 2025 the following Questions on Notice were raised by Councillors.

Officers' advice in relation to those questions is outlined below:

Councillor	Agenda Item	Question on Notice	Response
Cr Richters	15.2 - MCU – Consideration of Change Representations – 10 Deutscher Road, Mount Tully – MCU\02647	Would Private Works approval be required for the works required under amended condition 24?	The undertaking of roadworks on a local government road is considered operational works and is assessable against the Southern Downs Planning Scheme. To undertake stabilised road pavement works with associated low flow drainage, as outlined in Condition 24 of the approval for Short-term accommodation (Three (3) buildings, up to 16 guests) at 10 Deutscher Road, Mount Tully, would require an operational works application to be submitted to Council.

2. Other Business

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

12.2 SDRC 2024-25 Annual Report

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Director Strategy, Growth and Stakeholder Engagement	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt the Southern Downs Regional Council 2024-25 Annual Report incorporating the audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.

REPORT

Report

Section 182 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* stipulates that local governments must prepare and adopt an Annual Report within 1 month after the day the Auditor-General gives the Audit Report about the Local Government's financial statements for the financial year to the Local Government. The various requirements for the report contents are included within the report as per the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and the *Local Government Act 2009*.

In accordance with section 183 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the report contains:

- (a) The general-purpose financial statement for the financial year, audited by the Auditor-General; and
- (b) The current-year financial sustainability statement for the financial year, audited by the Auditor-General; and
- (c) The long-term financial sustainability statement for the financial year; and
- (d) The Auditor-General's Audit Report about the general-purpose financial statement and the current-year financial sustainability statement.

The report also contains the Community Financial Report as required by section 184 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and the various other legislative and non-legislative information for Council for 2024-25.

The details within the report were provided by all areas of Council and were collated and edited internally.

Key Highlights from FY25

Many achievements are included in the 2024/25 Annual Report. The following are some highlights:

1. Expansion of the Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery & Library

Council delivered the \$7.96 million expansion of the Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery and Library, creating a modern, purpose-built creative hub for the community. This investment provides larger public spaces, improved accessibility, and enhanced protection for high-value artworks and library collections. The project supported 37 construction jobs and strengthens Stanthorpe's position as a regional destination for arts, culture and learning.

2. Delivery of 3,188 Smart Water Meters Improving Water Security

Council installed 3,188 smart water meters across the region, bringing the total to 12,422 and significantly modernising the water network. These meters detected 1,762 leaks at 715 properties, saving an estimated 143,246kL of water—equivalent to almost half a million dollars in potential losses. This project demonstrates Council’s commitment to drought resilience, efficiency, and smart infrastructure investment.

3. Major Progress on the Warwick Saleyards Redevelopment

The multi-stage, \$7.5 million redevelopment of the Warwick Saleyards continued with new pens, processing areas, and improved animal welfare and safety infrastructure. Council also committed funding to respond to user feedback, including splitting pens to increase capacity and preparing structural posts for a future roof. These upgrades protect the long-term sustainability of one of the region’s most important agricultural assets.

4. Community Services – Youth Council Leadership Program

Council supported the next generation of local leaders through the Southern Downs Youth Council, comprised of 21 Year-10 students from nine schools across the region. The program gave young people a platform to raise issues, develop solutions and present a real-world “pitch” to Councillors under direct mentorship from elected members and staff. This initiative strengthened youth engagement, built leadership capability and deepened young people’s understanding of local government and civic participation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

If Council does not adopt the Annual Report within one month after the Auditor-General provides the audit report (provided on 4th November 2025), Council would be in breach of Section 182 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Failure to meet this statutory deadline exposes Council to regulatory non-compliance, potential external scrutiny from the Queensland Audit Office or the Department of Local Government, and reputational risk arising from not meeting transparency and accountability obligations.

Non-adoption may also delay the public release of required financial and operational information, undermining community confidence in Council’s governance processes.

Opportunity

The Annual Report highlights achievements of Council during the FY25 period.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

All departments contributed through the gathering of relevant information.
Council Information Session 29 October 2025.

External Consultation

Council's external auditor Crowe were engaged by the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) to audit Council's Financial Statements.

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Corporate Plan

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.2 Ensure our long-term financial sustainability is a pillar of our decision making.

 4.4.1 Provide assurance through effective governance, audit and risk management practices.

Policy / Strategy

Nil

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Annual Report 2024-2025[↓](#)

Annual Report 2024 – 2025

A great place to live, work, play and stay







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ABOUT THIS REPORT



This report summarises Council's 2024-25 activities and fulfils our legislative obligations under the *Local Government Act 2012*.

The annual report is a key mechanism by which Council holds itself accountable and success is measured against the Corporate Plan 2021-2026. This report is designed to inform our residents, ratepayers, businesses, employees, community groups and government partners about the progress we've made. Furthermore, it celebrates our achievements and highlights our financial, operational, and corporate activities.

ACCESSIBILITY

This publication is available in hard copy and electronic format.
This publication can be found on Council's website.

REQUESTING A PRINTED COPY

Download it at www.sdrcl.qld.gov.au or request a printed copy by contacting Council's Customer Service Centres.

Phone: 1300 My SDRC (1300 697 372)

Email: mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au

Warwick: 64 Fitzroy Street Warwick

Stanthorpe: 61 Marsh Street Stanthorpe

Allora: 78 Herbert Street Allora

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Southern Downs Regional Council acknowledges the Traditional custodians of the land on which we live and gives respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with whom we foster effective, respectful and culturally-sensitive engagement.

REGIONAL PROFILE

The Southern Downs region, home to the rural centres of Warwick and Stanthorpe, is strategically located just 90 minutes from Brisbane in the thriving Southern Queensland corridor. This prime location offers unique opportunities for business growth, with ample space, a skilled and eager workforce, and a customer-focused regional council ready to support development.

The Southern Downs boasts an exceptional blend of natural beauty, from breathtaking landscapes to immersive wine experiences and a vibrant farm-to-table lifestyle. Our region is celebrated for its year-round calendar of events, each reflecting the charm of our four distinct seasons and our diverse cultural heritage.

In addition to its natural and cultural assets, the Southern Downs is supported by excellent schools, outstanding sporting and recreational facilities, and comprehensive health services. These elements contribute to the rich tapestry of life in our region's villages, surrounding the major towns of Warwick and Stanthorpe.

At the heart of our community's success are our people, places, and prosperity. These elements, together with our

Council's strategic vision, make the Southern Downs an exceptional place to live, work, play, and stay.



>37,820
Resident Population
*ABS ERP 2024



>7,120km²
Regional area
*NIEIR 2024



>3,115km
Road network maintained

>\$42 million
Infrastructure Investment
*2024-25 SDRC Financial Statements



>16,000
Local jobs
*NIEIR 2024



>4,404
Local businesses
*ABS 2024

>\$15.2 million
Council spending on local procurement
*2024-25 SDRC Financial Statements

>\$3.8 million
Council's economic development impact
*Economic Development Australia, Measuring the impact of economic development report, May 2024



ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

OUR COUNCILLORS

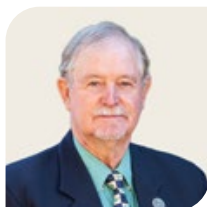
The Southern Downs local government area is represented by eight Councillors and an elected Mayor who oversee the strategic direction of Council.



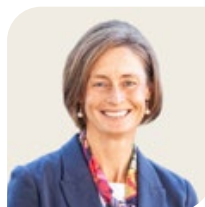
Cr Melissa Hamilton
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Prosperous communities portfolio
E: melissa.hamilton@sdrc.qld.gov.au
P: 0429 777 825



Cr Sheryl Windle
Deputy Mayor
Liveable communities portfolio
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Cr Ross Bartley
Connected communities portfolio
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Cr Carla Pidgeon
Productive communities portfolio
E: carla.pidgeon@sdrc.qld.gov.au
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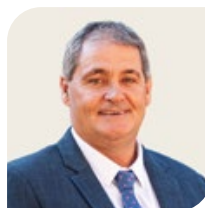
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Cr Joel Richters
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Cr Morwenna Harslett
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Cr Russell Wantling
Active communities portfolio
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Cr Cynthia McDonald
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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The Southern Downs Regional Council Annual Report for 2024–25 is a chance to reflect on what we've achieved together and to celebrate the spirit that makes our region so special.

This report represents the first full year of our new Council board with our focus on delivering great liveability and maximising the advantages of this wonderful region to build a strong, diverse economy for the future. As Mayor I am proud to lead a team that recognises the dedication and experience of our returning Councillors and embraces the passion and fresh insight of our new Councillors, and I am excited for what the future brings for Council and our region.

The past year has been a period of both opportunity and challenge. Severe weather and flooding tested us again, but as always, our community showed resilience, kindness and determination to recover and rebuild. With over \$12 million secured in disaster recovery funding, we've been able to repair vital infrastructure and keep our region moving forward.

At the same time, there is much to celebrate. Tourism and events continue to grow, with visitors drawn to our beautiful landscapes, wineries, festivals and sporting events. The new Country Universities Centre – Southern Downs is a milestone investment in our young people, creating opportunities to study and stay in the region.

We've invested in projects that matter to everyday life – from upgrades to water treatment plants, to flood mitigation and playgrounds and pathways, Council has continued to strengthen our essential services and infrastructure. Our libraries, galleries, youth and community programs remain at the heart of civic life, ensuring that the Southern Downs is not just a place to live, but a place to thrive.



Like most local governments across Australia, Council is under pressure to balance growth with liveability, while managing ageing infrastructure across our significant asset portfolio. Council will continue to advocate to both State and Federal governments to achieve our key priorities including water security for Stanthorpe, leveraging the energy transition for community benefit, promoting affordable housing, protecting our natural assets and lifestyle, supporting local industry, and fostering strong community engagement.

None of this would be possible without our incredible staff, and I thank all of you for your passion and dedication. You are the smiling faces that deliver essential services and support our community through good times and bad.

I also thank everyone who lives and works here in the Southern Downs. Your passion for this region, the positive engagement

we've had with you this year for the budget and draft planning scheme, and most of all your strong community spirit are what make the Southern Downs such a special place.

Looking ahead, there is such a bright future for the Southern Downs and I'm excited about what we can achieve together.



Cr Melissa Hamilton
Mayor

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



*As at 30 June 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

This Annual Report tells a story of recovery, growth, and shared accomplishment as we remain steadfast in delivering practical, meaningful outcomes.

One of our greatest strengths is our people. With more than 400 dedicated staff, Council is one of the region's largest employers and plays a leading role in shaping the local workforce.

This year we delivered Council's first Workforce Strategy which will set our direction from 2024 – 2028. The strategy reflects our commitment to our employees, both current and future, and sets out Council's aspiration to create an engaged, safe, responsive and resilient workforce that is agile and capable.

Although challenges in attracting candidates have continued to impact the filling of vacancies across Council, the vacancy rate was only 14%. We invested in 36 apprenticeships and traineeships, strengthened leadership development, introduced wellbeing initiatives that make Council a supportive, safe and inclusive workplace and delivered 12 revised Human Resources policies and a Code of Conduct program.

Council continues to take a proactive, hands-on approach to improving workplace safety by being consistently present and engaged on the ground.

Council's goal remains to provide a workplace where safety is embedded in every process and wellbeing is actively supported. This direct engagement has allowed us to strengthen our compliance and has already contributed to a noticeable shift in attitudes and behaviours around safety at all levels of the organisation.

Despite challenges in the wider economy, our region continues to flourish. Over 900,000 visitors experienced our celebrated landscapes, cultural events, and wineries - strengthening our local economy and lifting community spirit.

The establishment of the Country Universities – Southern Downs marks a transformative milestone in expanding educational opportunities for our young people, ensuring talent remains rooted here.

Council's Economic Development team is actively working with investors across agriculture, horticulture, and housing, cultivating opportunities that demonstrate confidence in the region's potential.

The capital works program delivered extensive flood recovery and maintenance projects with more than 300 flood impacted roads across our communities repaired or scheduled for repair. Council progressed the next stage of the Warwick Saleyards Redevelopment and delivered strategic enhancements to the facility – the only sheep saleyards in Queensland.

The Southern Downs is a great place to live, work, play and stay and during this reporting period Council welcomed 60 new citizens, bringing the total to 98 for this term of Council. The new Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery and Stanthorpe Library expansion was completed, the Warwick Dog Off Leash Area opened and we celebrated the successes of several festivals and events.

Our residents love where they live and Council is proud to have delivered core services including close to 200,000 library loans, servicing 12,800 households for roadside waste collection, installing 3,188 smart water meters and funding smaller community events with over \$50k in Community Grants.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to Mayor Hamilton, Councillors, and every Council employee - your collaboration and dedication are the engine behind our success. I also thank the Southern Downs community for their trust, participation, and ongoing feedback.

Thank you for being part of the journey.



Rachel Brophy
Chief Executive Officer

2024 JUMPERS AND JAZZ IN JULY QUICK FACTS*:

22,589
VISITORS TO THE WARWICK CBD

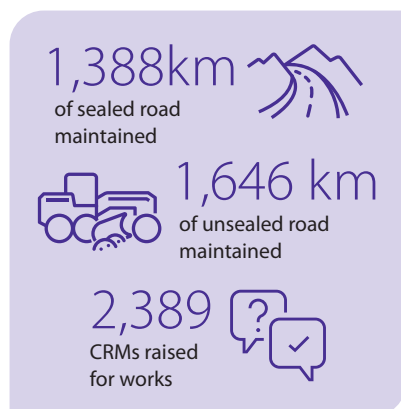
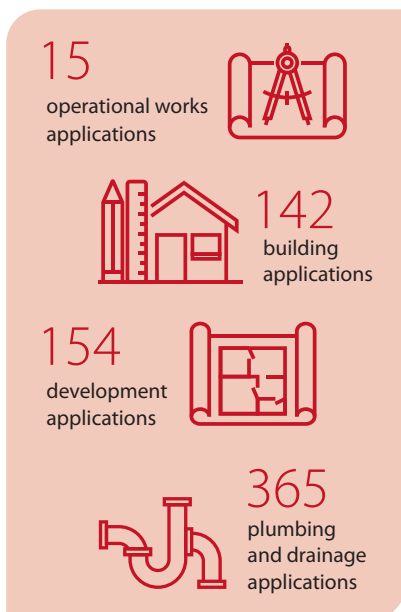
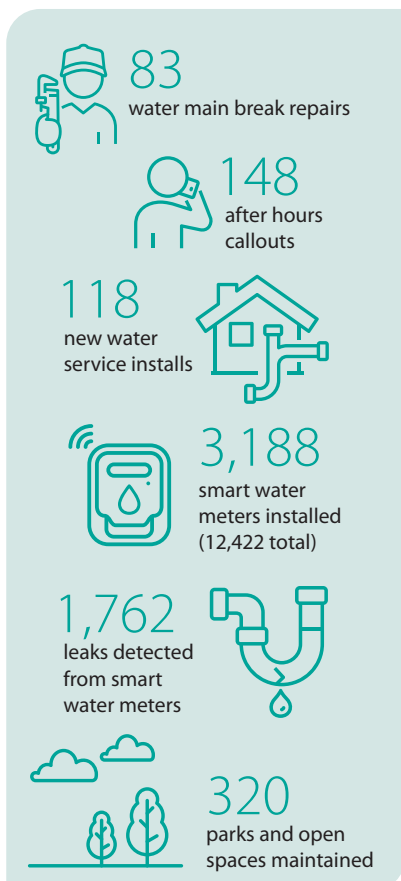
88.3%
OF THE ATTENDEES
STAYED OVERNIGHT

\$8,351,533
GROSS ECONOMIC STIMULUS

*Source: TEQ



2024 – 2025 STATISTICS



2024 – 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

HOW COUNCIL SPENDS EVERY \$100



ROADS AND MAINTENANCE

COUNCIL DELIVERED EXTENSIVE FLOOD RECOVERY AND CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM



During 2024–25, Council made significant progress in restoring and strengthening the region's road network, with a strong

focus on both flood recovery and proactive infrastructure maintenance.

- Progressed \$11.9 million flood recovery program (approved Jan 2024)
- Successfully completed emergent roadworks post-Ex-TC Alfred (March 2025)
- Hosted Road Construction Workshop exploring new technologies
- Secured ~\$12 million in damage claim approvals with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) for January 2024 flood event.

Council invested \$1.6 million in its Bitumen Reseal Program, improving 16 local roads to enhance safety, reduce future maintenance costs, and extend the life of the 1,366 km sealed road network. This proactive approach ensures that roads remain resilient to weather impacts and safe for all road users.

More than 300 flood-impacted roads across Greymare, Thanes Creek, Leyburn, Warwick, Allora, Maryvale, Killarney and surrounding communities are scheduled to be repaired or have already undergone repair. By integrating recovery works with routine maintenance, Council ensured efficiency while keeping communities connected and supported.

To deliver this massive recovery program, Council engaged external contractors and project managers to assist with large-scale unsealed road repairs and program oversight, while Council crews continued vital day-to-day maintenance and capital works. This partnership approach has allowed Council to accelerate recovery, strengthen resilience against future disasters, and deliver safe and reliable roads across the Southern Downs - a vital investment in the region's residents, businesses, and visitors.

2024 – 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

SALEYARDS AND TRUCKWASH

WARWICK SALEYARDS REDEVELOPMENT SECURES SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Warwick Saleyards as at 30 June 2025

The Warwick Saleyards Redevelopment Project is delivering strategic enhancements to secure a sustainable future for the saleyards and support the Southern Downs' biggest industry.

The \$7.5 million project is addressing animal welfare and workplace health and safety concerns and ensures the region has modernised facilities. The improvements feature 120 selling pens, 35 holding pens, two processing areas, overhead agent catwalks, 5 new loading ramps, cattle troughs and more.

Following the successful completion of Stage 1 and with Stage 2 commenced in June 2024, Stage 3 will concentrate on the sheep yard upgrades while Stage 4 will improve access to animal loading ramps and build new car parking. In response to user requests, Council will also fund the splitting of the 120 selling pens in Stage 1 into 240 pens to increase head numbers as well as making changes to the Stage 2 pen layout.

Upgrades to-date have been co-funded by the Federal Government's Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant Program and Council. In addition and following requests from stakeholders, Council has funded an additional \$1 million in variations for Stage 1 including the provision of structural posts for a future roof and other ancillary works.

LIBRARIES AND ART GALLERIES

STATE OF THE ART CREATIVE HUB FOR STANTHORPE

Stanthorpe's newly expanded, state-of-the-art creative hub boasts more space, enhanced services, modern fit-out and improved fire safety for millions of dollars of artwork and books. The \$7.96 million Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery and Library Expansion project created 37 jobs during construction and received \$2 million in funding from the Australian Government, with Council contributing the remainder.



Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery

WATER AND WASTEWATER

\$180K INVESTED IN DROUGHT RESILIENCE

Council invested \$180k to strengthen the region's water security and future drought preparedness with a new dual-filling commercial water standpipe in Stanthorpe. The new capital project improves service delivery for both commercial and residential users by addressing longstanding issues with the existing water standpipe systems at Mackenzie Street and Connor Road. Commercial water carriers play a vital role in supporting our local economy and during the last drought, we learned the importance of having more water standpipes in Stanthorpe to allow quicker turnaround times for water carriers who service many residents relying on rainwater tanks. This upgrade shows that Council is listening to the needs of local businesses and taking practical steps to improve services.



Mackenzie Street Standpipe

PARKS, CEMETERIES AND GARDENS

WARWICK DOG OFF LEASH AREA OPENED



L to R: Cr Joel Richters, Deputy Mayor Sheryl Windle, Mayor Melissa Hamilton, Cr Cynthia McDonald

A brand-new Dog Off Leash Area (DOLA) opened in Victoria Park in Warwick. The DOLA includes 3 segregated dog areas, seating, water, and public access paths. The DOLA is proudly delivered with the help of the Queensland and Australian governments through Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

MYSDRC WATER SAVES DOLLARS AND MAKES SENSE



Cr Carla Pidgeon and SDRC Customer Service Officer Monique Bryson explore the MySDRC Water online monitoring platform

In a significant step towards modernising water infrastructure and improving water management practices, 3,188 smart water meters were installed across the Southern Downs, bringing to a total 12,422. The \$5 million drought resilience project has already realised promised water saving by identifying 1,762 leaks at 715 properties. This equates to 143,246kL and almost half a million dollars of potential savings in the 2024-25 financial year.

SWIMMING POOLS AND SPORTS GROUNDS

SEIZING THE OLYMPIC DECADE



Southern Downs Olympian, Matt Denny

The Southern Downs has firmly established itself as a proud contributor to Australia's Olympic story, with local athletes proving that talent nurtured in our region shines bright on the world stage. In 2024, a record four athletes from

the Southern Downs (Matt Denny, Ben Armbruster, Charlotte Caslick and Harriet Hudson) represented Australia at the Paris Olympics, a remarkable achievement that reflects the depth of dedication, resilience and community spirit that defines our region. Their journeys highlight the importance of supporting local sporting programs and ensuring access to world-class facilities, just 90 minutes from Brisbane.

Among these achievements, Matt Denny's bronze medal in the men's discus captured the hearts of our community and inspired a wave of celebrations and legacy projects in his hometown of Allora. A hero's welcome parade honoured his success, while Council endorsed the naming of the discus ring at the Allora Cricket Grounds and a new walking path in Dalrymple Park to feature markers of his record-breaking milestones. These tributes not only celebrate Matt's determination and spirit but also stand as lasting inspiration for future generations. As the countdown to the 2032 Brisbane Olympics continues, the Southern Downs remains committed to investing in athletes, facilities and community pride - ensuring that our region continues to play a vital role in Australia's Olympic success.

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

REVING UP THE HORSEPOWER CAPITAL OF AUSTRALIA

Warwick Bike Week, featuring the Australian Superbike Championships and Penrite ProMX Championships returned to Morgan Park for a 10th year and drew thousands of spectators to the event. Council committed \$13k in funding for fencing materials at the Warwick Motocross Club in Morgan Park to improve security and safety and limit wildlife access to racing tracks. Together



Penrite ProMX Championships

with the Australian Superbike event, Warwick Bike Week attracted close to 14,000 visitors, with extended stays injecting approximately \$4 million into the region. Both events are broadcast to a national and international audience of 700,000, further cementing Warwick as the Horsepower Capital of Australia.

STANTHORPE TOP TOURISM AWARD

Stanthorpe took out Silver in the Queensland Top Tourism Town Awards! This recognition celebrates everything that makes the Granite Belt region so special—breathtaking landscapes, boutique experiences, local produce, and a welcoming community that always shines. We're proud to be part of a place where nature, creativity, and connection thrive—and even prouder to see Stanthorpe recognised on a state stage.



Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Board Members, Stephanie Ingall and Rachael Lang, Mayor Melissa Hamilton, Andrew Powell MP Minister for Tourism and Peter Homan CEO of Queensland Country Tourism at the 2025 awards night

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE

CRITICAL INVESTMENT IN WILD DOG FENCING PROTECTS LOCAL LIVESTOCK

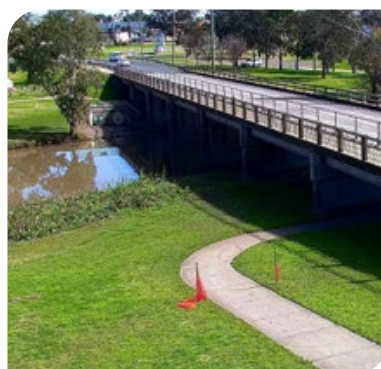
Council provided \$20k to fund critical wild dog fencing grid upgrades in Pikedale that will protect local livestock from devastating wild dog attacks. Led by the Pikedale Cluster Fence Association (PCFA), the upgrade of the grid will strengthen the region's fencing network to ensure local graziers can continue their operations safely and sustainably. This funding assistance highlights the strength of community collaboration, with Council and PCFA working together to deliver practical solutions to support the livestock industry.

SUSTAINABLE FARMING PROJECT TACKLES WASTE

Council is leading the charge towards a more sustainable future with the launch of a \$350k waste recovery pilot program designed to manage excess agricultural plastic waste currently landfilled, stockpiled or buried on farms across the region. Funded by the Queensland Government through the Department of State Development, Infrastructure & Planning, the project will address key aspects of agricultural waste management, including on-farm retrieval, collection logistics, processing technology and the development of a sustainable business model. The project goal is to create a scalable model that demonstrates the feasibility of rural collection and recovery schemes for agricultural plastics. This pilot can serve as a blueprint for other local government areas, fostering broader opportunities for responsible agricultural plastic recycling across Queensland.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT & RECOVERY

SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITIES DURING FLOODS



New flood camera view at OO Madsen Bridge

Through QRA funding, three Bureau of Meteorology transmittable rainfall gauges and flood cameras were installed at strategic locations throughout the region. The OO Madsen Bridge in Warwick, Centenary Bridge at Dalrymple Creek in Allora and Carnarvon Bridge in Stanthorpe are now publicly accessible from Council's Disaster Dashboard at disaster.sdrc.qld.gov.au. These cameras will boost Council's ability to monitor flood levels and deliver accurate warnings.

Community safety was further boosted in Killarney and Leyburn with the flood warning sirens being decommissioned and replaced with a faster and more dependable phone-based flood alert system. To improve emergency response, Council transitioned to the modern Emergency Alert (EA) system—a faster, more dependable method for notifying residents during urgent evacuation situations.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

FUTURE-FOCUSSED YOUTH COUNCIL STEPS UP

Established in 2018, the Southern Downs Youth Council boasts a new generation of inspiring young leaders who have stepped up to advocate for youth issues in the region. Twenty-one Year-10 students from nine schools across the region form a dynamic think-tank where young people can voice their concerns, share ideas and collaborate on solutions. The students worked together under the mentorship of Councillors and staff to deliver a real-world "pitch" to Council, advocating for issues of importance, whilst gaining a valuable experience and a hands-on understanding of how local government operates.



The 2024–25 Southern Downs Youth Council with Cr Morwenna Harslett and Deputy Mayor Sheryl Windle

ASSESSMENT OF THE CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Annual Report for a financial year must contain the Chief Executive Officer's assessment of the local government's progress toward implementing its five-year Corporate Plan and Operational Plan.

The Operational Plan, which is prepared each financial year in accordance with the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, contains the actions and service programs that will be implemented by Council over a twelve-month period to achieve the long-term goals identified in the Corporate Plan. The activities and projects in the Operational Plan are funded from the annual budget. The Plan focuses on projects and initiatives that Council will be focusing on in the financial year to achieve long term Corporate Deliverables.

In accordance with the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council will assess its progress towards implementing its Corporate and Operational Plans on a quarterly basis.

THE 2021-2026 CORPORATE PLAN HAS FOUR KEY STRATEGIC PILLARS:

OUR PEOPLE

OUR PEOPLE live and work in diverse urban and rural communities where varied cultures are recognised and celebrated for their differences.

OUR PLACES

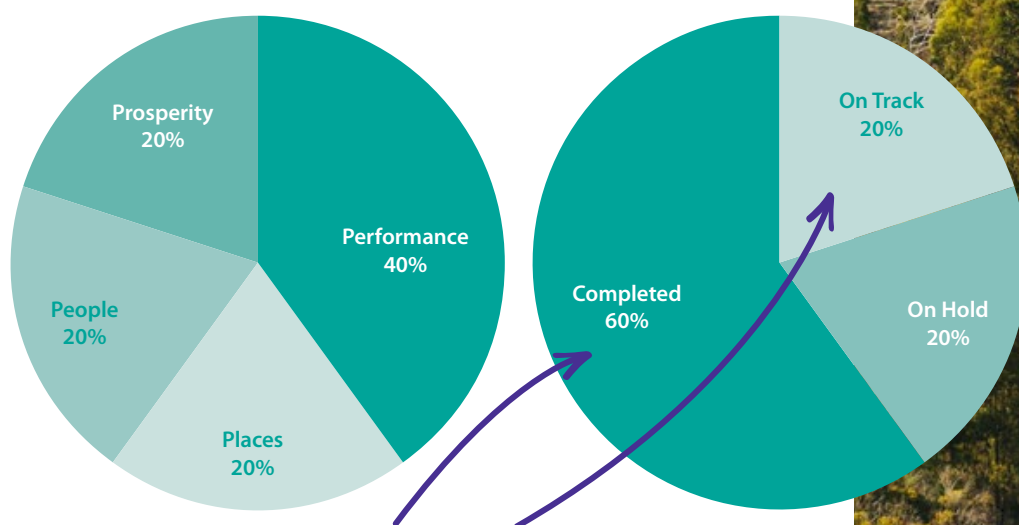
OUR PLACES serve the needs of our people, providing attractive environments for living, working, playing and staying. OUR PLACES are accessible, protected, fit for purpose, safe and sustainable.

OUR PROSPERITY

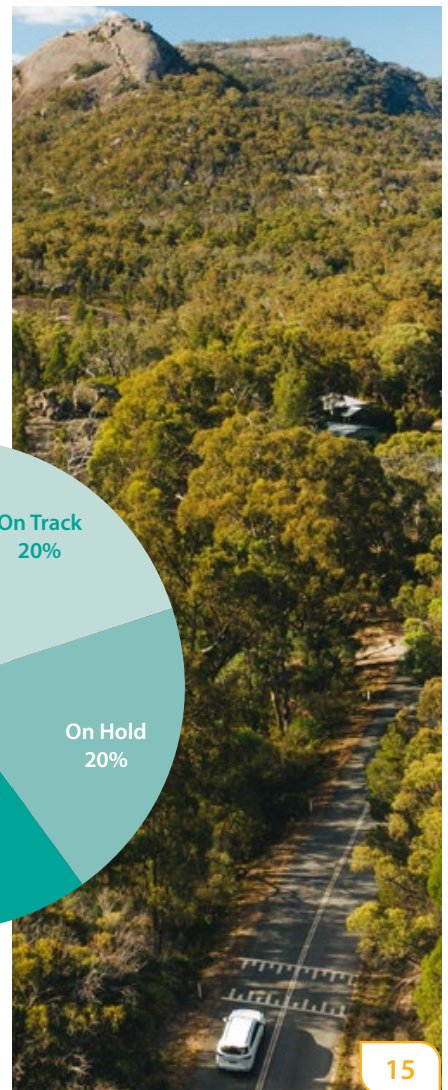
OUR PROSPERITY is supported by a constructive inter-relationship of public infrastructure and private investment, to facilitate sustainability and growth of the local economy.

OUR PERFORMANCE

OUR PERFORMANCE is driven by our values and approach to innovation and improvement. It will be reflected through ethical decision making and good governance.



As at 30 June 2025, Council had either completed or was on track to complete a significant portion of its planned operational activities and projects for the 2024-2025 financial year.



GOAL 1: OUR PEOPLE

OUR PEOPLE live and work in diverse urban and rural communities where varied cultures are recognised and celebrated for their differences.



3
OUTCOMES



9
OBJECTIVES



ALL
COMPLETE

OUTCOME 1.1:

Communities trust us to engage with them and advocate on their behalf

1.1.1 Advocate for Councillor, staff and community representation on government and non-government committees and task forces relevant to the region – Complete

Expressions of interest submitted to LGAQ for inclusion of senior staff and/or elected members on relevant Advisory Committees.

1.1.2 Implement effective and genuine community consultation processes that enable participation, engagement and collaboration – Complete

Communications and Community Engagement Strategy adopted and engagement platform procured.

1.1.3 Build confidence in our communities by being visible, empathetic and by actively listening – Complete

Environmental Services team successfully implemented awareness programs relating to environmental health, environmental sustainability, regulatory services, local laws and waste management, including regular social media messaging and engagement with the community, to improve understanding of services delivered to ensure a healthy, safe and sustainable community.

OUTCOME 1.2:

Communities have the opportunities to grow and develop

Plan and provide community facilities and programs to meet the needs of our diverse community and enable community growth – Complete

1.2.1 Through the Community Services team, Council delivered community and civic events, such as Australia Day, Anzac



Day in accordance with the Council Led Civic and Community Events Policy (PL-119).

1.2.2 Provide equitable access, and advocate for, a range of services, programs and facilities to address the marginalised and "hard to reach" groups within the community to foster inclusion, growth and skills development – Complete

Delivered community events, such as NAIDOC Week, Youth Week, Disability Action Week, Seniors Week, and ensured delivery of programs that meet the broader needs of the community.

1.2.3 Offer contemporary community development services across the region that reflect the needs and aspirations of the community – Complete

Quarterly Interagency Meetings held with key stakeholders.

OUTCOME 1.3:

Communities are active, healthy and celebrate cultural diversity

1.3.1 Identify, promote and grow opportunities for arts, cultural expression and the development of creative industries – Complete

Through the Stanthorpe and Warwick

Art Galleries, delivered exhibitions and educational programs that continue to enhance the arts and culture of the region and finalised MOUs with Warwick and Stanthorpe art gallery management committees.

1.3.2 Partner with sport and recreation stakeholders to encourage active lifestyles – Complete

Earlier this year, the Queensland Government launched ClubIQ – a suite of free resources and tools to support sport and recreation clubs. ClubIQ is not just a resource—it's a movement to strengthen clubs, empower volunteers, and enrich communities through sport and recreation. Council collaborated with the Queensland Government to deliver several presentations to the local community on this great set of resources.

1.3.3 Plan and provide facilities and programs that enable participation in sport, recreation and cultural and community activity – Complete

Identified programs, grant opportunities and events that allow the community to access sport, recreation and community programs and developed and implement an Integrated Facility Management Transition Plan relevant to all Council facilities.

GOAL 2: OUR PLACES

OUR PLACES serve the needs of our people, providing attractive environments for living, working, playing and staying.

OUR PLACES are accessible, protected, fit for purpose, safe and sustainable.

OUTCOME 2.1:

Public places and open spaces are safe, well maintained and liveable

2.1.1 Partner with relevant agencies to ensure community safety and resilience in relation to disaster management of bushfires, floods and other natural disasters – Complete

Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) brought together responsible agencies to ensure ongoing alignment of delivery in natural disasters, including recovery and resilience programs relating to the 2023 Bushfire Recovery and Resilience Plan.

2.1.2 Identify, facilitate and promote community-led place making, activation of public places and opportunities to enhance and activate the urban environment – Complete

A staged street tree replacement program implemented in CBD's and townships.

2.1.3 Advocate for, develop and implement environmental strategies that protect and enhance living assets in urban, rural, natural and agricultural landscapes – Complete



3
OUTCOMES



9
OBJECTIVES



4
COMPLETE



4
IN PROGRESS



1
ON HOLD

Delivered the 2024–25 Action Plan to support the continued implementation of the *Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2031*.

OUTCOME 2.2:

Public places, services and facilities are accessible, sustainable and cost effective

2.2.1 Facilitate and plan for safe, accessible and affordable infrastructure, housing, health and communication services for the community, visitors and industry – Complete

Local Government Infrastructure Plan (LGIP) review included in the draft Planning Scheme consultation.

Undertook an investigation into the feasibility and logistics of Council opening up and operating several gravel pit quarries to provide quality road making material for local roads

2.2.2 Develop and implement water security programs and strategies to ensure a sustainable and reliable water supply for all towns – In progress

Ongoing collaboration with the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, Toowoomba Regional Council and SEQ Water to deliver the Toowoomba to Warwick Pipeline project.

Council has completed all actions in the Drought Resilience Package and continues to seek external funding for renewal of critical water and wastewater assets.

2.2.3 Improved resource recovery and waste management and minimisation through new technologies, education and innovation – In progress until 2027

Contribution to progressing the commencement of the implementation of the Darling Downs Regional Waste Management Plan, focusing on outcomes relevant to the Southern Downs region including the implementation of the

annual Waste Education Plan and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan for the region.

Council participated in the national Garage Sale Trail for the first time, secured funding to participate in the 'Let's Get it Sorted' program, and implemented new recycling initiatives, such as Big Bag Recovery.

OUTCOME 2.3:

Our natural and agricultural environments are healthy, resilient and sustainable

2.3.1 Develop and implement a climate change policy and encourage community and business to adopt sustainable practices – In progress

Education has continued in the community on sustainable practices under actions in the *Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2031*.

2.3.2 Plan for and provide an integrated and accessible network of open space, parkland, trails, corridors and natural areas including recreational waterways – On hold

The continuation of the Master Plan for Open Space Sport and Recreation provides the foundation for the infrastructure planning and investment to develop contiguous links between nature and recreation areas. This will also inform the planning for other transport infrastructure to enable community access.

2.3.3 Develop policies and implement measures to enhance our agricultural sector and protect priority agricultural land from invasive pest animals and pest plants and non-rural development incursion – In progress

Investigation with the Department of Transport & Main Roads to try and increase the number local roads accessible by higher productivity vehicles.

New Invasive Pests Strategic Plan to be developed.



L to R: Cr Russell Wantling, Cr Carla Pidgeon, Cr Cynthia McDonald, Deputy Mayor Sheryl Windle, Cr Ross Bartley, Cr Morwenna Harslett, Mayor Melissa Hamilton, Cr Joel Richters, Cr Sarah Deane

GOAL 3: OUR PROSPERITY

OUR PROSPERITY is supported by a constructive inter-relationship of public infrastructure and private investment, to facilitate sustainability and growth of the local economy.

OUTCOME 3.1: Population growth is maximised within the parameters of maintaining our locality's unique characters and provision of infrastructure

3.1.1 Develop and implement a Residential Attraction Strategy and a Job Creation Strategy to attract a diverse range of new residents to the region
– Complete

Economic Development Strategy reviewed.

3.1.2 Facilitate innovative housing outcomes to allow local businesses to attract employees – Complete

Local Housing Action Plan Working Group established.

3.1.3 Review infrastructure charges and developer incentive policies to provide a balanced and supportive approach to investment – Complete

During the 2024/25 reporting year Infrastructure charges were reviewed and funding was secured to undertake developer incentive policy works in the 2025/26 FY.



3
OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 3.2:

Businesses thrive and grow

3.2.1 Investigate and maintain a jobs, training and recruitment attraction program, facilitate networking and clustering events and undertake a review of key business constraints
– Complete

Delivered the Locally Led Economic Recovery (LLER) program.

Adopted 2024-2025 Economic Development Strategy Action Plan.

3.2.2 Support skills development initiatives such as establishment of a Country University facility and support education and training providers regarding employee retention and attraction pathways – Complete
Country Universities – Southern Downs established.

3.2.3 Advocate for improved water availability and security for the agricultural industry – Complete
Advocated to State and Federal Governments for funding for on-farm dam evaporation covers and the release of the Regional Water Assessment (RWA).



9
OBJECTIVES



8
COMPLETE



1
IN PROGRESS

OUTCOME 3.3:

The Southern Downs is a destination of choice for business and visitors

3.3.1 Establish a reputation for working collaboratively with developers to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes
– Complete

During the 2024/25 reporting year the Development Assessment enquiry processes was reviewed and efficiencies identified. Furthermore, Council's building certification services are now being promoted to developers and a reporting dashboard for planning application statutory timeframes is under development.

3.3.2 Develop and implement a Planning and Development Facilitation Program for potential major developments
– In progress

Business improvements underway to facilitate a pre-lodgement meeting service.

3.3.3 Support and work with regional partners to undertake targeted branding and marketing activities for major events – Complete

Events Strategy 2021-2025 and funding models reviewed. Major events supported through the activities of the Southern Downs & Granite Belt tourism brand.

GOAL 4: OUR PERFORMANCE

OUR PERFORMANCE is driven by our values and approach to innovation and improvement. It will be reflected through ethical decision making and good governance.

OUTCOME 4.1:

Our customers want to do business with us

4.1.1 Deliver contemporary customer service experiences that aligns with the expectations of our customers and the community – Complete

Customer service centre processes reviewed and improvements identified including electronic lodgement of operational works, plumbing and drainage and building applications.

Implementation of insurance review initiatives across governance and fleet services.

Warwick Visitor Information Centre relocated to facilitate better visitor services.

4.1.2 Embed a culture of continuous improvement focusing on creating value through innovation and technological advancement, reducing waste and improving efficiency – Complete

Completed the migration of the Geographical Information System (GIS) Service to the Cloud environment.

Delivered Technology One related CiAnywhere projects as per the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Roadmap.

Completed upgrades to the official SDRC Visitor App under the LLER funding program.



3
OUTCOMES



18
OBJECTIVES



10
COMPLETE



4
IN PROGRESS



4
ONGOING

Implemented new Saleyards management software and continued the digitisation of treatment plant maintenance work in accordance with adopted Water Outlook program.

4.1.3 We 'get stuff done' and are solution seekers – Complete

Implemented an updated policy framework, delivered 90% of the 2024-2025 Capital Works Program and developed a 10 year works program for all infrastructure assets

OUTCOME 4.2:

Our people return home safely

4.2.1 Improve our safety management system and visible leadership to ensure our people go home safely – In progress

Fifty percent of the Safety Management System Reset Map completed.

HAZOP studies for all treatment plants and pump stations to be completed by June 2026.

Warwick Saleyards operating procedures and saleyard quality manual improved.

4.2.2 Improve our wellbeing management including physical and mental health support – In progress

Workforce Strategy 2024 – 2028 in progress with sub-plans and frameworks under development for completion in December 2028.

4.2.3 Improve our people's capability and provide support and upskilling opportunities – Complete

Planning Services team development plan implemented.

Communications and Marketing Support Officer successfully completed the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) Mentorship program.

Council invested in 36 apprenticeships and traineeships and strengthened leadership development.

OUTCOME 4.3:

Our people are proud to work for Council

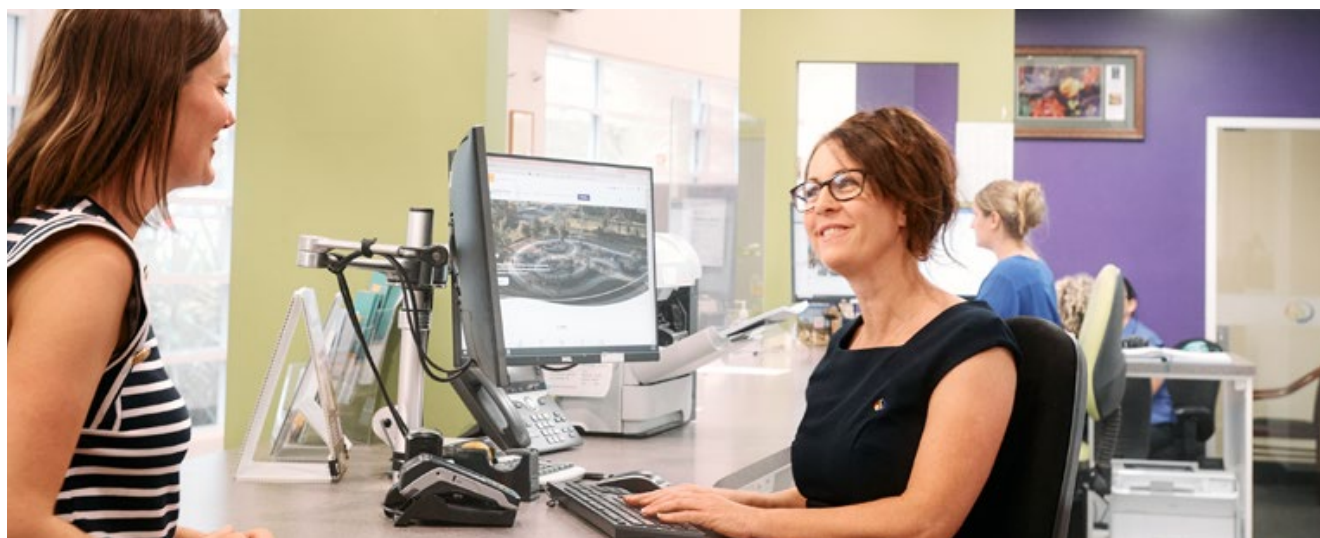
4.3.1 Enable collaborative workplaces and contemporary work practices – Complete

Council continued to engage in Stream B and C Enterprise Bargaining negotiations, undertook an Employee Engagement Survey and, adopted the Workforce Strategy.

A Comms Helpdesk was implemented to assist with managing increased requests from branding, signage, communications and engagement from both internal and external stakeholders.

A review of Stores Operations improved business processes around work practices, safety and customer experience.





4.3.2 Build leadership capability and define competencies and development pathways - Complete

Leadership program sourced, developed and delivered to ELT and SLT and, a progression and prerequisite matrix for Works Department implemented.

4.3.3 Instil in our people the concept of brand ambassadorship - Complete

Councillor portfolio branding and reporting implemented to strengthen communication with residents.

Organisation-wide roll out of updated style guide to inform facility branding, uniforms and strategic documents.

Induction process updated to include brand ambassadorship content.

OUTCOME 4.4:

Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do

4.4.1 Provide assurance through effective governance, audit and risk management practices - Complete

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework adopted, governance and procurement training delivered, delegations register updated, risk register updated and backflow prevention device register implemented.

4.4.2 Ensure our long-term financial sustainability is a pillar of our decision making - In progress

Develop 10-year Master Plans for service delivery outcomes (completion date: July 2027). The Master Plans will be developed in consultation with the community and define the services expected from Assets with the sustainability of Council in mind. Council has completed a High-Risk Asset State Assessment, developed a Services Catalogue, updated Council's Financial Sustainability Strategy (LTFP) and adopted the 2025-26 Budget.

4.4.3 Our asset management is smart, effective and efficient with robust project selection pathways - In progress

Council has set out to achieve the Asset Management Roadmap defined in the Strategic Asset Management Plan by June 2027. Council has enabled Knowledge Based Decision making across the organisation with consolidated knowledge systems (GIS, Assets, Finance), provided continuous improvement in the Project Management Framework and developed Benefits Realisation programs.

OUTCOME 4.5:

We have genuine and effective partnerships

4.5.1 We act in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders at all levels of the organisation - Complete

Undertook further work on the business improvement process planning sessions to ensure efficiency and completeness

of transactions for internal and external customers.

4.5.2 We use a range of advocacy, engagement and communication methods that suit the issue or initiative we are advocating for - Ongoing

Ongoing support for Council's communication and liaison with LGAQ.

4.5.3 Our advocacy is well planned with a clearly defined purpose - Ongoing

Ongoing support for the Regional Water Assessment (RWA).

OUTCOME 4.6:

Our leaders are authentic

4.6.1 Our elected members are collaborative and actively work with Executive Management to deliver desired outcomes - Ongoing

Corporate Plan 2021-2026 to be reviewed in 2025-26 and elected member induction program concluded.

4.6.2 Executive Leadership Team is visible, proactive and outcomes focused - Ongoing

Increased toolbox talks, monthly staff meetings and establishment of the Operational Leadership Team.

4.6.3 Leadership development at all levels including elected members is considered "core business" - Complete

Elected members attended training and conference opportunities as detailed in this report.

GOVERNANCE

This section of the report contains information which is prescribed by the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (LGR) to be disclosed in Council's Annual Report for the 2024-25 reporting period.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2009

SECTION 41 IDENTIFYING BENEFICIAL ENTERPRISES

Southern Downs Regional Council did not conduct a beneficial enterprise during the 2024-2025 financial year.

SECTION 45 IDENTIFYING BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

In line with section 45 (a) & (b) of the *Local Government Act 2009*, Council must provide a list of all business activities conducted during the financial year and identify those that are significant business activities.

Business activities conducted during 2024-2025:

- water
- sewerage
- waste
- saleyards

The competitive neutrality principle has been applied to these significant businesses with relevant adjustments made as a result.

SECTION 201 REMUNERATION PAYABLE TO SENIOR CONTRACT EMPLOYEES

The following information relating to senior contract employee remuneration is required in accordance with section 201 of the *Local Government Act 2009*:

- Two (2) senior contracts with a total remuneration package in the range of \$200,000 to \$299,999
- Two (2) senior contract employees with a total remuneration package in the range of \$300,000 to \$399,994 with one (1) of the senior contracts in operation for a period nine (9) months only

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REGULATION

SECTION 185(A)

Section 185 (a) of the LGR requires Council to provide a copy of resolutions made during the year under section 250(1) which relates to the Councillors' Expenses Reimbursement Policy including any amendments to the policy.

- At the Ordinary Council meeting held 16 October 2024 agenda item 13.7 Council adopted the amended Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Councillors Policy (PL-CS024). Amendments included a substantial revision of the content of the policy and redrafting.

- At the Ordinary Council meeting held 20 November 2024 Council adopted unanimously a reviewed and amended Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Councillors Policy (PL-CS024) (available on Council's website). Amendments included a substantial revision of the content of the policy and redrafting.

SECTION 185(B) VALUATION OF NON-CURRENT ASSETS

In accordance with section 185(b) of the LGR, there were no resolutions made by Council during the 2024-2025 financial year under section 206(2) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to expense a non-current asset above the recognition threshold.

SECTION 186(1)(A) AND (B)

In accordance with section 186(1)(a) of the LGR, the total remuneration paid to each Councillor, and the superannuation contributions made on behalf of each Councillor during the financial year are detailed below.

In accordance with Section 186 (1)(b) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the total expenses incurred by, and the facilities provided to each Councillor during the financial year under Council's Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Councillors Policy (PL-CS024) are detailed below.

Councillor Payments for 2024/25 Financial Year				
Councillor	Remuneration	Superannuation	Expenses Incurred	Facilities Provided
M Hamilton	146,157.57	17,538.66	3,509.42	1,376.08
S Windle	91,348.15	10,961.72	2,384.42	1,376.08
R Bartley	77,644.70	9,317.36	2,384.42	944.08
S Deane	77,644.70	9,317.36	3,091.60	1,376.08
M Harslett	77,644.70	9,317.36	3,146.15	1,376.08
C McDonald	77,644.70	9,317.36	2,562.40	1,936.78
C Pidgeon	77,644.70		3,183.40	1,376.08
J Richters	77,644.70	9,317.36	3,005.42	1,808.08
R Wantling	77,644.70	9,317.36	3,463.18	1,604.08
Totals	781,018.62	84,404.54	26,730.41	13,173.42

- Expenses include travel, conferences, legal expenses and professional development
- Facilities include catering, telecommunications and computing
- Councillors have access to vehicles for Council business, quite often on a shared basis. These expenses are not individually captured or reported.

SECTION 186(1)(C) COUNCILLOR MEETING ATTENDANCE

In accordance with Section 186 (1)(c) of the LGR, the table below details Councillor attendance at Ordinary and Special Meetings from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Councillor	Ordinary Meetings 12 Meetings	Special Meetings 6 Meetings	Council Info Sessions	Other - Workshop/ Training / Connecting with Council	Total Meetings
M Hamilton	12	6	28	7	53
S Windle	12	6	27	7	52
R Bartley	12	6	26	4	48
S Deane	12	6	26	7	51
M Harslett	12	6	28	7	53
C McDonald	12	6	26	6	50
C Pidgeon	12	5	27	6	50
J Richters	12	6	26	6	50
R Wantling	12	6	27	5	50

SECTION 186(1)(D), (E) AND (F) COUNCILLOR CONDUCT

The *Local Government Act 2009* sets out the roles, responsibilities and obligations of Councillors. Complaints about the conduct of Councillors are to be made, or referred, to the Independent Assessor for investigation.

In accordance with Section 186 (1)(d), (e) and (f) of the LGR conduct complaints, referrals, notices, decisions, orders and recommendations during the financial term is shown in the table below:

Number of Councillor Conduct Tribunal

Subsection of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i>	Description	Number
150I(2)	Orders made about unsuitable meeting conduct	Nil
150AH(1)	Orders made for inappropriate conduct	Nil
150AR(1)	Decision, orders and recommendations for misconduct	Nil
150, 150I(2), 150AH(1) or 150AR(1)	The name of each Councillor for whom a decision, order or recommendation was made under these sections	N/A

Number of Councillor Conduct Complaints, Notices and Referrals

Subsection of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i>	Description	Number
150P(2)(a)	Total number of complaints referred to the assessor under section	3
150P(3)	Matters referred to the Crime and Corruption Commission by the local government	Nil
150R(2)	Notices given by local government official to the Assessor about a Councillor's conduct	17
150S(2)(a)	Notices of misconduct given to the Assessor by the local government	Nil
150W(a)(b)(e)	Occasions when decisions were made	Nil
150AFA(4)(a)	Occasions information was given	Nil
Chapter 5A Part 3 Division 5	Occasions when the local government asked another entity to investigate the suspected inappropriate conduct of a Councillor	Nil
Chapter 5A Part 3 Division 6	Applications heard by the conduct tribunal about whether a Councillor engaged in misconduct or inappropriate conduct	1

SECTION 188 OVERSEAS TRAVEL

In accordance with section 189(2) of the LGR, the Annual Report must confirm information about overseas travel made by a Councillor or a Local Government employee. No Councillor or employee undertook overseas travel in an official capacity during the 2024-2025 financial year.

SECTION 189(2) COUNCILLOR DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

In accordance with section 189(2) of the LGR no expenditure from a discretionary

fund was allocated for the 2024-2025 financial year.

SECTION 187 ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION COMPLAINTS

In accordance with section 187(1)(a) of the LGR, Council is committed to ensuring that all complaints are processed in accordance with its customer service charter and managed fairly, consistently, ethically and lawfully.

Council has implemented a structured complaints management process to ensure all complaints are handled in a fair,

timely and consistent manner. Complaints are acknowledged promptly, assessed on their merits, and addressed in line with principles of transparency, procedural fairness and confidentiality. Staff are trained to follow this process and all complaints are recorded and monitored. This approach reflects council's commitment to accountability, equity, and strengthening community trust in its decision making. Council recognises that a review of our processes is required on a regular basis to ensure we are delivering a process that is effective, responsive and aligned with community expectations.

In accordance with section 187(2) of the LGR, the following table is a summary of administrative action complaints received, resolved and ongoing during the 2024-2025 financial year:

Administrative action complaints made to the Council during the 2024/25 financial year	Administrative action complaints resolved during the 2024/25 financial year	Administrative action complaints not resolved during the 2024/25 financial year	Administrative action complaints made in the 2023/24 financial year
17	15	2	NIL

SECTION 189 GRANTS TO COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Tourism & MAJOR Events	Amount
Jumpers & Jazz in July (Major Event)	\$30,000
Historic Leyburn Sprints (Major Event)	\$12,000
Snowflakes in Stanthorpe (Major Event)	\$20,000
Stanthorpe Apple and Grape Harvest Festival (Major Event)	\$13,000
Warwick Show & Rodeo Society (Major Event - Rodeo)	\$50,000
Events / Show Societies (Unallocated)	\$30,000
Granite Belt Wine Tourism	\$55,000

Community Grants	Amount
Regional Arts Development Fund	\$41,475
Grants to the Community	\$56,000

Other	Amount
Warwick Chamber of Commerce	\$17,900
Youth Mental Health Initiatives	\$70,000
Stanthorpe River Improvement Trust	\$52,500
Stanthorpe and Granite Belt Chamber of Commerce	\$15,000
Darling Downs Moreton Bay Rabbit Board	\$363,417
Warwick Shire River Improvement Trust	\$100,000
Southern Downs Steam Railway	\$15,000

Council funds community facilities including libraries, art galleries, community buildings, camping grounds, swimming pools and fitness centres. More details can be found in the document "operational budget by service type" included in the Budget Pack.

SECTION 190(C) COMMERCIAL BUSINESS UNITS

In line with section 190 (c) of the LGR, Council must provide an annual operations report for each commercial business unit. Council did not operate any commercial business units during the 2024-2025 financial year.

SECTION 190(D)(I) JOINT GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

In accordance with section 190 (d) (i) of the LGR the following items detail actions or expenditures for a service, facility or activity another local government supplied under an agreement for conducting a joint government activity

and for which the local government levied special rates or charges during the year.

Nil activities for the 2024-2025 financial year.

SECTION 190(F) KEY REGISTERS

In accordance with section 190(f) of the LGR, Council keeps the following registers:

- Register of Interests - Councillors & Chief Executive Officer (s.289-297 of LGR 2012)
- Register of Interests - Senior Executive Employees (s.289-297 of LGR 2012)
- Registers of Interests for Related Persons - Councillors (s.289- 297 of LGR 2012)
- Registers of Interests for Related Persons - Chief Executive Officer & Senior Executive Employees (s.289-297 of LGR 2012)
- Register of Delegations - Council to Chief Executive Officer and Chief Executive Officer to Employee or Contractor (s.260 of *Local Government Act 2009* (LGA))

- Register of Local Laws (s.31 of LGA 2009)
- Register of Roads (s.74 of LGA 2009)
- Register of Assets (s.104 of LGA 2009)
- Register of Development Applications (schedule 22, part 2, s. 6 of Planning Regulation 2017)
- Infrastructure Charges Register (schedule 22, part 1, s. 1 (y) of Planning Regulation 2017)
- Register of Building Notices (s.251 of *Building Act 1975*)
- Register of Permits and Inspection Certificates of Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2019 (s.112 of PDR 2019)
- Register of Testable Backflow Prevention Devices (s.113 of PDR 2019)
- Register of Details of Onsite Sewerage and Grey Water use Facilities for which Council has given a Compliance Certificate (s.114 of PDR 2019)
- Register of Show Cause and Enforcement Notices (s.115 of PDR 2019)

- Register of Approvals for Statutory Body (s.74 of *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982*)
- Register of Cost Recovery Fees and Commercial Charges (s.98 of LGA 2009)
- Exemption certificate register (schedule 22, part 1, s.1 (1)(u) of the PR 2017)
- All development applications and change applications given to the referral agency under section 54 of the Act (schedule 22, part 3, s9(1) of the PR 2017)

SECTION 190(1)(E) CHANGES TO TENDERS

In 2024-2025 Council issued invitations to change tenders under section 228(8) of the LGR for the following tenders:

- 24_078 Yangan Transfer Station
- 24_009 Stanthorpe Netball Clubhouse
- 24_045 Design an construction four toilet blocks and shelter
- 04_079 Dog off leash area

SECTION 190(1)(G) SUMMARY CONCESSIONS FOR RATES AND CHARGES

In accordance with section 190(g) of the LGR, the following concessions were granted by Council in 2024-2025:

Concession type costs 2024-2025	Quantity	Cost of concession
Senior Citizen Clubs	5	-\$3,590.00
Showground Related Organisations	9	-\$27,225.00
Sports & Community Organisations	101	-\$105,813.04
Community/Charitable Organisation	22	-\$28,803.64
Permit to Occupy Concession	3	-\$2,445.00
Water relief - Council infrastructure failure	9	-\$7,076.16
Water relief - unapparent plumbing failure	13	-\$3,997.19
Amosfield Road Concession	4	-\$2,955.00
Grand Total	165	-\$181,905.03

Rural Fire Brigades Special Charge

This special charge is paid in full to the combined rural fire brigade to fund the ongoing provision and maintenance of firefighting equipment for the fire brigades that operate throughout the rural areas of the region.

Brought forward from 2024-2025	\$140,225.20
Total charge	\$283,776.43
Total paid to rural fire brigade	\$423,673.93
Total carried forward to 2025-2026	\$327.70

SECTION 190(1)(H) INTERNAL AUDIT

Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) is an advisory committee of Council and operates under a charter, outlining its role, responsibilities, composition, and operating guidelines, in accordance with section 105 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, LGR and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

The primary objective of the ARMC is to promote good corporate governance through the provision of independent assurance, oversight and advice to Council and the Chief Executive Officer on matters relating to fraud and corruption control, risk management, internal control, governance, compliance, audit, financial statement preparation and financial management. The committee consists

of six members, three independent members appointed by Council, one independent member as part of a cross border arrangement with Tenterfield Shire Council and two Councillors. An external member is appointed as Chairperson and the Committee generally meets three to four times a year. Five meetings were held in the 2024-25 financial year.

For the 2024-2025 financial year, the committee comprised the following members:

Member	Member type	Tenure
Kerry Phillips	Independent (Chair)	22 September 2021 – current*
Mel Jacobs	Independent	22 September 2021 – current*
Tony Trace	Independent	22 September 2021 – current*
Elizabeth Alley	Independent member – cross border arrangement MOU with Tenterfield Shire Council)	23 January 2025 – current*
Melissa Hamilton	Councillor (Mayor)	19 April 2024 – current
Joel Richters	Councillor	19 April 2024 – current

* At the time of publishing this report.

The annual workplan (adopted by Council 17 July 2024) outlined the scheduled requirements to be reported, reviewed, and monitored across the applicable period by the ARMC.

SECTION 190(1)(I) AND (J) COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINTS

In accordance with section 190(1) (i) and (j) of the LGR, there were no investigation notices for competitive neutrality complaints nor any required response to the Queensland Competition Authority during the 2024-2025 financial year.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS

The *Human Rights Act 2019* requires public entities (including Local Governments) to act and make decisions compatible with human rights, as well as take into consideration human rights when deciding. The *Human Rights Act 2019* identifies 23 Human Rights and public entities, such as Council are required to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights.

In accordance with section 97 (2) of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, Council must provide details of any action taken during

the reporting period to further the objects of this Act and provide the number of complaints received and the outcome of these complaints. Council integrates *Human Rights Act 2019* into all relevant policies, reports and decisions held by Council and in complaint processes.

In the 2024-2025 financial year, Council received two human rights complaints, in which one was subsequently withdrawn.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORT

The Community Financial Report is a summary of Council's Financial

Statements prepared in accordance with Section 179 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

The Community Financial Report simplifies the financial statements, which often can be difficult for those without an accounting or financial background to understand. The Community Financial Report aims to provide information on Council's financial performance and position that is more meaningful and useful for the whole community.

1. COUNCIL'S END OF YEAR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

What you will find in the Financial Statements

The Audited Financial Statements of Council set out the financial performance, financial position, cash flows and the net wealth of Council for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

About the Management Certificate

The Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer must certify that the Financial Statements

present a true and fair view of Council's financial results for the year. After the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer have certified the Financial Statements the

Council must adopt them to ensure Council management and elected representatives take ownership and responsibility for the Financial Statements.

About the Financial Statements

The Financial Statements are divided into four primary financial documents and one accompanying document.

1. A Statement of Comprehensive Income

A summary of Council's financial performance for the year listing regular income, expenses and other comprehensive income which records items such as changes in the fair values of Council's assets and investments.

2. A Statement of Financial Position

The statement of financial position provides a snapshot of Council's financial position which includes assets and liabilities as of 30 June 2025.

3. A Statement of Changes in Equity

This statement provides the overall change in Council's net wealth (in dollars) for the 2024-25 financial year.

4. A Statement of Cash Flows

This statement shows the sources Council received cash from and on what goods, services and facilities Council paid for with cash.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The notes provide greater detail to the information provided in the four primary financial documents.

About the Auditor's Reports

The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) is required to audit the Council's Financial Statements. The QAO sometimes use contract firms that specialise in auditing local governments. Council's contracted external auditor was Crowe Australasia.

The Auditor provides an audit report which gives an opinion on whether the Financial Statements present fairly the Council's financial performance and position.

Where to find a complete version of Council's 2024-25 Financial Statements

A complete version of Council's Financial Statements for the 2024-25 Financial Year can be found at our website www.sdrclld.gov.au or at Council's administrative offices.



2 . OVERVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S
FINANCIAL RESULT AND
FINANCIAL POSITION

Statement of Comprehensive Income
(Profit and Loss) for 2024-25

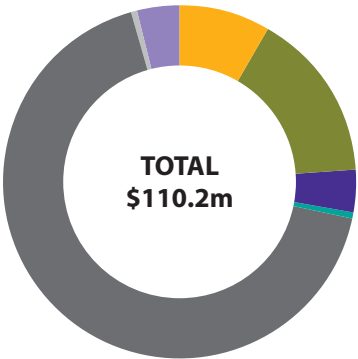
Council's net result for the 2024-25 financial year was a surplus of \$20.9m which is a decrease from the 2023-24 financial year surplus of \$35.6m.

Major movements from 2023-24 to 2024-25 financial year include:

- Sales revenue increased by \$2.5m to \$4.0m
- Operating grants, subsidies, contributions and donations have increased by \$8.8m to \$17.1m
- Depreciation increased by \$5.5m to \$27.0m
- Finance costs have increased by \$193k to \$1.4m

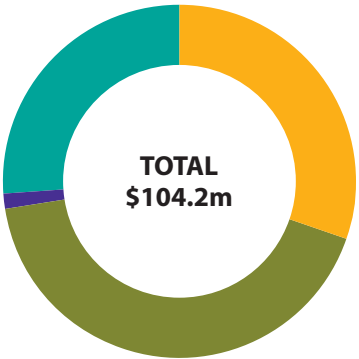
COUNCIL'S RESULTS	ACTUAL 2025 \$'000	ACTUAL 2024 \$'000
Revenue (excl. income for capital purposes)	\$110,205	\$94,361
Expenses	\$104,168	\$97,006
Operating Result	\$6,037	\$(2,645)
Capital Income, Grants & Contributions*	\$22,442	\$41,720
Capital Expenses	\$7,611	\$3,433
Net Result	\$20,868	\$35,642
Gain (Loss) on revaluation and impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment	\$4,064	\$87,310
Total Comprehensive Result	\$24,932	\$122,952

OPERATING REVENUE



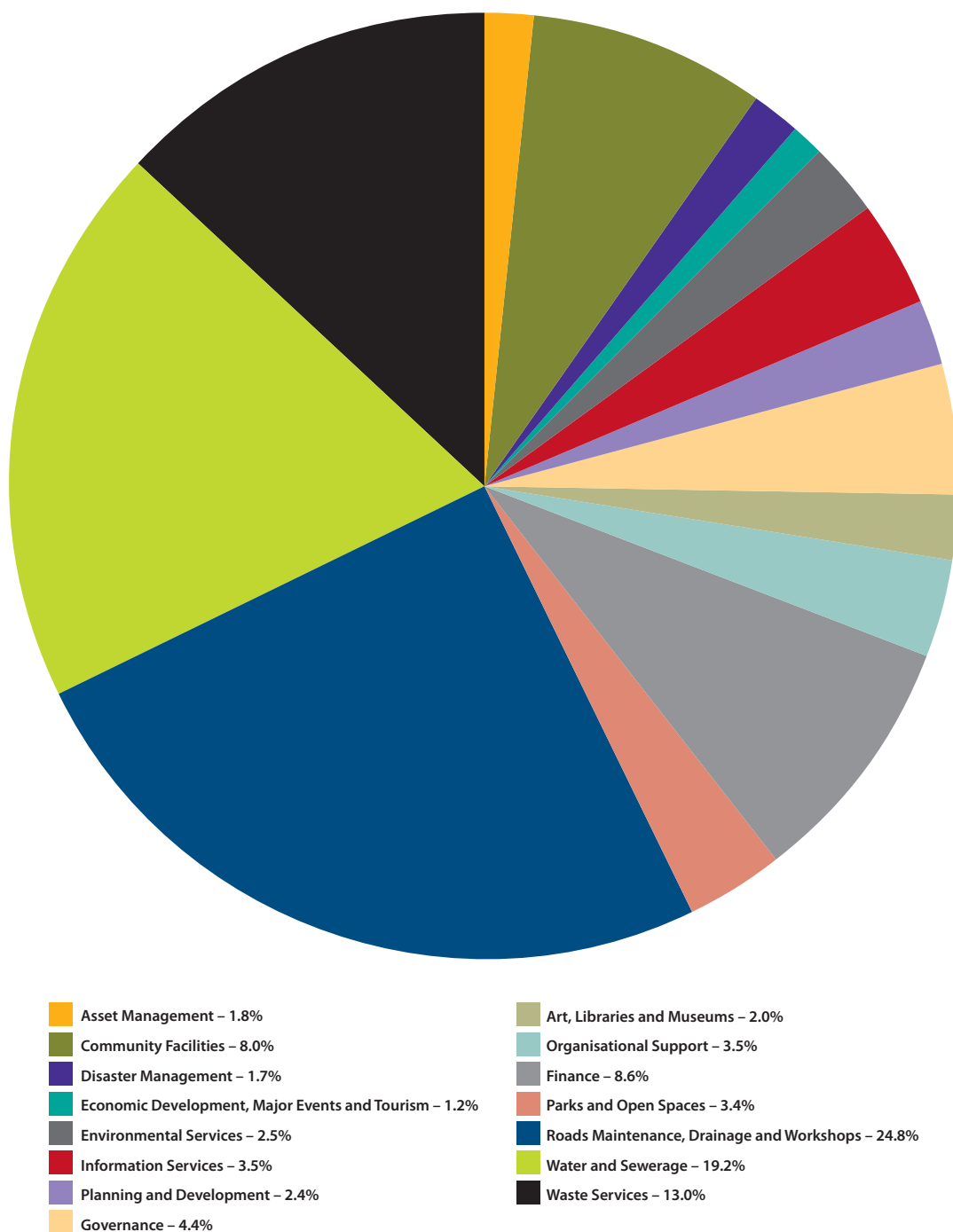
- Fees & Charges – \$9.4m
- Grants, Subsidies, Contributions & Donations – \$4.2m
- Interest & Investment Revenue – \$4.2m
- Other Revenue – \$0.8m
- Rates, Levies & Charges – \$73.9m
- Rental Income – \$0.7m
- Sales Revenue – \$4.1m

OPERATING EXPENSES



- Employee Benefits – \$31.8m
- Materials & Services – \$43.8m
- Finance Costs – \$1.4m
- Depreciation & Amortisation – \$27.2m

WHERE DO MY RATES GO?

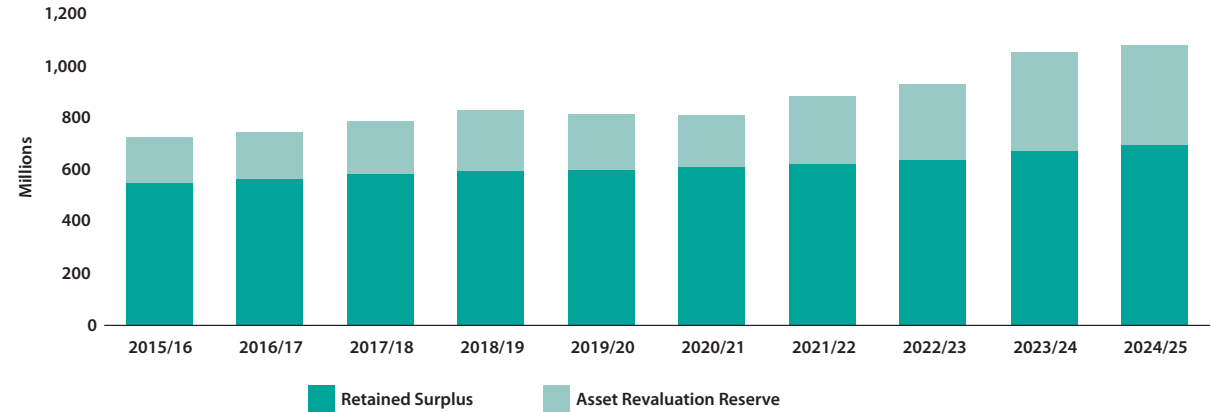


COMMUNITY EQUITY – COUNCIL’S NET WEALTH

The Statement of Changes in Equity provides the overall change in Council’s net wealth (in dollars) by showing the movements in retained earnings and reserves.

At the end of the 2024-25 financial year Council’s total community equity balance was \$1,077m.

COMPARATIVE EQUITY BALANCES



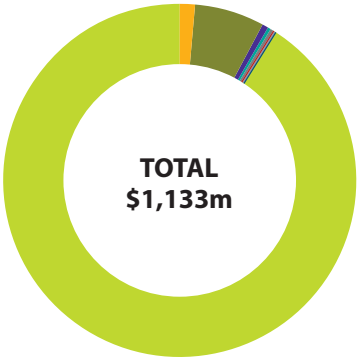
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (BALANCE SHEET)

The Statement of Financial Position measures what we own (our assets), what we owe (our debts) and our net worth at the end of the financial year.

At the end of the 2024-25 financial year Council’s total assets were \$1,133m and Council’s total liabilities were \$55.5m. From the 2023-24 financial year total assets increased by \$23.8m, and total liabilities reduced by \$1.1m.

ASSETS – WHAT WE OWN

Total Assets



CURRENT ASSETS

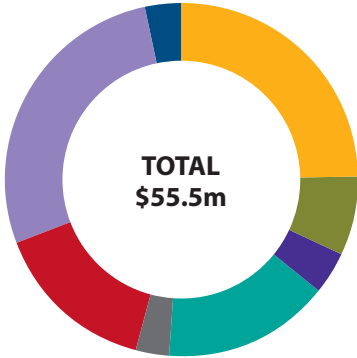
- Cash and Cash Equivalents – \$15.8m
- Investments – \$72.5m
- Current Trade & Other Receivables – \$7.6m
- Inventories – \$1.1m
- Other Assets – \$3.4m
- Non-current assets classified as Held for Sale – \$0.2m

NON-CURRENT ASSETS

- Non-current Trade and Other Receivables – \$0.1m
- Investment Property – \$0.4m
- Property, Plant and Equipment – \$1,032m

LIABILITIES – WHAT WE OWE

Total Liabilities



CURRENT LIABILITIES

- Trade and Other Payables – \$13.8m
- Contract Liabilities – \$4.0m
- Current Borrowings – \$2.1m
- Current Provisions – \$8.6m
- Other Liabilities – \$1.7m

NON CURRENT LIABILITIES

- Non-current Borrowings – \$8.3m
- Non-current Provisions – \$15.3m
- Other Liabilities – \$1.7m

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

This statement shows the sources Council received cash from and on what goods, services and facilities Council spent cash on.

Council's excess cash received over cash spent during the 2024-25 financial year was \$12.4m.

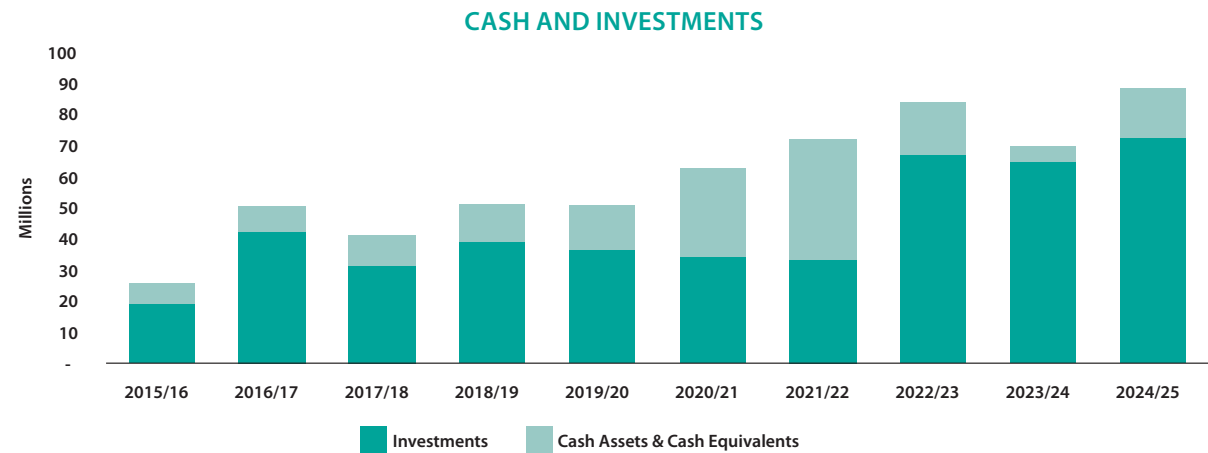
Cash inflows in the 2024-25 financial year from customers, investment and interest revenue and other operating activities

was \$40.3m, an increase of \$20.8 from the 2023-24 year.

Council investments increased by \$8m from the 2023-24 financial year to have \$72.5m invested in the 2024-25.

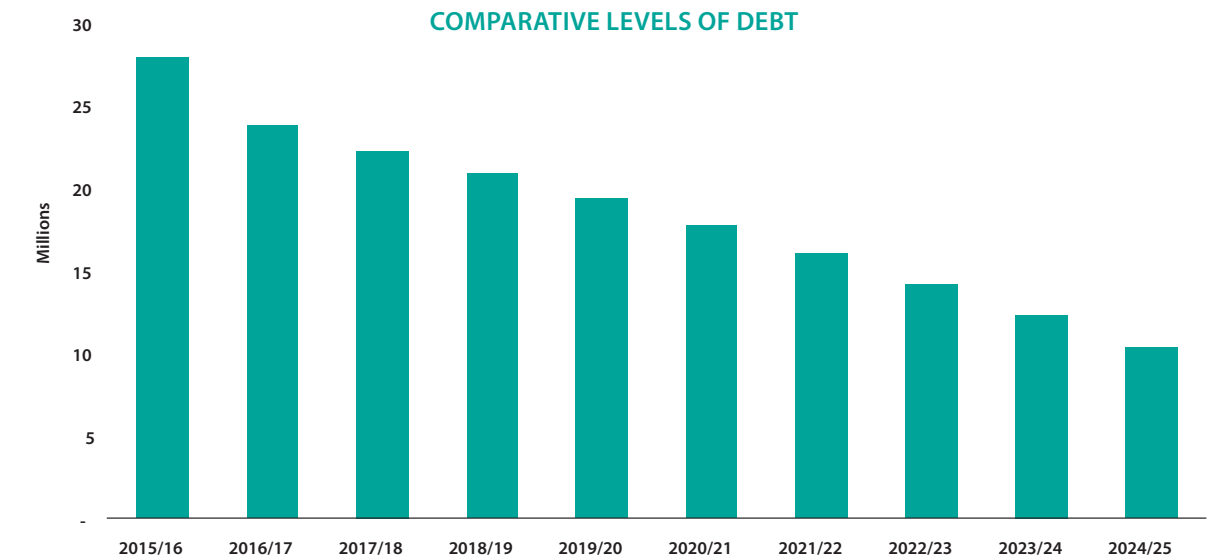
Repayment of borrowings during 2024-25 financial year were \$2.0m, this is similar to the 2023-24 financial year when \$1.9m was paid.

As at 30 June 2025 Council's total cash and cash equivalents and investments totalled \$88.3m which is an increase of \$18.7m from the previous year when it was \$69.6m.



OUR DEBT

During the 2024-25 financial year Council's debt repayments were \$1.96m, reducing the total debt balance to \$10.4m.



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY RATIOS

Financial sustainability is a strategy and ratios are used as point-in-time measurements to assess the outcomes of the strategy.

Council's performance as at 30 June 2025 against three relevant measure of financial sustainability are included in the financial statements and shown below:

RATIO	EXPLANATION	CALCULATION	TARGET	2025 RESULT	TARGET MET
Unrestricted Cash Expense Coverage Ratio	Indicator of the unconstrained liquidity available to a council to meet ongoing and emergent financial demands, which is a key component to solvency.	Total cash and equivalents, plus current investments and working capital limit divided by total operating expenses	> 4 months	12.7 months	✓
Operating surplus ratio	An indicator of the extent to which operating revenues generated cover operational expenses. Any operating surplus would be available for capital funding or other purposes.	Operating result divided by total operating revenue	> 0%	5.48%	✓
Operating cash ratio	A measure of council's ability to cover its core operational expenses and generate a cash surplus excluding depreciation, amortisation, and finance costs.	Operating result plus depreciation and amortisation and finance costs divided by total operating revenue	> 0%	31.43	✓
Asset Sustainability Ratio	Approximation of the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed are being replaced as these reach the end of their useful lives	Capital expenditure on replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense	> 80%	129.85%	✓
Asset Consumption Ratio	Approximates the extent to which council's infrastructure assets have been consumed compared to what it would cost to build a new asset with the same benefit to the community	Written down replacement cost of depreciable infrastructure assets divided by current replacement cost	> 60%	63.99%	✓
Leverage Ratio	An indicator of a council's ability to repay its existing debt. It measures the relative size of the council's debt to its operating performance.	Book value of debt divided by total operating revenue less total operating expenditure plus depreciation and amortisation	0-3 times	0.3 times	✓

Southern Downs Regional Council

GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 30 June 2025



Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

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for the year ended 30 June 2025

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Introduction

Each year, individual Local Governments across Queensland are required to present a set of audited Financial Statements to their Council and Community.

What you will find in the Statements

The Financial Statements set out the financial performance, financial position and cash flows of Council for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

The format of the Financial Statements complies with both the accounting and reporting requirements of Australian Accounting Standards.

About the Management Certificate

The Financial Statements must be certified by both the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer as 'presenting fairly' the Council's financial results for the year, and are required to be adopted by Council – ensuring both responsibility for and ownership of the Financial Statements.

About the Primary Financial Statements

The Financial Statements incorporate four "primary" financial statements:

1. A Statement of Comprehensive Income

A summary of Council's financial performance for the year, listing all income and expenses. The combined Other Comprehensive Income records items such as changes in the fair values of Council's property, plant and equipment and financial instruments.

2. A Statement of Financial Position

A 30 June snapshot of Council's Financial Position including its assets and liabilities.

3. A Statement of Changes in Equity

The overall change for the year (in dollars) of Council's "net wealth".

4. The Statement of Cash Flows

Indicates where Council's cash came from and where it was spent.

About the Notes to the Financial Statements

The Notes to the Financial Statements provide greater detail and additional information on the four Primary Financial Statements.

About the Auditor's Reports

Council's Financial Statements are required to be audited by the Queensland Audit Office.

The Auditor provides an audit report which gives an opinion on whether the Financial Statements present fairly the Council's financial performance and position.

Who uses the Financial Statements?

The financial statements are publicly available documents and must be presented at a Council meeting after the date of the Audit Report.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Income			
Revenue			
Recurrent revenue			
Rates, levies and charges	3a	73,917	69,531
Fees and charges	3b	9,385	8,828
Sales revenue	3c	4,088	1,552
Grants, subsidies and contributions	3d	17,106	8,315
Total recurrent revenue		104,496	88,226
Other income			
Rental income		678	613
Interest received	4a	4,231	4,685
Other income	4b	800	837
Total other income		5,709	6,135
Total operating revenue		110,205	94,361
Capital income			
Grants, subsidies and contributions	3d	22,442	41,055
Capital income	5	—	665
Total capital income		22,442	41,720
Total income		132,647	136,081
Expenses			
Recurrent expenses			
Employee and councillor costs	6	31,783	31,513
Materials and services	7	43,789	42,570
Finance costs		1,381	1,188
Depreciation and amortisation:			
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	12	27,039	21,555
- Intangible assets	13	28	32
- Right of use assets		148	148
Total recurrent expenses		104,168	97,006
Other expenses			
Capital Expenses	8	7,611	3,433
Total other expenses		7,611	3,433
Total expenses		111,779	100,439
Net Result		20,868	35,642
Other comprehensive income			
Items which will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result			
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	12	4,064	87,310
Total other comprehensive income for the year		4,064	87,310
Total comprehensive income for the year		24,932	122,952

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and material accounting policies.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	9	15,779	5,055
Financial assets	9	72,500	64,500
Receivables	10	7,601	9,556
Inventories		1,138	988
Contract assets	14	3,101	7,544
Other financial assets		302	346
		<u>100,421</u>	<u>87,989</u>
Non-current assets held for sale	11	160	590
Total current assets		<u>100,581</u>	<u>88,579</u>
Non-current assets			
Receivables	10	136	154
Right of use assets		133	92
Investment property		364	205
Property, plant and equipment	12	1,031,525	1,019,848
Intangible assets	13	88	150
Total non-current assets		<u>1,032,246</u>	<u>1,020,449</u>
Total Assets		<u>1,132,827</u>	<u>1,109,028</u>
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Payables	15	13,760	16,736
Contract liabilities	14	3,967	4,877
Borrowings	16	2,098	1,979
Lease liabilities		134	95
Provisions	17	8,623	9,059
Other liabilities	18	1,605	1,740
Total current liabilities		<u>30,187</u>	<u>34,486</u>
Non-current liabilities			
Borrowings	16	8,261	10,336
Lease liabilities		10	2
Provisions	17	15,347	8,558
Other liabilities	18	1,671	3,227
Total non-current liabilities		<u>25,289</u>	<u>22,123</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>55,476</u>	<u>56,609</u>
Net community assets		<u>1,077,351</u>	<u>1,052,419</u>
Community equity			
Asset revaluation surplus	12	382,365	378,301
Retained surplus		694,986	674,118
Total community equity		<u>1,077,351</u>	<u>1,052,419</u>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and material accounting policies.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	Asset revaluation surplus \$ '000	Retained surplus \$ '000	Total equity \$ '000
Balance as at 1 July 2024		378,301	674,118	1,052,419
Balance as at 1 July		378,301	674,118	1,052,419
Net result		–	20,868	20,868
Other comprehensive income for the year				
- Increase in asset revaluation surplus	12	4,064	–	4,064
Other comprehensive income		4,064	–	4,064
Total comprehensive income for the year		4,064	20,868	24,932
Balance as at 30 June 2025		382,365	694,986	1,077,351
Balance as at 1 July 2023		290,991	638,476	929,467
Balance as at 1 July		290,991	638,476	929,467
Net result		–	35,642	35,642
Other comprehensive income for the year				
- Increase in asset revaluation surplus	12	87,310	–	87,310
Other comprehensive income		87,310	–	87,310
Total comprehensive income for the year		87,310	35,642	122,952
Balance as at 30 June 2024		378,301	674,118	1,052,419

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and material accounting policies.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(75,795)	(69,846)
Receipts from customers		88,182	80,232
		<u>12,387</u>	<u>10,386</u>
Receipts			
Rental income		678	613
Interest received		4,231	4,685
Non capital grants and contributions		22,044	10,712
Other		7,613	7,070
Payments			
Borrowing costs		(1,372)	(1,178)
Other		(5,243)	(12,758)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	22	<u>40,338</u>	<u>19,530</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Receipts			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		678	1,130
Grants, subsidies, contributions and donations		22,442	31,411
Payments			
Payments for intangible assets		—	(75)
Payments for investment property		(159)	—
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(42,477)	(63,895)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from investing activities		<u>(19,516)</u>	<u>(31,429)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Payments			
Repayment of borrowings		(1,956)	(1,884)
Repayments made on leases (principal only)		(142)	(154)
Net cash flow inflow/(outflow) from financing activities		<u>(2,098)</u>	<u>(2,038)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held		<u>18,724</u>	<u>(13,937)</u>
plus: cash and cash equivalents - beginning		69,555	83,492
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	9	<u>88,279</u>	<u>69,555</u>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and material accounting policies.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Information about these financial statements

(a) Basis of preparation

The Southern Downs Regional Council is constituted under the *Queensland Local Government Act 2009* and is domiciled in Australia.

These general purpose financial statements are for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. They are prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Council is a not-for-profit (NFP) entity for financial reporting purposes and these financial statements complies with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations as applicable to not-for-profit entities.

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the revaluation of certain classes of property and investment property.

(b) New and revised Accounting Standards adopted during the year

Southern Downs Regional Council adopted all standards which became mandatorily effective for annual reporting periods beginning on 1 July 2024. None of the standards had an impact on the reported position, performance and cash flows.

The relevant standard for Southern Downs Regional Council were:

- AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements (amended by AASB 2020-1, AASB 2020-6, AASB 2022-6, AASB 2023-3) relating to current / non-current classification of liabilities
- AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement (amended by AASB 2022-10)

(c) Standards issued by the AASB not yet effective

The AASB has issued Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations which are not mandatorily effective at 30 June 2025. These standards have not been adopted by Council and will be included in the financial statements on their effective date. Where the standard is expected to have a significant impact for Council then further information has been provided in this note.

The following list identifies all the new and amended Australian Accounting Standards, and Interpretations, that were issued but not yet effective at the time of compiling these statements that could be applicable to Councils.

Effective for NFP annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2026

- AASB 2024-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Classification and Measurement of Financial Instruments

Effective for NFP annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2026 for public sector

- AASB 17 Insurance Contracts (amended by AASB 2020-5, AASB 2023-1, AASB 2023-8 and AASB 2023-9 Insurance Contracts in the Public Sector)
- AASB 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements

continued on next page ...

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Information about these financial statements (continued)

(d) Estimates and judgements

Council make a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions in preparing these financial statements. These are based on the best information available to Council at the time. However, due to the passage of time, these assumptions may change. Therefore, the recorded balances may not reflect the final outcomes. The significant judgements, estimates and assumptions relate to the following items and specific information is provided in the relevant note:

- Revenue Recognition - Note 3
- Valuation and Depreciation of Property, Plant & Equipment - Note 12
- Provisions - Note 17
- Contingent Liabilities - Note 20
- Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management - Note 25

(e) Rounding and comparatives

The financial statements are in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or, where that amount is \$500 or less, to zero, unless otherwise stated.

Comparative information is presented on the same basis as the prior year.

(f) Volunteer services

Council uses volunteer services at the Warwick Library and the Visitor Information Centres in Warwick and Stanthorpe.

Council is not able to reliably measure the fair value of these volunteer services. Council would not purchase these services if not donated, so the value of these services has not been included in these statements.

(g) Taxation

Council is exempt from income tax. Council is subject to Fringe Benefits Tax, Goods and Services Tax ('GST') and payroll tax on certain activities. The net amount of GST recoverable from the ATO or payable to the ATO is shown as an asset or liability respectively.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2. Analysis of results by function

(a) Components of Council functions

Details relating to the Council's functions / activities as reported in Note 2(b) are as follows:

Business services and finance

Council's business services and finance functions provides professional financial and other information and administrative services across all of Council. This function includes internal audit, budget support, financial accounting, marketing and communication, and information technology services. The goal of this function is to provide accurate, timely and appropriate information to support sound decision making and meet statutory requirements.

Community services

The goal of community services is to ensure Southern Downs Regional Council is a healthy, vibrant, contemporary and connected community. Community Services provides well managed and maintained community facilities, and ensures the effective delivery of cultural, health, welfare, environmental and recreational services.

This function includes:

- libraries,
- entertainment venues
- environmental licences and approvals

Planning and development

This function facilitates the growth and prosperity within the Council area through well planned and quality development. The objective of planning and development is to ensure the Southern Downs Regional Council is well designed, efficient and facilitates growth, yet also preserves the character and natural environment of the area. This function includes activities and services related to city, neighbourhood and regional planning, and management of development approval processes.

Transport infrastructure

The objective of the transport infrastructure program is to ensure the community is serviced by a high quality and effective road network. The function provides and maintains transport infrastructure, including the maintenance and provision of the drainage network.

Waste management

The goal of this function is to protect and support our community and natural environment by sustainably managing refuse. The function provides refuse collection and disposal services, mosquito and other pest management programs.

Water infrastructure

The goal of this program is to support a healthy, safe community through sustainable water services. This function includes all activities relating to water including flood and waterways management.

Sewerage infrastructure

This function protects and supports the health of our community by sustainably managing sewerage infrastructure.

continued on next page ...

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2. Analysis of results by function (continued)

(b) Income, expenses and assets attributed to Council functions

Functions	Gross program income		Capital grants	Total income	Gross program expenses		Total expenses	Net result from recurring operations	Net result	Total assets
	Recurring grants	Recurring other	\$ '000	\$ '000	Recurring	Capital	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
2025										
Business services and finance	3,618	41,604	–	45,222	(15,140)	(7,611)	(22,751)	30,082	22,471	255,634
Community services	3,398	3,838	2,027	9,263	(18,926)	–	(18,926)	(11,690)	(9,663)	10,335
Planning and development	94	1,815	–	1,909	(4,179)	–	(4,179)	(2,270)	(2,270)	4,731
Transport infrastructure	8,268	3,957	15,141	27,366	(23,399)	–	(23,399)	(11,174)	3,967	536,285
Waste management	1,728	12,679	279	14,686	(17,454)	–	(17,454)	(3,047)	(2,768)	8,260
Water infrastructure	–	17,740	4,423	22,163	(16,891)	–	(16,891)	849	5,272	183,401
Sewerage infrastructure	–	11,466	572	12,038	(8,179)	–	(8,179)	3,287	3,859	134,181
Total	17,106	93,099	22,442	132,647	(104,168)	(7,611)	(111,779)	6,037	20,868	1,132,827
2024										
Business services and finance	1,322	41,125	60	42,507	(17,923)	(3,433)	(21,356)	24,524	21,151	240,812
Community services	4,589	3,627	6,733	14,949	(19,448)	–	(19,448)	(11,232)	(4,499)	9,811
Planning and development	77	1,485	–	1,562	(4,024)	–	(4,024)	(2,462)	(2,462)	462
Transport infrastructure	828	1,410	24,171	26,409	(23,149)	–	(23,149)	(20,911)	3,260	539,817
Waste management	1,489	11,312	683	13,484	(13,649)	–	(13,649)	(848)	(165)	4,893
Water infrastructure	10	16,399	7,341	23,750	(12,160)	–	(12,160)	4,249	11,590	180,872
Sewerage infrastructure	–	10,688	2,732	13,420	(6,653)	–	(6,653)	4,035	6,767	132,361
Total	8,315	86,046	41,720	136,081	(97,006)	(3,433)	(100,439)	(2,645)	35,642	1,109,028

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Revenue

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000

(a) Rates, levies and charges

Rates, levies and charges are recognised as revenue at the beginning of the rating period to which they relate. Prepaid rates are recognised as a financial liability until the beginning of the rating period.

General rates	39,130	38,014
Water	10,095	9,214
Water consumption	7,008	6,523
Sewerage	10,830	10,268
Garbage charges	9,311	7,867
Total rates and utility charge revenue	76,374	71,886
Less: discounts	(2,457)	(2,355)
Total rates, levies and charges	73,917	69,531

(b) Fees and charges

Revenue arising from fees and charges is recognised at the point in time when the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services which are provided to the customers and generally the payment terms are within 30 days of the provision of the service. There is no material obligation for Council in relation to refunds or returns.

Licences granted by Council are all either short-term or low value and all revenue from licences is recognised at the time that the licence is granted rather than the term of the licence.

Revenue from infringements is recognised on issue of infringement notice after applying the expected credit loss model relating to impairment of receivables for initial recognition of statutory receivables.

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000
Development and application fees	2,294	1,835
Infringements	48	67
Licences and registrations	524	589
Library fees	18	12
Fitness centre fees	—	44
Waste disposal fees	3,449	3,289
Cemetery fees	701	810
Saleyard fees	1,429	1,113
Other fees and charges	922	1,069
Total fees and charges	9,385	8,828

continued on next page ...

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Revenue (continued)

(c) Sales revenue

Sale of goods revenue is recognised at the point in time when the customer obtains control of the goods, generally at delivery. Revenue from services is recognised when the service is rendered.

Revenue from contracts and recoverable works generally comprises a recoupment of material costs together with an hourly charge for use of equipment and employees. This revenue and the associated costs are recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract activity based on costs incurred at the reporting date. Where consideration is received for the service in advance it is included in other liabilities and is recognised as revenue in the period when the service is performed. The contract work carried out is not subject to retentions.

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000
Rendering of services		
Contract and recoverable works	3,932	1,379
Child care centre	156	173
Total sales revenue	4,088	1,552

(d) Grants, subsidies, contributions and donations

In June 2023 Council received an amount of \$7.2 million equating to 96% of the 2023-24 Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grant allocation. As these grants are considered untied grants, they were recognised upon receipt in the 2022-23 financial year. In the 2023-24 financial year Council did not receive similar grant funding in advance, and as such there is a decrease in Council's revenue. The amount of \$6.2 million was received for the 2024-25 year in July 2024.

Grant income under AASB 15

Where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations then the revenue is recognised when control of each performance obligation is satisfied.

Performance obligations vary in each agreement but include completion of work and delivery of events and campaigns. Payment terms vary depending on the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

Each performance obligation is considered to ensure that the revenue recognition reflects the transfer of control and within grant agreements there may be some performance obligations where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract.

Where control is transferred over time, revenue is recognised using either costs or time incurred.

Grant income under AASB 1058

Where Council receives an asset for significantly below fair value, the asset is recognised at fair value, related liability (or equity items) are recorded and income then is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

Capital grants

Where Council receives funding under an enforceable contract to acquire or construct a specified item of property, plant and equipment which will be under Council's control on completion, revenue is recognised as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed.

For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred.

Donations and contributions

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Revenue (continued)

Where assets are donated or purchased for significantly below fair value, the revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by the Council.

Donations and contributions are generally recognised on receipt of the asset since there are no enforceable performance obligations.

Physical assets contributed to Council by developers in the form of roadworks, stormwater, water and wastewater infrastructure and park equipment are recognised as revenue when Council obtains control of the asset and there is sufficient data in the form of drawings and plans to determine the approximate specifications and values of such assets. Non-cash contributions with a value in excess of the recognition thresholds are recognised as non-current assets. Those below the thresholds are recorded as expenses.

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000

(i) Operating

Recurrent grants are of a non-capital nature and relate to money received for operational purposes

General purpose grants	11,639	820
State government subsidies and grants	5,030	7,010
Commonwealth government subsidies and grants	437	485
Total recurrent grants, subsidies, contributions and donations	17,106	8,315

(ii) Capital

Capital revenue includes grants and subsidies received which are tied to specific projects for the replacement or upgrade of existing non-current assets and/or investment in new assets. It also includes non-cash contributions which are usually infrastructure assets received from developers.

State government subsidies and grants	16,488	28,109
Commonwealth government subsidies and grants	3,943	11,603
Contributions	2,011	1,343
Total capital grants, subsidies, contributions and donations	22,442	41,055

(iii) Timing of revenue recognition for grants, subsidies, contributions and donations

	2025		2024	
	Revenue recognised at a point in time \$ '000	Revenue recognised over time \$ '000	Revenue recognised at a point in time \$ '000	Revenue recognised over time \$ '000
Grants and subsidies	16,891	19,971	8,040	39,987
Contributions	2,011	—	1,343	—
Other	675	—	—	—
	19,577	19,971	9,383	39,987

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 4. Interest and other income

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(a) Interest received		
Interest received from bank and term deposits	4,015	4,402
Interest received from other sources	12	14
Interest from overdue rates and utility charges	204	269
Total interest received	4,231	4,685
(b) Other income		
Other income includes reimbursements received, insurance claim revenue, aerodrome fuel and sale of scrap metal.		
Other income	800	837
Total other income	800	837

Note 5. Capital income

		2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
	Notes		
Provision for restoration of land			
Reduction in restoration provision	17	—	665
Total capital income		—	665

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Employee and councillor costs

	Notes	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Wages and salaries		25,029	23,535
Councillors remuneration		895	850
Annual, sick and long service leave entitlements		5,462	5,889
Superannuation	21	3,392	3,239
		<u>34,778</u>	<u>33,513</u>
Other employee related expenses		1,722	1,719
		<u>36,500</u>	<u>35,232</u>
Less: capitalised employee expenses		(4,717)	(3,719)
Total Employee benefits		<u>31,783</u>	<u>31,513</u>

Councillor remuneration represents salary, and other allowances paid in respect of carrying out their duties.

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Additional information:		
Total Council employees at the reporting date:		
Elected members	9	9
Administration staff	188	177
Depot and outdoors staff	173	177
Total full time equivalent employees	<u>370</u>	<u>363</u>

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 7. Materials and services

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Advertising and marketing	318	219
Administration supplies and consumables	615	596
Audit of annual financial statements by the Auditor-General of Queensland	134	126
Communications and IT	649	681
Water Purchases	1,943	1,847
Contractors	17,923	19,000
Donations paid	1,023	995
Fuel	1,626	1,741
Hire expenses	1,991	416
Insurance	1,133	1,070
Library books	172	160
Materials	1,608	3,121
Equipment and tools	1,883	1,417
Power	1,487	1,352
Professional services	2,754	2,096
Repairs and maintenance	719	559
Rural fire brigade levy payment	424	140
Subscriptions and registrations	3,138	2,599
Contributions Paid	148	203
Waste Levy	3,040	3,107
Roads Materials	1,016	1,083
Other materials and services	45	42
Total materials and services	43,789	42,570

Total audit fees quoted by the Queensland Audit Office relating to the 2024-25 financial statements are \$134,200 (2024: \$126,380).

Note 8. Capital expenses

	Notes	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(a) Loss on disposal of non-current assets			
Proceeds from the disposal of property, plant and equipment		644	1,130
Less: carrying value of disposed property, plant and equipment	12	(8,255)	(4,519)
Loss on disposal of non-current assets		7,611	3,389
(b) Other capital expenses			
Loss on write-off of assets		—	11
Donated assets		—	33
Total other capital expenses		—	44
Total capital expenses		7,611	3,433

Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Cash, cash equivalents and financial assets

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank and on hand	10,534	3,037
Deposits at call	5,245	2,018
Balance per Statement of Financial Position	15,779	5,055
Financial assets - current		
Term deposits	72,500	64,500
Balance per Statement of Cash Flows	88,279	69,555

QTC working capital facility

Council is exposed to credit risk through its investments in the QTC Cash Fund and QTC Working Capital Facility. The QTC Cash Fund is an asset management portfolio investing in a wide range of high credit rated counterparties. Deposits with the QTC Cash Fund are capital guaranteed. Working Capital Facility deposits have a duration of one day and all investments are required to have a minimum credit rating of "A-", the likelihood of the counterparty not having capacity to meet its financial commitments is low.

Cash and deposits at call are held in the Commonwealth Bank in term deposits and business cheque accounts. The bank currently has a short term credit rating of A1+, and long term rating of AA-.

Council's cash and cash equivalents are subject to a number of internal and external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary or future use.

These include:

(i) Externally imposed expenditure restrictions at the reporting date relate to the following cash assets:

Waste levy refund received in advance	3,276	4,767
Unspent government grants and subsidies	4,776	4,877
Total externally imposed restrictions on cash assets	8,052	9,644

(ii) Internal allocations of cash at the reporting date:

Internal allocations of cash may be lifted by a Council with a resolution.

Future capital works	16,131	20,476
Total internally allocated cash	16,131	20,476
Total unspent restricted cash	24,183	30,120

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Cash, cash equivalents and financial assets (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
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Trust Funds

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012*, a separate trust bank account and separate accounting records are maintained for funds held on behalf of outside parties. Funds held in the trust account include those funds from the sale of land for arrears in rates, deposits for the contracted sale of land, security deposits lodged to guarantee performance and unclaimed monies (e.g. wages). The Council only performs a custodian role in respect of these monies and because the monies cannot be used for Council purposes, they are not considered revenue nor brought to account in the financial statements since Council has no control over the assets. Trust funds are subject to annual audit by the Auditor-General of Queensland.

Trust funds held for outside parties

Security deposits	3,219	2,060
	3,219	2,060

Note 10. Receivables

Receivables, loans and advances are amounts owed to council at year end and are recognised at the amount due at the time of sale or service delivery or advance. Settlement of receivables is required within 30 days after the invoice is issued.

Debts are regularly assessed for collectability and allowance is made, where appropriate, for impairment. All known bad debts were written-off at 30 June. If an amount is recovered in a subsequent period it is recognised as revenue.

The impairment loss is recognised in finance costs. The amount of the impairment is the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of the estimated cash flows discounted at the effective interest rate.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

Current

Rates and charges	3,149	3,301
Other debtors	3,764	5,115
GST recoverable	691	1,214
Loans and advances to community organisations	18	18
Total	7,622	9,648

less: Loss allowance

Other	(21)	(92)
Total provision for impairment - receivables	(21)	(92)

Total current receivables

7,601	9,556
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Non-current

Loans and advances to community organisations	136	154
Total non-current receivables	136	154

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 10. Receivables (continued)

Council applies normal business credit protection procedures prior to providing goods or services to minimise credit risk.

There is a geographical concentration of risk in Council's jurisdiction, and since the area is largely agricultural, there is also a concentration in that sector.

The council does not require collateral in respect of trade and other receivables.

When Council has no reasonable expectation of recovering an amount owed by a debtor, and has ceased enforcement activity, the debt is written-off by directly reducing the receivable against the loss allowance. If the amount of debt written off exceeds the loss allowance, the excess is recognised as an impairment loss.

Council has identified 5 distinctive groupings of its receivables: rates and charges, statutory charges, grants, lease receivables, other debtors and relevant judgements in relation to expected credit loss has been made for each group.

Rates and charges: Council is empowered under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009* to sell an owner's property to recover outstanding rate debts and therefore the expected credit loss is immaterial. Impairment of rates and charges will occur only if arrears are deemed to be greater than the proceeds Council would receive from the sale of the respective property.

Statutory charges: In some limited circumstances, Council may write off impaired statutory charges, on this basis Council calculates an ECL for statutory charges (non-rates and utility charges). Although not material, disclosure is being made for the purposes of public interest and transparency.

Grants: Payable by State and Commonwealth governments and their agencies. A credit enhancement exists as these payments are effectively government guaranteed and both the State and Commonwealth Governments have high credit ratings. Accordingly, Council determines the level of credit risk exposure to be immaterial and therefore does not record an expected credit loss for these counterparties.

Lease receivables: Council has elected to use the simplified approach for lease receivables. Internal historical data shows no defaults have occurred. Even in the event of a default occurring, Council has determined expected credit losses for this receivables grouping to be immaterial. Accordingly, an expected credit loss of lease receivables is not calculated.

Other debtors: Council identifies other debtors as receivables which are not rates and charges; statutory charges; lease receivables; or grants.

Loans

Loans relate to advances made to various sporting bodies. These loans arise from time to time and are subject to negotiated interest rates which are below market rates. The credit risk on these loans is considered low. The loans in place are at call.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 11. Non-current assets Held for Sale

Assets are classified as non-current assets held for sale when the carrying amount of these assets will be recovered principally through a sales transaction rather than continuing use. Non-current assets classified as held for sale are available for immediate sale in their present condition. Management believe the sale is highly probable within 12 months. Non-current assets held for sale are measured at the lower of their carrying amount, and fair value less cost to sell, and are not depreciated.

Council has decided to sell land parcels that are no longer required to be held by Council. The fair value of the land was determined using the sales comparison approach. Sales prices of comparable land sites in close proximity are adjusted for differences in key attributes such as property size. The most significant inputs into this valuation approach are price per square metre. The land is categorised as a level 2 valuation. Disposal costs were estimated based on commission rates charged by the real estate agents that have been engaged, and legal costs quoted by council's solicitors.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Land	160	590



Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 12. Property, plant and equipment

2025 Measurement basis	Capital work in progress		Land and improvements		Buildings		Plant and equipment		Road, drainage and bridge network		Water		Sewerage		Infrastructure assets		Artworks		Total	
	Cost	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value	Fair Value	Cost	Cost	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	\$ '000	\$ '000
Opening gross balance	10,805	62,285			140,951	36,731	747,587	291,724	216,193	39,361	2,228	1,547,865								
Additions - new	3,377	-			-	3,396	-	-	-	-	-	6,773								
Additions - renewals	29,625	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29,625								
Contributed assets	-	-			-	-	383	28	-	-	-	411								
Disposals	-	-			(516)	(2,446)	(450)	(3,844)	(23)	(9,462)	(2)	(16,743)								
Revaluation increments to equity (ARS)	-	6,142			-	-	-	-	-	1,178	-	7,344								
Transfers from Work in Progress	(28,035)	137			2,468	550	6,553	8,949	4,111	5,267	24	-								
Transfers from/to held for sale category	(5)	116			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	111								
Transfers from/to Intangible Assets	(13)	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(13)								
Adjustments and other transfers	-	(279)			(3,585)	(152)	77	-	-	3,608	-	(331)								
Refuse restoration increase to asset	-	6,153			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,153								
Closing Gross value as at 30 June	15,754	74,554			139,318	38,079	754,150	296,857	220,281	39,952	2,250	1,581,195								
Opening accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	11,776			71,188	20,238	216,668	113,481	84,476	10,190	-	528,017								
Depreciation expense	-	1,865			3,109	2,358	10,906	4,545	3,277	979	-	27,039								
Depreciation on disposals	-	-			(456)	(1,761)	(265)	(1,246)	(11)	(4,873)	-	(8,612)								
Revaluation increments to equity (ARS)	-	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,280								
Adjustments and other transfers	-	-			(1,134)	(152)	77	-	-	1,155	-	(54)								
Accumulated depreciation as at 30 June	-	13,641			72,707	20,683	227,386	116,780	87,742	10,731	-	549,670								
Total net book value of property, plant and equipment	15,754	60,913			66,611	17,396	526,764	180,077	132,539	29,221	2,250	1,031,525								

Other information
Range of estimated useful life (years)

Land not depreciated, improvements	7-40	10-200	2-20	18-200	10-150	7-200	Not depreciated
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Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 12. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

	Capital work in progress	Land and improvements	Buildings	Plant and equipment	Road, drainage and bridge network	Water	Sewerage	Other infrastructure assets	Total
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	
2024	Cost	Fair Value	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	Fair Value	
Measurement basis									
Fair value category									
Opening gross balance	28,123	58,398	122,827	36,505	712,734	230,118	163,154	33,272	1,387,359
Additions - new	10,144	-	-	2,656	30	-	-	-	12,830
Additions - renewals	52,915	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52,915
Contributed assets	-	-	-	-	396	-	-	-	396
Disposals	-	-	(39)	(2,938)	(3,096)	-	-	(3,411)	(9,484)
Revaluation increments to equity (ARS)	-	4,118	6,961	-	-	51,283	42,984	-	105,346
Transfers from Work in Progress	(79,024)	-	11,222	508	37,591	10,323	10,055	9,323	(2)
Transfers from/to held for sale category	-	163	-	-	-	-	-	-	163
Adjustments and other transfers	(1,353)	(89)	(20)	-	(68)	-	-	177	(1,353)
Refuse restoration increase to asset	-	(305)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(305)
Closing Gross value as at 30 June	10,805	62,285	140,951	36,731	747,587	291,724	216,193	39,361	1,547,865
Opening accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	11,690	66,355	20,011	207,801	104,769	72,128	10,797	493,551
Depreciation expense	-	124	2,215	2,309	10,262	3,298	2,574	773	21,555
Depreciation on disposals	-	-	(13)	(2,074)	(1,274)	-	-	(1,418)	(4,779)
Revaluation increments to equity (ARS)	-	-	2,848	-	-	5,414	9,774	-	18,036
Adjustments and other transfers	-	(38)	(217)	(8)	(121)	-	-	38	(346)
Accumulated depreciation as at 30 June	-	11,776	71,188	20,238	216,668	113,481	84,476	10,190	528,017
Total net book value of property, plant and equipment	10,805	50,509	69,763	16,493	530,919	178,243	131,717	29,171	1,019,848

*) \$2,709 million worth of assets were first recognised through the valuation process as at 30 June 2024 which have not been recognised as a prior year error. This refers to \$886 thousand in Water and \$1.82 million in Wastewater.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 12. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

(a) Recognition

The asset capitalisation thresholds for Council are:

	\$
Land	No threshold
Buildings, Infrastructure, Fleet, Plant and Equipment	\$10,000
Artworks	\$1.00
Intangible Assets	\$10,000

The asset capitalisation threshold for fleet and plant and equipment has changed from \$5,000 to \$10,000 in the 2024/25 financial year.

Land under roads, and reserve land under the Land Act 1994 or Land Title Act 1994, is controlled by Queensland State Government, and not recognised in the Council financial statements.

(b) Measurement

Property, plant and equipment assets are initially recorded at cost. Subsequently, each class of property, plant and equipment is stated at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment loss.

(c) Depreciation

Land, work in progress, road formations and formation works associated with construction of dams, levee banks and reservoirs are not depreciated.

Depreciation, where applicable, is calculated on a straight-line basis. Management believes that straight-line basis appropriately reflects the pattern of consumption of all Council assets.

Key judgements and estimates

Management reviews its estimate of the useful lives of depreciable assets at each reporting date, based on the expected utility of the assets. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to technical or physical obsolescence that may change the utility of infrastructure assets.

(d) Impairment

Property, plant and equipment is assessed for indicators of impairment annually. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, the Council determines the asset's recoverable amount. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

(e) Valuation

The fair value of assets and liabilities must be estimated in accordance with various Accounting Standards for either recognition and measurement requirements or for disclosure purposes.

Valuation Processes

Council compares the carrying amount of its property, plant and equipment on an annual basis to current fair value and makes adjustment where these are materially different. Every 5 years, council performs a full comprehensive revaluation by engaging an external professionally qualified valuer.

In the intervening years, Council undertakes:

- Management valuation using internal engineers and asset managers to assess the condition and cost assumptions associated with all infrastructure assets and an appropriate cost index for the region.
- "Desktop" valuation for land and improvements, buildings and infrastructure asset classes which involves management providing updated information to the valuer regarding additions, deletions and changes in assumptions such as useful

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Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 12. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

life, residual value and condition rating. The valuer then determines suitable indices which are applied to each of these asset classes.

On revaluation, accumulated depreciation is restated proportionately with the change in the carrying amount of the asset and any change in the estimate of remaining useful life.

Fair values are classified into three levels as follows:

Level 1: Fair value based on quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.

Level 2: Fair value based on inputs that are directly or indirectly observable, such as prices for similar assets, for the asset or liability.

Level 3: Fair value based on unobservable inputs for the asset and liability.

Key judgements and estimates

Some of the Council's assets and liabilities are measured at fair value for financial reporting purposes.

In estimating the fair value of an asset or liability, the Council uses market-observable data to the extent it is available and other inputs as necessary.

There were no transfers between levels during the year.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 12. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

(ii) Valuation techniques used to derive level 2 and level 3 fair values

Asset class and fair value hierarchy	Valuation approach	Last comprehensive valuation date	Valuer engaged	Key assumptions and estimates (related data sources)	Other interim revaluation adjustment
Investment Property (level 2)	Market value	30/06/24	JLL Value and Risk Advisory	Sales prices of comparable land sites in close proximity are adjusted for differences in key attributes such as property size. The most significant input into this valuation approach is price per square metre.	Indexation Applied to 30 June 2025 of 12.28%
Land (level 2)	Market value	30/06/24	JLL Value and Risk Advisory	Current zoning rules. Sales prices of comparable land sites in close proximity are adjusted for differences in key attributes such as property size. The most significant inputs into this valuation approach is price per square metre.	Indexation Applied to 30 June 2025 of 12.28%
Buildings (level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30/06/24	JLL Value and Risk Advisory	Unit rates based on square metres using market evidence. Other inputs are estimates of useful life, pattern of consumption and asset condition.	Nil
Roads, Drainage and Bridge Networks (level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30/06/23	Australis Asset Advisory Group, Registered Valuers	Existing supply contract rates for raw materials appropriate for the asset based on age, size, location and condition. Remaining life of assets including existing conditions.	Nil
Water and Sewerage Assets (level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30/06/24	JLL Value and Risk Advisory	Development, soil and depth factors taking into account current condition. Remaining life of asset including existing conditions. Calculations of a short-life part and long-life part of the asset are summed together to reach Fair Value.	Nil
Other Infrastructure Assets (level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30/06/25	Shepherd Services	Visual inspection of assets for current condition data and remaining life estimates. Collate historical cost data with recently completed projects, manufacturing information, and other data to determine unit rates.	Revision of useful life for assets

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 12. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Asset class and fair value hierarchy	Valuation approach	Last comprehensive valuation date	Valuer engaged	Key assumptions and estimates (related data sources)	Other interim revaluation adjustment
Artworks (level 2)	Market Value	30/06/25	Miller Fine Art	The valuation of artwork is dependent on many nuances; the profile of the artist, the medium, the size of the work, the date/period of the work.	Nil

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 13. Intangible assets

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000

In December 2022 Council's existing on premises system software was transitioned to a cloud based Software as a Service (SaaS) model. Following this process all intangible assets that related to the on-premises software were written off according to AASB 138 Intangible Assets - Software as a Service.

The software is amortised on a straight line basis over an estimated life of 4 years.

Intangible assets are as follows:

Software

Opening gross carrying value	3,086	3,011
Additions	13	75
Gross book value written off	(2,587)	—
Closing carrying value	512	3,086
Opening accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,936)	(2,904)
Amortisation charges	(28)	(32)
Accumulated amortisation charges written off	2,540	—
Closing accumulated amortisation and impairment	(424)	(2,936)
Net carrying value at end of financial year	88	150

Southern Downs Regional Council

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Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 14. Contract balances

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(a) Contract assets		
Current		
Contract assets	3,101	7,544
Total current contract assets	3,101	7,544
Current contract assets	3,101	7,544
Total contract assets	3,101	7,544
(b) Contract liabilities		
Grants		
Funds received upfront to construct Council controlled assets	3,967	4,877
Total grants	3,967	4,877
Total current contract liabilities	3,967	4,877
Classified as:		
Current contract liabilities	3,967	4,877
Total contract liabilities	3,967	4,877
Funding received in advance relates to the following:		
• Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants Program		
• Roads to Recovery, Smart Reticulation and Network Monitoring Program		
• Building Our Region, Works for Queensland. Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program		
• Blackspot, Bridge Renewal Program, Cycle Network Local Government Grants		
Revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the year		
Deposits received in advance of services provided	100	30
Total revenue included in the contract liability	100	30

Note 15. Payables

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Creditors are recognised when goods or services are received, at the amount owed. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30 day terms.		
Current		
Creditors and accruals	2,985	5,161
Accrued expenses	6,310	7,235
Accrued wages and salaries	585	555
Prepaid rates	3,728	3,662
Employee entitlements	152	123
Total current payables	13,760	16,736

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 16. Borrowings

Interest is expensed as it is accrued. No interest has been capitalised during the current or comparative reporting period. Expected final repayment dates vary from 15 June 2026 to 15 March 2034.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Current		
Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation	2,098	1,979
Total current borrowings	2,098	1,979
Non-current		
Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation	8,261	10,336
Total non-current borrowings	8,261	10,336

Reconciliation of Loan Movements for the year

Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation

Opening balance at beginning of financial year	12,315	14,199
Principal repayments	(1,956)	(1,884)
Book value at end of financial year	10,359	12,315

The QTC loan market value at the reporting date was \$10,661,338. This represents the value of the debt if Council repaid it at that date. As it is the intention of Council to hold the debt for its term, no provision is required to be made in these accounts.

Covenants

Southern Downs Regional Council has no plans to defer any longer term liabilities, and already classifies the portion of our loans that are payable within 12 months as current liabilities, with the remaining portion shown as non-current.

Note 17. Provisions

Long service leave

The provision for long service leave represents the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date. The liability is calculated using current pay rates and projected future increases in those rates and includes related employee on-costs. The estimates are adjusted for the probability of the employee remaining in the council's employment or other associated employment which would result in the Council being required to meet the liability. Adjustments are then made to allow for the proportion of the benefit earned to date, and the result is discounted to present value. The provision is discounted using Commonwealth Bond yield rates.

Refuse dump restoration

A provision is made for the cost of restoring refuse dumps and quarries where it is probable the council will have an obligation to rehabilitate the site when the use of the facilities is complete.

The calculation of the provisions use assumptions including application of environmental legislation, site closure dates, available technologies and engineering cost estimates. These uncertainties may result in future actual expenditure differing from amounts currently provided. The provisions are reviewed at least annually and updated based on the facts and circumstances available at the time.

Refuse restoration provision represents the present value of anticipated future costs associated with the closure of the dump sites, decontamination, and monitoring of historical residues and leaching on these sites.

As refuse dumps are on state reserves which the Council does not control, the provision for restoration is treated as an expense in the year the provision is first recognised. Changes in the provision are treated as an expense or income.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 17. Provisions (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Current		
Annual leave	3,065	2,936
Long service leave	3,234	3,958
Refuse restoration	2,324	2,165
Total current provisions	8,623	9,059
Non-current		
Long service leave	880	707
Refuse restoration	14,467	7,851
Total non-current provisions	15,347	8,558

Movements in non-employee benefit provisions

Refuse restoration		
Balance at beginning of financial year	10,016	10,650
Increase/(decrease) in provision	(1,342)	(667)
Increase in provision due to unwinding of discount	621	337
Increase/(decrease) in provision due to change in discount rate	268	(206)
Increase/(decrease) in estimate of future cost	7,228	(98)
Balance at end of financial year	16,791	10,016

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 18. Other liabilities

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Current		
Waste levy refund received in advance	1,605	1,540
Land Sales	–	200
Total current other liabilities	1,605	1,740
Non-current		
Waste levy refund received in advance	1,671	3,227
Total non-current other liabilities	1,671	3,227

Other liabilities includes payment received from the State government to mitigate the direct impacts on households of the State Waste Levy. This money has been set aside to help fund Council's Levy expense from 2025/26 and 2026/27. Council is liable to the State for payment of the Levy on most forms of commercial and household waste delivered to its disposal sites. The State is required to make an annual payment to Council that essentially refunds Council for the portion of the Levy that relates to households.

As at 30 June 2025 the portion deemed to relate to the next 12 months has been recognised in current liabilities with the residual balance recognised in non-current liabilities for the remaining periods to 2026/27.

Note 19. Commitments for expenditure

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(a) Contractual commitments		
Contractual commitments at end of financial year but not recognised in the financial statements are as follows:		
Garbage collection contract	15,745	22,528
Long-term plant hire	145	123
Management of aquatic facilities	1,623	2,875
	17,513	25,526

Garbage Collection Contracts

Council has entered into contracts with third parties for services of certain waste management activities up to 2027/28. These contracts include fixed service agreement costs in addition to variable costs that are dependent on various criteria, including the number of rubbish bins collected and the type of collection service provided. Council have an obligation to provide these services to ratepayers and as such, the commitment amounts disclosed include both the fixed service agreement costs and Council's best estimate of the variable costs to be incurred over the remaining life of the contracts.

Management of Aquatic Facilities

Council has entered into new contracts to manage the aquatic facilities and fitness centres in both Warwick and Stanthorpe. Previously only the Warwick facility was managed by contractors. The new contracts have a start date of 1 October 2023 and a finish date of September 2026.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 19. Commitments for expenditure (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(b) Capital commitments (exclusive of GST)		
Commitment for the construction of the following assets contracted for at the reporting date but not recognised as liabilities:		
Property, plant and equipment		
Road, drainage and bridge network	1,128	1,827
Buildings	1,368	1,220
Water and sewerage	4,938	6,670
Land	–	14
Plant and equipment	807	44
Other infrastructure	7,890	1,358
Total commitments	16,131	11,133
These expenditures are payable as follows:		
Within the next year	16,131	11,133
Total payable	16,131	11,133

Note 20. Contingent liabilities

Details and estimates of maximum amounts of contingent liabilities are as follows:

Local Government Mutual

The Council is a member of the local government mutual liability self-insurance pool; LGM Queensland. In the event of the pool being wound up or it is unable to meet its debts as they fall due, the trust deed and rules provide that any accumulated deficit will be met by the individual pool members in the same proportion as their contribution is to the total pool contributions in respect to any year that a deficit arises.

As at 30 June 2025 the financial statements reported an accumulated surplus and it is not anticipated any liability will arise.

Local Government Workcare

The Council is a member of the Queensland local government worker's compensation self-insurance scheme; Local Government Workcare. Under this scheme the Council has provided an indemnity towards a bank guarantee to cover bad debts which may remain should the self insurance licence be cancelled and there was insufficient funds available to cover outstanding liabilities. Only the Queensland Government's workers compensation authority may call on any part of the guarantee should the above circumstances arise. The Council's maximum exposure to the bank guarantee is \$942,174.

Litigation

Council is not aware of any legal action that may give rise to a material contingent liability.

Council acting as guarantor

Council is a guarantor for the following loans:

- a \$330,000 loan in the name of the Warwick Redbacks AFL Club
- a \$70,000 loan in the name of Warwick Cowboys Rugby League Football Club

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 21. Superannuation - regional defined benefit fund

Council contributes to the Brighter Super Regional Defined Benefits Fund (the scheme), at the rate of 12% for each standard permanent employee who is a defined benefit member. This rate is set in accordance with the Brighter Super trust deed and may be varied on the advice of an actuary. The Regional Defined Benefits Fund is a complying superannuation scheme for the purpose of the Commonwealth Superannuation Industry (Supervision) legislation and is also governed by the *Local Government Act 2009*. The scheme is managed by Brighter Super as trustee.

The scheme is a pooled defined benefit plan and it is not in accordance with the deed to allocate obligations, plan assets and costs at the council level.

Any amount by which the scheme is over or under funded may affect future contribution rate obligations, but has not been recognised as an asset or liability of the council.

Southern Downs Regional Council may be liable to the scheme for a portion of another local governments' obligations should that local government be unable to meet them. However the risk of this occurring is extremely low and in accordance with the Brighter Super trust deed changes to council's obligations will only be made on the advice of an actuary.

The last completed triennial actuarial assessment of the scheme as required under Superannuation Prudential Standard 160 was undertaken as at 1 July 2024. The actuary indicated that "At the valuation date of 1 July 2024, the net assets of the scheme exceeded the vested benefits and the scheme was in a satisfactory financial position as at the valuation date" The measure of vested benefits represents the value of benefit entitlements should all participating employees voluntarily exit the scheme. The Council is not aware of anything that has happened since that time that indicates the assets of the scheme are not sufficient to meet the vested benefits as at the reporting date.

No changes have been made to prescribed employer contributions which remain at 12% of employee salary or wages and there are no known requirements to change the rate of contributions.

The next triennial actuarial review is not due until 1 July 2027.

The most significant risks that may result in Brighter Super increasing the contribution rate, on the advice of the actuary, are:

Investment risk - The risk that the scheme's investment returns will be lower than assumed and additional contributions are needed to fund the shortfall.

Salary growth risk - The risk that wages or salaries will rise more rapidly than assumed, increasing vested benefits to be funded.

	Notes	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Superannuation contributions made to the Regional Defined Benefits Fund		65	102
Other superannuation contributions for employees		3,327	3,137
Total superannuation contributions paid by Council for employees	6	3,392	3,239

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 22. Reconciliation of Operating Result

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Net operating result from income statement	20,868	35,642
Non-cash items		
Depreciation and amortisation	27,215	21,735
	27,215	21,735
Losses/(gains) recognised on fair value re-measurements through the income		
Unwinding of discount rates on reinstatement provisions	–	(665)
	–	(665)
Investing and development activities		
Net (profit)/loss on disposal of assets	7,611	3,389
Loss on write-off of assets	–	11
Capital grants and contributions	(22,442)	(41,055)
	(14,831)	(37,655)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	2,044	(584)
Increase/(decrease) in provision for loss allowance	(71)	(16)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(150)	(154)
(Increase)/decrease in contract assets	4,443	–
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	44	414
Increase/(decrease) in payables	(2,176)	(167)
Increase/(decrease) in contract liabilities	(910)	–
Increase/(decrease) in employee leave entitlements	(422)	836
Increase/(decrease) in other provisions	6,775	31
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	(2,491)	113
	7,086	473
Net cash provided from/(used in) operating activities from the statement of cash flows	40,338	19,530

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 23. Reconciliation of liabilities arising from finance activities

	As at 30/06/24			As at 30/06/25
	Opening Balance \$ '000	Cashflows \$ '000	Non-cash changes (new leases) \$ '000	Closing balance \$ '000
Borrowings	12,315	(1,956)	—	10,359
Lease Liability	93	(147)	178	124
	12,408	(2,103)	178	10,483

	As at 30/06/23			As at 30/06/24
	Opening Balance \$ '000	Cashflows \$ '000	Non-cash changes (new leases) \$ '000	Closing balance \$ '000
Borrowings	14,199	(1,884)	—	12,315
Lease Liabilities	127	(158)	124	93
	14,326	(2,042)	124	12,408

Note 24. Events after the reporting period

There were no material adjusting events after the balance date.

Note 25. Financial instruments and financial risk management

(a) Financial assets and financial liabilities

Council has exposure to the following risks arising from financial instruments; (i) credit risk, (ii) liquidity risk, and (iii) market risk.

Financial risk management

Council is responsible for the establishment and oversight of the risk management framework, together with developing and monitoring risk management policies.

Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee endorses policies for overall risk management, as well as specifically for managing credit, liquidity and market risk.

The Council's risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced, to set appropriate limits and controls and to monitor these risks and adherence against limits. The Council aims to manage volatility to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Council.

The Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee oversees how management monitors compliance with the Council's risk management policies and procedures, and reviews the adequacy of the risk management framework in relation to the risks faced by the Council. The Council Audit and Risk Management Committee is assisted in its oversight role by internal audits which are undertaken by both regular and ad hoc reviews of risk management controls and procedures; the results of which are reported to Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Council does not enter into derivatives.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 25. Financial instruments and financial risk management (continued)

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss if a counterparty to a financial instrument fails to meet its contractual obligations. These obligations arise principally from the Council's investments and receivables from customers.

Exposure to credit risk is managed through regular analysis of credit counterparty ability to meet payment obligations. The carrying amount of financial assets represents the maximum credit exposure.

Investments in financial instruments are required to be made with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) or similar State/Commonwealth bodies or financial institutions in Australia, in line with the requirements of the *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982*.

No collateral is held as security relating to the financial assets held by the Council.

The carrying amounts of financial assets at the end of the reporting period represent the maximum exposure to credit risk for the Council.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Council will encounter difficulty in meeting the obligations associated with its financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset.

The Council's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure, as far as possible, that it will have sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when they are due, under both normal and stressed conditions, without incurring unacceptable losses or risking damage to the Council's reputation.

Exposure to liquidity risk

Council is exposed to liquidity risk through its normal course of business and through its borrowings with QTC.

The following table sets out the liquidity risk in relation to financial liabilities (excluding lease liabilities) held by the Council. It represents the remaining contractual cashflows (principal and interest) of financial liabilities at the end of the reporting period, excluding the impact of netting agreements.

	0 to 1 year \$ '000	1 to 5 years \$ '000	Over 5 years \$ '000	Total contractual cash flows \$ '000	Carrying amount \$ '000
2025					
Payables	13,760	—	—	13,760	13,760
Loans - QTC	2,601	6,616	2,861	12,078	10,359
	16,361	6,616	2,861	25,838	24,119
2024					
Payables	16,736	—	—	16,736	16,736
Loans - QTC	2,601	8,179	3,899	14,679	12,315
	19,337	8,179	3,899	31,415	29,051

The outflows in the above table are not expected to occur significantly earlier and are not expected to be for significantly different amounts than indicated in the table.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 25. Financial instruments and financial risk management (continued)

Market risk

Market risk is the risk that changes in market indices, such as interest rates, will affect the Council's income or the value of its holdings of financial instruments.

Interest rate risk

The Council is exposed to interest rate risk through investments and borrowings with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) and other financial institutions.

The Council has access to a mix of variable and fixed rate funding options through QTC so that interest rate risk exposure can be minimised.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity to interest rate movements is shown for variable financial assets and liabilities based on the carrying amount at reporting date.

The following interest rate sensitivity analysis depicts what effect a reasonably possible change in interest rates (assumed to be 1%) would have on the profit and equity, based on the carrying values at the end of the reporting period. The calculation assumes that the change in interest rates would be held constant over the period.

	Net carrying amount \$ '000	Net result		Equity	
		1% increase \$ '000	1% decrease \$ '000	1% increase \$ '000	1% decrease \$ '000
2025					
Cash and cash equivalents	88,279	883	(883)	883	(883)
Loans - QTC	(10,359)	(104)	104	(104)	104
Net	77,920	779	(779)	779	(779)
2024					
Cash and cash equivalents	69,555	696	(696)	696	(696)
Loans - QTC	(12,315)	(123)	123	(123)	123
Net	57,240	573	(573)	573	(573)

In relation to the QTC loans held by the Council, the following has been applied:

QTC Fixed Rate Loan - financial instruments with fixed interest rates which are carried at amortised cost are not subject to interest rate sensitivity.

QTC Generic Debt Pool - the generic debt pool products approximate a fixed rate loan. There is a negligible impact on interest sensitivity from changes in interest rates for generic debt pool borrowings.

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 25. Financial instruments and financial risk management (continued)

(b) Fair value

The fair value of trade and other receivables and payables is assumed to approximate the value of the original transaction, less any allowance for impairment.

The following table shows the carrying amounts and fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities, including their levels in the fair value hierarchy. It does not include fair value information for financial assets and financial liabilities measured at amortised cost if the carrying amount is a reasonable approximation of fair value.

		Carrying value		Fair value	
		2025	2024	2025	2024
	Notes	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Financial assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	9	10,531	3,037	10,531	3,037
QTC cash fund	9	5,248	2,018	5,248	2,018
Investments		72,500	64,500	72,500	64,500
Total financial assets		88,279	69,555	88,279	69,555
Financial liabilities					
Loans - QTC	16	10,359	12,315	10,661	12,497
Total financial liabilities		10,359	12,315	10,661	12,497

Measurement of fair value

Valuation technique used in measuring other financial liabilities (unsecured bank loans and finance lease liabilities) is discounted cash flows. This valuation model considers the present value of expected payments, discounted using a risk-adjusted discount rate.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 26. National competition policy

Business activities to which the code of competitive conduct is applied

Council applies the competitive code of conduct to the following activities:

- Water and Sewerage
- Waste Services

This requires the application of full cost pricing, identifying the cost of community service obligations (CSO) and eliminating the advantages and disadvantages of public ownership within that activity.

The CSO value is determined by Council, and represents an activities cost(s) which would not be incurred if the primary objective of the activities was to make a profit. The Council provides funding from general revenue to the business activity to cover the cost of providing non-commercial community services or costs deemed to be CSO's by the Council.

The following activity statements are for activities subject to the competitive code of conduct:

	Water and sewerage \$ '000	Waste \$ '000
Revenue for services provided to the Council	782	24
Revenue for services provided to external clients	28,452	14,253
Community service obligations	(169)	—
	29,065	14,277
Less : expenditure	(23,997)	(16,741)
Surplus/(deficit)	5,068	(2,464)

Description of CSO's provided to business activities:

Activities	CSO description	Actual \$ '000
Water and sewerage	For providing free services to public areas	782
Waste services	For providing free services to public areas	24

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 27. Transactions with related parties

(a) Key management personnel

Transactions with key management personnel

Key Management Personnel are people who have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, either directly or indirectly. For the purposes of the Related Party Policy and these statements Key Management Personnel are elected members, the chief executive officer and general managers.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
The compensation paid to key management personnel comprises:		
Short-term employee benefits	2,152	1,691
Post-employment benefits	196	182
Long-term benefits	25	23
Termination benefits	786	9
Total	3,159	1,905

(b) Other Related Parties

Transactions with other related parties

	Details	Amount of transactions during year \$ '000
2025		
Employee expenses for close family members of key management personnel		—
		—
2024		
Employee expenses for close family members of key management personnel		165
		165

Following the election held in March 2024 there are no longer any close family members of key management personnel. In 2023-24 there were 2 close family members of key management personnel of the previous elected members.

(c) Transactions with related parties that have not been disclosed

Most of the entities and people that are related parties of Southern Downs Regional Council live and operate within the Southern Downs Regional Council. Therefore, on a regular basis, ordinary citizen transactions occur between Council and its related parties. Some examples include: payment of rates, dog registrations, borrowing books from the Council libraries and use of Council swimming pools.

Council has not included these types of transactions in this disclosure where they are made on the same terms and conditions available to the general public.



Southern Downs Regional Council

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 28. Council information and contact details

Principal place of business:

64 Fitzroy Street
Warwick Qld 4370

Contact details**Mailing address:**

PO Box 26
Warwick Qld 4370

Telephone: 1300 697 372

Facsimile: 07 4661 8607

Opening hours:

8 am to 5 pm
Monday to Friday
Receipting hours 8.30 am to 4.30 pm

Internet: www.sdrc.qld.gov.au

Email: mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au

Officers**AUDITORS**

Queensland Audit Office
Level 13 53 Albert Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Elected members**Mayor**

Cr Melissa Hamilton

Councillors

Cr Sheryl Windle
Cr Ross Bartley
Cr Sarah Deane
Cr Morwenna Harslett
Cr Cynthia McDonald
Cr Carla Pidgeon
Cr Joel Richters
Cr Russell Wantling

Other information

ABN: 59 786 792 651

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Management Certificate

for the year ended 30 June 2025

These General Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared pursuant to sections 176 and 177 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the *Regulations*) and other prescribed requirements.

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the *Regulation*, we certify that:

- i. the prescribed requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012* for the establishment and keeping of accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
- ii. the General Purpose Financial Statements, as set out on pages 3 to 42, present a true and fair view, in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, of the Council's transactions for the financial year and financial position at the end of the year.


Councillor Melissa Hamilton
Mayor
27 October 2025


Rachel Brophy
Chief Executive Officer
27 October 2025



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the councillors of Southern Downs Regional Council

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

I have audited the financial report of Southern Downs Regional Council.

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including material accounting policy information and the certificate given by the Mayor and Acting Chief Executive Officer.

In my opinion, the financial report:

- a) gives a true and fair view of the council's financial position as at 30 June 2025, and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b) complies with the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Local Government Regulation 2012 and Australian Accounting Standards.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report* section of my report.

I am independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Other information

The councillors are responsible for the other information.

The other information comprises the information included in the entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

At the date of this auditor's report, the available other information in Southern Downs Regional Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025 was the current year financial sustainability statement, current year financial sustainability statement - contextual ratios (unaudited) and unaudited long-term financial sustainability statement.

My opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. However, as required by the Local



Government Regulation 2012, I have formed a separate opinion on the current year financial sustainability statement.

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report and my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the councillors for the financial report

The councillors are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Local Government Regulation 2012 and Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as the councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The councillors are also responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is intended to abolish the council or to otherwise cease operations of the council.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at:
https://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf

This description forms part of my auditor's report.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

In accordance with s. 40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year ended 30 June 2025:

- a) I received all the information and explanations I required
- b) I consider that, the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts were complied with in all material respects.



Prescribed requirements scope

The prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of accounts are contained in the *Local Government Act 2009*, and the Local Government Regulation 2012. The applicable requirements include those for keeping financial records that correctly record and explain the council's transactions and account balances to enable the preparation of a true and fair financial report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Adams'.

David Adams
as delegate of the Auditor-General

30 October 2025

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement

	Target Tier 4	Actual 2025	5 Yr Av. 2020-25
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Audited ratios

Council's performance at 30 June 2025 against key financial ratios and targets.

Liquidity

1. Unrestricted cash expense coverage ratio

Total cash and equivalents add current investments add available ongoing QTC working capital limit less externally restricted cash	x 12	Greater than 4 months	12.7 months	10.9 months
Total operating expenditure less depreciation and amortisation less finance costs				

The unrestricted cash expense cover ratio is an indicator of the unconstrained liquidity available to a council to meet ongoing and emergent financial demands, which is a key component to solvency. It represents the number of months a council can continue operating based on current monthly expenses.

Operating Performance

2. Operating surplus ratio

Operating result	Greater than 0%	5.48%	0.84%
Total operating revenue			

The operating surplus ratio is an indicator of the extent to which operating revenues generated cover operational expenses. Any operating surplus would be available for capital funding or other purposes.

3. Operating cash ratio

Operating result add depreciation and amortisation add finance costs	Greater than 0%	31.43%	24.84%
Total operating revenue			

The operating cash ratio is a measure of council's ability to cover its core operational expenses and generate a cash surplus excluding depreciation, amortisation, and finance costs.

Asset management

4. Asset sustainability ratio

Capital expenditure on replacement of infrastructure assets (renewals)	Greater than 80%	129.85%	154.60%
Depreciation expenditure on infrastructure assets			

The asset sustainability ratio approximates the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed by a council are being replaced as they reach the end of their useful lives.

continued on next page ...

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Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement (continued)

	Target Tier 4	Actual 2025	5 Yr Av. 2020-25
5. Asset consumption ratio			
Written down replacement cost of depreciable infrastructure assets	Greater than 60%	63.99%	65.06%
Current replacement cost of depreciable infrastructure assets			

The asset consumption ratio approximates the extent to which council's infrastructure assets have been consumed compared to what it would cost to build a new asset with the same benefit to the community.

Debt servicing capacity

6. Leverage ratio			
Book value of debt			
Total operating revenue less total operating expenditure add depreciation and amortisation	0-3 times	0.3 times	0.7 times

The leverage ratio is an indicator of a council's ability to repay its existing debt. It measures the relative size of the council's debt to its operating performance.

Note 1 - basis of preparation
The current year financial sustainability statement is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Regulation 2012 and the Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2025. The amounts used to calculate the 6 reported measures are prepared on an accrual basis and are drawn from the council's audited general purpose financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Financial Statements 2025

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Certificate of Accuracy (audited ratios)

This current-year financial sustainability statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 178 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation).

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that this current year financial sustainability statement has been accurately calculated.


Councillor Melissa Hamilton
Mayor
27 October 2025


Rachel Brophy
Chief Executive Officer
27 October 2025



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Councillors of Southern Downs Regional Council

Report on the Current-Year Financial Sustainability Statement

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying current year financial sustainability statement of Southern Downs Regional Council for the year ended 30 June 2025, comprising the statement, explanatory notes, and the certificate of accuracy given by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.

In accordance with s.212 of the Local Government Regulation 2012, in my opinion, in all material respects, the current year financial sustainability statement of Southern Downs Regional Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 has been accurately calculated.

Basis of opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the current year financial sustainability statement* section of my report.

I am independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the statement in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of matter – basis of accounting

I draw attention to Note 1 which describes the basis of accounting. The current year financial sustainability statement has been prepared in accordance with the Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2024 for the purpose of fulfilling the council's reporting responsibilities under the Local Government Regulation 2012. As a result, the statement may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Other Information

The councillors are responsible for the other information.

The other information comprises the information included in the entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025 but does not include the financial sustainability statement and our auditor's report thereon.

At the date of this auditor's report, the available other information in Southern Down Regional Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025 was the general-purpose financial statements, current-year financial sustainability statement - contextual ratios (unaudited), and the unaudited long-term financial sustainability statement.



My opinion on the current year financial sustainability statement does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. However, as required by the Local Government Regulation 2012, I have formed a separate opinion on the general-purpose financial report.

In connection with my audit of the financial sustainability statement, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial sustainability statement and my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the councillors for the current year financial sustainability statement

The councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the current year financial sustainability statement in accordance with the Local Government Regulation 2012. The councillors responsibility also includes such internal control as the councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the statement that is accurately calculated and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the current year financial sustainability statement

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the current year financial sustainability statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this statement.

My responsibility does not extend to forming an opinion on the appropriateness or relevance of the reported ratios, nor on the council's future sustainability.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of material accounting policy information used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the council.



I communicate with the council regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Adams'.

David Adams
as delegate of the Auditor-General

30 October 2025

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement

	Target Tier 4	Actual 2025	5 Yr Av. 2020-25
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Contextual ratios (unaudited)

Financial Capacity

1. Council controlled revenue

Net rates, levies and charges add fees and charges	n/a	75.59%	74.51%
Total operating revenue			

Council controlled revenue is an indicator of a council's financial flexibility, ability to influence its operating income, and capacity to respond to unexpected financial shocks.

2. Population growth

Prior year estimated population	- 1	n/a	1.01%	1.22%
Previous year estimated population				

Population growth is a key driver of a council's operating income, service needs, and infrastructure requirements into the future.

Note 1 - basis of preparation

The current year financial sustainability statement - contextual ratios is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Regulation 2012 and the Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2024. The amounts used to calculate the 2 reported measures are prepared on an accrual basis and are drawn from the council's audited general purpose financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Certificate of Accuracy (contextual ratios - unaudited)

This current-year financial sustainability statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 178 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation).

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that this current year financial sustainability statement has been accurately calculated.



Councillor Melissa Hamilton

Mayor

27 October 2025



Rachel Brophy
Chief Executive Officer

27 October 2025

Southern Downs Regional Council
General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025
Unaudited Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement

	Target 2025	Actual 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
--	----------------	----------------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------

Measures of financial sustainability

Liquidity

1. Unrestricted cash expense coverage ratio

Total cash and equivalents add current investments
add available ongoing QTC working capital limit less
externally restricted cash

x 12

Total operating expenditure less depreciation and
amortisation less finance costs

Greater
than 4
months

12.7
months

8.7
months

6.8
months

6.6
months

6.9
months

7.2
months

7.0
months

7.6
months

7.7
months

8.5
months

8.7
months

The unrestricted cash expense cover ratio is an indicator of the unconstrained liquidity available to a council to meet ongoing and emergent financial demands, which is a key component to solvency. It represents the number of months a council can continue operating based on current monthly expenses.

Operating Performance

2. Operating surplus ratio

Operating result

Total operating revenue

>0% to
<10%

5.48%

0.01%

0.04%

0.24%

0.73%

0.34%

0.00%

0.46%

1.46%

1.60%

1.90%

The operating surplus ratio is an indicator of the extent to which operating revenues generated cover operational expenses. Any operating surplus would be available for capital funding or other purposes.

3. Operating cash ratio

Operating result add depreciation and amortisation add finance costs

Total operating revenue

>0%

31.43%

25.70%

26.00%

26.30%

26.80%

26.80%

26.60%

26.40%

26.20%

25.90%

25.80%

The operating cash ratio is a measure of council's ability to cover its core operational expenses and generate a cash surplus excluding depreciation, amortisation, and finance costs.

continued on next page ...

Southern Downs Regional Council
General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Unaudited Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement (continued)

	Target 2025	Actual 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Asset Management												
4. Asset sustainability ratio												
Capital expenditure on replacement of infrastructure assets (renewals)	>90%	129.85%	132.50%	113.60%	97.50%	133.80%	95.40%	105.80%	84.50%	92.20%	81.20%	137.20%
Depreciation expenditure on infrastructure assets												
The asset sustainability ratio approximates the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed by a council are being replaced as they reach the end of their useful lives.												
5. Asset consumption ratio												
Written down replacement cost of depreciable infrastructure assets	>60%	63.99%	65.30%	64.10%	63.50%	62.80%	62.00%	61.70%	60.50%	59.20%	57.90%	57.10%
Current replacement cost of depreciable infrastructure assets												
The asset consumption ratio approximates the extent to which council's infrastructure assets have been consumed compared to what it would cost to build a new asset with the same benefit to the community.												
6. Asset renewal funding ratio												
Total of planned capital expenditure on infrastructure assets renewals over 10 years	n/a	∞	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total required capital expenditure on infrastructure asset renewals over 10 years												

The asset renewal funding ratio measures the ability of a council to fund its projected infrastructure asset renewal/replacements in the future.

This ratio is not applicable to Southern Downs Regional Council for the 2024-25 Financial Year. This ratio will commence in the 2025-26 Financial Year.

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Southern Downs Regional Council
General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025
Unaudited Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement (continued)

	Target 2025	Actual 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Forecast 2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Debt servicing capacity												
7. Leverage ratio												
Book value of debt	0 - 3 Times	0.3 times	0.4 times	0.4 times	0.6 times	0.8 times	1.0 times	1.2 times	1.2 times	1.0 times	0.9 times	1.0 times
Total operating revenue less total operating expenditure add depreciation and amortisation												
The leverage ratio is an indicator of a council's ability to repay its existing debt. It measures the relative size of the council's debt to its operating performance.												
Financial Capacity												
8. Council controlled revenue												
Net rates, levies and charges add fees and charges	NA	75.59%	82.48%	83.46%	84.00%	84.27%	84.37%	84.43%	84.51%	84.58%	84.64%	84.68%
Total operating revenue												
Council controlled revenue is an indicator of a council's financial flexibility, ability to influence its operating income, and capacity to respond to unexpected financial shocks.												
9. Population growth												
Prior year estimated population	- 1	1.01%	0.55%	0.55%	0.55%	0.54%	0.54%	0.54%	0.54%	0.53%	0.53%	0.52%
Previous year estimated population												
Population growth is a key driver of a council's operating income, service needs, and infrastructure requirements into the future.												

Southern Downs Regional Council Financial Management Strategy

continued on next page ...

Financial Statements 2025

Southern Downs Regional Council
General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Council measures revenue and expenditure trends over time as a guide to future requirements and to make decisions about the efficient allocation of resources to ensure the most effective provision of services. Council ensures that its financial management strategy is prudent and that its long-term financial forecast shows a sound financial position whilst also being able to meet the community's current and future needs.

Council aims to operate within a set of conservative guide-posts to ensure we are financially sustainable in the short, medium and long term. As part of our financial strategy, we have adopted seven key financial performance indicators to guide our financial health. In addition to the financial indicators, we have the above three sustainability indicators that have been set by the Department of Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience to help monitor the long-term sustainability of all councils across Queensland. Throughout the financial year, these indicators are calculated and reported on monthly at Council meetings, as part of a full suite of financial reports. Should there be any deviation outside these parameters, the executive management and Council will be fully informed and may take corrective action as required.

Southern Downs Regional Council

Financial Statements 2025

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Certificate of Accuracy - Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement

This long-term financial sustainability statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 178 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation).

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that this long-term financial sustainability statement has been accurately calculated.



Councillor Melissa Hamilton

Mayor

27 October 2025



Rachel Brophy

Chief Executive Officer

27 October 2025



Southern Downs
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Southern Downs

A great place to live, work, play and stay.

CONTACT US

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Southern Downs online



13. CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

13.1 Financial Services - Financial Report as at 31 October 2025

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Management Accountant	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council receive and note the Financial Performance Report as at 31 October 2025.

REPORT

Background

The Finance Team have prepared the Financial Performance Report for October 2025.

Report

Income Statement

Revenue

Operational revenue of YTD actual \$53.8M is \$1.4M ahead of budget compared to YTD budget of \$52.4M with the main variations being:

- Grants & Subsidies are currently \$847K higher than budgeted due to timing of claims.
- Interest Revenue is currently \$383K higher than expected due to current cash balance.

Expenses

Operational expenditure of \$38.3M is currently \$1.1M over budget compared to YTD budget of \$37.2M. This is associated with materials and services, and internal plant hire charges. The main variances in materials and services include road maintenance performance contract (RMPC) and roadworks signs \$122K, IT lease fees \$77K payment made at beginning of year, \$99K insurance premium higher than budgeted. A review of internal plant hire charges resulted in an increase, due to ensuring all plant items are charged plant hire fees.

Capital Grants

Revenue from capital grants is currently under budget by \$0.4M, at \$4.1M. The timing of the receipt of capital grants can vary and is dependent on the progress of projects. The Finance Team is currently assessing funding received for all projects.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 October 2025, Council had \$90.9M in cash at bank and investments, of which approximately \$71.1 is unrestricted cash. The total of outstanding loans, both the current and non-current portions, is \$9.9M.

Capital Works in Progress

Capital works expenditure as at 31 October 2025 was \$16.4M which is 23.6% of the adopted capital works budget of \$69.8M. There is a further \$11.7M in committed costs, meaning \$28.2M has been spent or committed, representing 40.4% of the adopted budget. In comparison to last year, at this stage Council had spent or committed 30.9% of the budget.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Finance Team is monitoring movement in interest rates closely as changes can impact Council's interest revenue. Similarly, staff are currently undertaking and planning for future asset revaluation and indexation. These items can impact Council's financial position at year end and budget for FY25/26.

Opportunity

The actual vs budget variance analysis will be reviewed by staff in relation to project milestones and aligning project delivery with budget. This will improve cash flow forecasting and monthly reporting, especially as part of FY25/26 financial year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Nil

External Consultation

Nil

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012

Corporate Plan

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.2 Ensure our long-term financial sustainability is a pillar of our decision making.
 4.4.3 Our asset management is smart, effective and efficient with robust project selection pathways.

Policy / Strategy

Operational Plan 2024/25

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. SDRC Financial Report October 2025 [↓](#)



Southern Downs
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Performance Report

October 2025

Southern Downs Regional Council

Income Statement

October 2025

	Phased 2026 YTD Actual \$	Phased 2026 YTD Budget \$	YTD Variance \$	YTD Variance %	Annual 2026 Budget \$	Annual 2026 Forecast \$
Revenue from ordinary activities						
General Rates	22,726,600	22,553,638	172,963	0.8%	45,105,550	45,105,550
Rural fire brigade levy	142,423	141,785	638	0.5%	283,570	283,570
Utility Rates and Charges	17,721,840	18,287,419	(565,579)	(3.1%)	36,564,838	36,564,838
Less Discounts	(1,322,750)	(1,332,586)	9,835	(0.7%)	(2,665,171)	(2,665,171)
Rates on Council properties	(433,334)	(420,650)	(12,684)	3.0%	(880,294)	(880,294)
	38,834,779	39,229,606	(394,827)	(1.01%)	78,408,493	78,408,493
Fees and Charges	3,494,496	3,310,277	184,219	5.6%	8,817,955	8,817,955
Interest	1,552,195	1,168,973	383,222	32.8%	3,531,824	3,531,824
Contract & Sales Revenue	1,014,354	880,728	133,627	15.2%	2,264,716	2,264,716
Rent and Other Income	386,790	431,815	(45,026)	(10.4%)	1,320,766	1,320,766
Government Grants and Subsidies	4,040,765	3,193,523	847,241	26.5%	11,595,126	11,595,126
Internal Revenue	4,493,712	4,186,783	306,929	7.3%	12,560,348	12,560,348
Total Operating Revenue	53,817,091	52,401,705	1,415,386	2.7%	118,499,229	118,499,229
Expenses from ordinary activities						
Employee Costs	11,113,459	11,395,998	(282,539)	(2.5%)	32,126,684	32,126,684
Materials and Services	14,797,230	14,031,504	765,726	5.5%	47,852,158	47,852,158
Depreciation and Amortisation	8,396,274	8,396,274	-	0.0%	26,643,546	26,643,546
Plant Hire	1,850,862	1,747,562	103,300	5.9%	5,078,440	5,078,440
Finance Costs	156,953	175,686	(18,734)	(10.7%)	863,319	863,319
Internal Charges	1,993,971	1,993,969	2	0.0%	5,981,908	5,981,908
Total Operating Expenses	38,308,749	37,740,993	567,756	1.5%	118,546,055	118,546,055
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) before capital items	15,508,343	14,660,712	847,630	5.78%	(46,827)	(46,827)
Other Capital Amounts						
Capital Grants, Contributions and Donations	5,707,052	5,234,535	472,517	9.0%	14,029,433	14,029,433
Other capital income and (expenses)	-	369,000	(369,000)	(100.0%)	(4,271,000)	(4,271,000)
Net Result Surplus/(Deficit)	21,215,394	20,264,247	951,147	4.7%	9,711,606	9,711,606

Southern Downs Regional Council

Balance Sheet

October 2025

	Phased 2025 YTD Actual \$	Annual 2025 Budget \$	YTD Variance \$	YTD Variance %
Current Assets				
Cash assets & Investments	90,940,783	87,589,000	3,351,783	3.8%
Receivables	9,071,930	11,872,000	(2,800,070)	(23.6%)
Assets held for sale	159,907	160,000	(93)	(0.1%)
Inventories	1,239,449	1,138,000	101,449	8.9%
	101,412,069	100,759,000	653,069	0.6%
Non-Current Assets				
Investment Property	363,900	364,000	(100)	(0.0%)
Property, plant and equipment	1,016,874,246	1,027,804,000	(10,929,754)	(1.1%)
Other Financial Assets	131,000	136,000	(5,000)	(3.7%)
Capital works in progress	31,260,214	15,500,000	15,760,214	101.7%
Intangible Assets	87,225	88,000	(775)	(0.9%)
	1,048,716,585	1,043,892,000	4,824,585	0.5%
TOTAL ASSETS	1,150,128,654	1,144,651,000	5,477,654	0.5%
Current Liabilities				
Creditors and other payables	15,753,323	15,318,000	435,323	2.8%
Provisions	8,892,141	9,119,000	(226,859)	(2.5%)
Interest bearing liabilities	2,098,379	2,367,000	(268,621)	(11.3%)
	26,743,842	26,804,000	(60,158)	(0.2%)
Non-Current Liabilities				
Interest bearing liabilities	7,753,820	12,615,000	(4,861,180)	(38.5%)
Provisions	15,380,867	15,155,000	225,867	1.5%
Other Payables	1,680,467	1,671,000	9,467	0.6%
	24,815,154	29,441,000	(4,625,846)	(15.7%)
TOTAL LIABILITIES	51,558,996	56,245,000	(4,686,004)	(8.3%)
NET COMMUNITY ASSETS	1,098,569,658	1,088,406,000	10,163,658	0.9%
Community Equity				
Asset Revaluation Reserve	382,365,600	377,790,000	4,575,600	1.2%
Retained surplus	716,204,059	710,616,000	5,588,059	0.8%
TOTAL COMMUNITY EQUITY	1,098,569,658	1,088,406,000	10,163,658	0.9%

Southern Downs Regional Council

Cash Flow Statement

October 2025

	Phased 2026 YTD Actual \$	Phased 2026 YTD Budget \$	YTD Variance \$	YTD Variance %	Annual 2026 Budget \$
Cashflows from operating activities					
Receipts from customers	45,394,498	43,420,611	1,973,886	4.5%	90,829,000
Payments to suppliers and employees	(38,066,176)	(33,406,502)	(4,659,674)	13.9%	(79,086,000)
Investment and interest revenue received	1,552,195	1,168,973	383,222	32.8%	3,531,000
Rental Income	386,790	431,815	(45,026)	(10.4%)	635,000
Non-capital grants and contributions	4,040,765	3,193,523	847,241	26.5%	11,567,000
Borrowing costs	-	-	-	0.0%	(519,000)
Other cashflows from operating activities	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Net Cash Operating Activities	13,308,071	14,808,421	(1,500,349)	67.4%	26,957,000
Cashflows from Investing Activities					
Sale of property, plant and equipment	-	1,107,000	(1,107,000)	(100.0%)	1,107,000
Grants, subsidies, contributions and donations	5,707,052	5,234,535	472,517	9.0%	16,377,000
Net investment maturities	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(16,438,683)	(6,359,000)	(10,079,683)	158.5%	(69,768,000)
Payments for intangible assets	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Net Cash Investing Activities	(10,731,631)	(17,465)	(10,714,166)	67.5%	(52,284,000)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities					
Proceeds from/repayment of borrowings and advances	85,239	422,000	(336,761)	(79.8%)	422,000
Net Cash Financing Activities	85,239	422,000	(336,761)	(79.8%)	422,000
Net increase in cash and cash and equivalent held	2,661,679	15,212,956	(12,551,276)	(82.5%)	(24,905,000)
Cash at beginning of period	88,279,104	63,816,000	24,463,104	38.3%	88,279,104
Cash at end of period	90,940,783	79,028,956	11,911,828	15.1%	63,374,104

Southern Downs Regional Council Sustainability Ratios October 2025

	Key Ratios	Calculation	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	Target Ratio	On Target?	Overview
Financial Capacity	Council Controlled Revenue Ratio	((Net Rates, Levies and Charges + Fees and Charges) / Total Operating Revenue) (%)	82.50%	86.70%	N/A	✓	Council-controlled revenue is an indicator of a Council's financial flexibility, ability to influence its operating income, and capacity to respond to unexpected financial shocks.
	Population Growth Ratio	(Prior year estimated population / previous year estimated population) - 1	0.60%	0.28%	N/A	✓	Population growth is a key driver to a Council's operating income, service needs, and infrastructure requirements into the future.
Operating Performance	Operating Surplus Ratio	(Net Operating Surplus / Total Operating Revenue) (%)	1.2%	28.8%	> 0.0% to < 10.0%	✗	The operating surplus ratio is an indicator of the extent to which operating revenues raised cover operational expenses only or are available for capital funding purposes.
	Operating Cash Ratio	(Net Operating Surplus + Depreciation + Finance Costs) / Total Operating Revenue (%)	25.70%	44.71%	> 0%	✓	The operating cash ratio indicates that a Council is generating surplus cash from its core operations, which suggests that Council has the ability to self-fund its capital expenditure requirements.
Liquidity	Unrestricted Cash Expense Cover Ratio	(Total Cash and Equivalents + Current Investments + Available Ongoing QTC Working Capital Facility Limit - Externally Restricted Cash) / Total Operating Expenditure - Depreciation and Amortisation - Finance Costs) x 12	7	33	Greater than 4 months	✓	The unrestricted cash expense cover ratio is an indicator of the unconstrained liquidity available to a Council to meet ongoing and emergent financial demands, which is a key component to solvency. It represents the number of months a Council can continue operating based on currently monthly expenses.
Asset Management	Asset Sustainability Ratio	(Capital Expenditure on the Replacement of Assets (renewals) / Depreciation Expense)	105.7%	39.3%	> 90%	✗	This is an approximation of the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed by the Council are being replaced as these reach the end of their useful lives.
	Asset Consumption Ratio	Written Down Replacement Cost of Depreciable Infrastructure Assets / Current Replacement Cost of Depreciable Infrastructure Assets	65.2%	63.8%	> 60%	✓	The asset consumption ratio approximates the extent to which Council's infrastructure assets have been consumed compared to what it would cost to build a new asset with the same benefit to the community.
	Asset Renewal Funding Ratio	Total of Planned Capital Expenditure on Infrastructure Asset Renewals over 10 Years / Total Required Capital Expenditure on Infrastructure Asset Renewals over 10 Years	99.9%	99.9%	N/A	✓	The asset renewal funding ratio measures the ability of a Council to fund its projected infrastructure asset renewal/replacement in the future.
Debt Servicing Capacity	Debt Leverage Ratio	(Book Value of Debt / (Total Operating Revenue - Total Operating Expenditure + Depreciation and Amortisation))	0.53	0.41	Tier 4 = 0 - 3 times	✓	This is an indicator of Council's ability to repay its existing debt. It measures the relative size of the Council's debt to its operating performance.
Other	Working Capital Ratio	(Current Assets / Current Liabilities)	3.76:1	3.79 : 1	> 1:1	✓	This is an indicator of the management of working capital (short term financial capital). Measures the extent to which a Council has liquid assets available to meet short term financial obligations.
	Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	((Total Liabilities - Current Assets) / Total Operating Revenue)	(37.6%)	(92.6%)	<=60%	✓	This is an indicator of the extent to which the net financial liabilities of a Council can be serviced by its operating revenues.

Comments on Ratio Results.

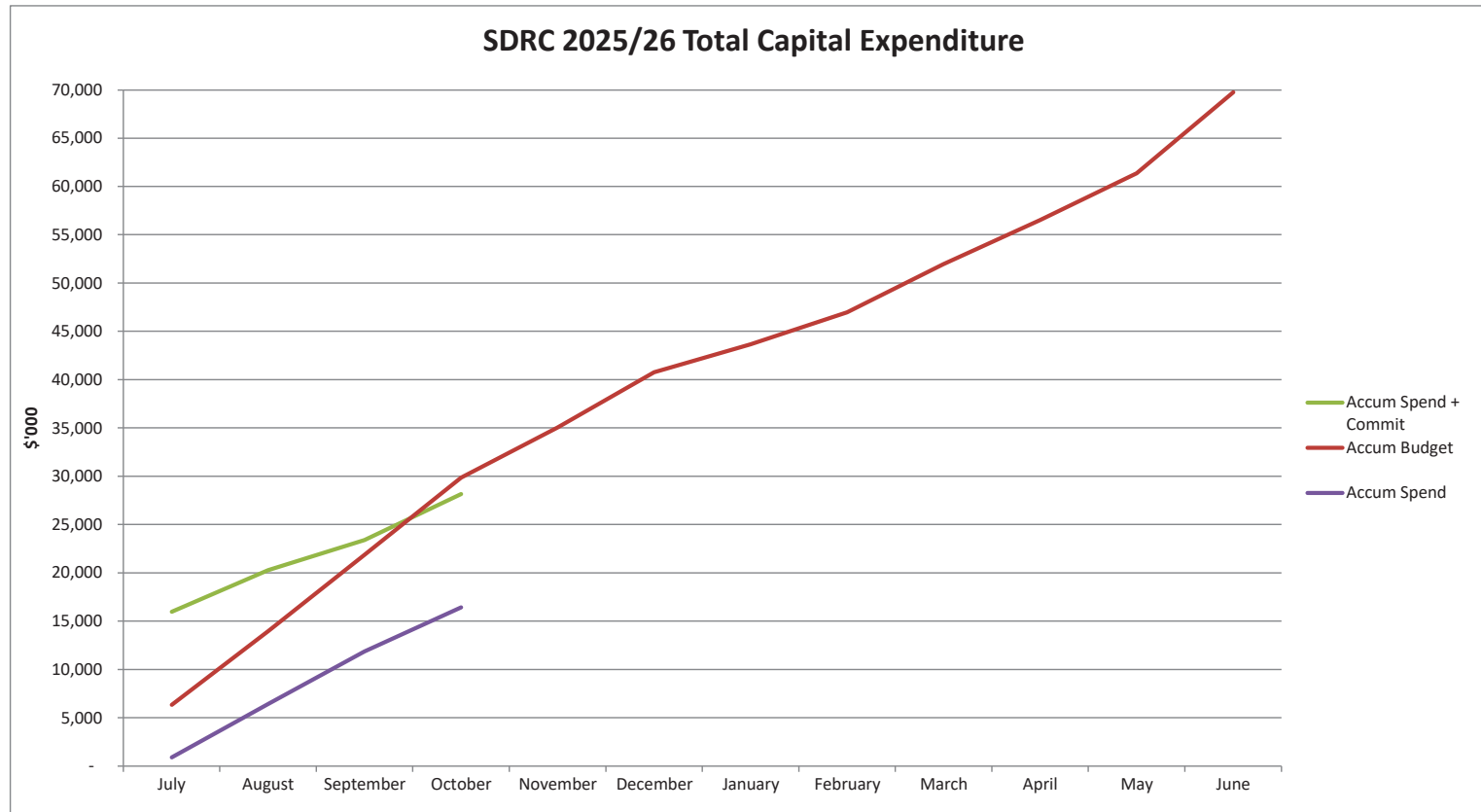
The reported ratios are taken from the Department of Local Government guidelines on sustainable financial management. When looking at ratios it is important to acknowledge that they represent a snapshot in time and that anomalies in the reported results are not taken in isolation. The targets are those provided by the Department as a preferred range and results outside those ranges will require further consideration.

However these ratios represent Council's position at a single point in time and should not be considered in isolation. Ratios should be considered over the long term.

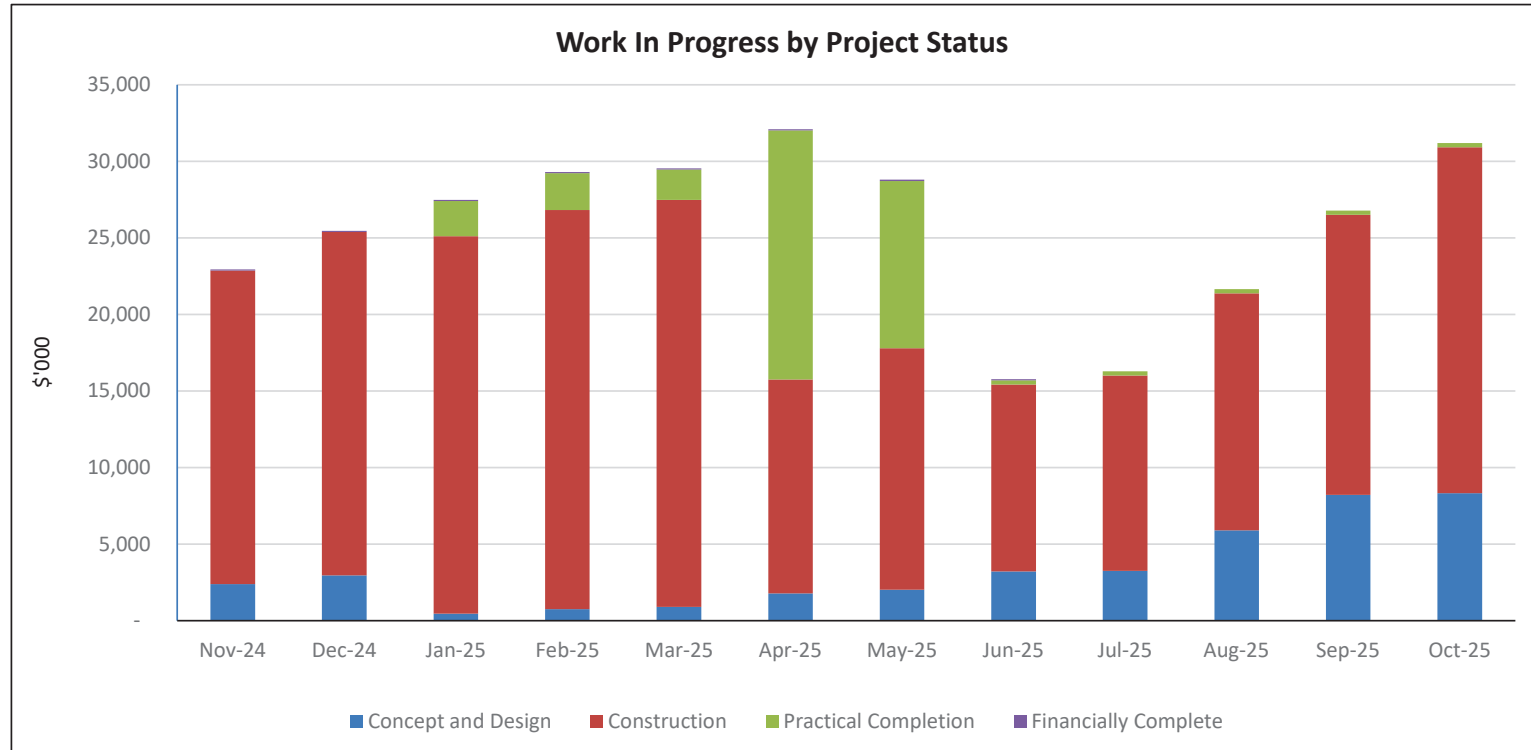
Southern Downs Regional Council
Capital Works Projects by Asset Class
As At 31 October 2025

	Budget	YTD Expenditure	% Spent	Committed	Spent and Committed	% Spent and Committed
Land	-	-	-	800	800	-
Buildings	4,189,910	489,570	11.7%	1,184,337	1,673,907	40.0%
Plant & Equipment	8,803,097	951,428	10.8%	1,145,718	2,097,146	23.8%
Roads, Drains & Bridges	24,331,341	9,119,941	37.5%	1,859,783	10,979,724	45.1%
Water	12,368,022	1,339,026	10.8%	3,427,413	4,766,439	38.5%
Sewerage	7,718,918	402,753	5.2%	1,755,393	2,158,147	28.0%
Other Assets	12,357,040	4,135,964	33.5%	2,349,020	6,484,985	52.5%
Total	69,768,328	16,438,683	23.6%	11,722,464	28,161,147	40.4%

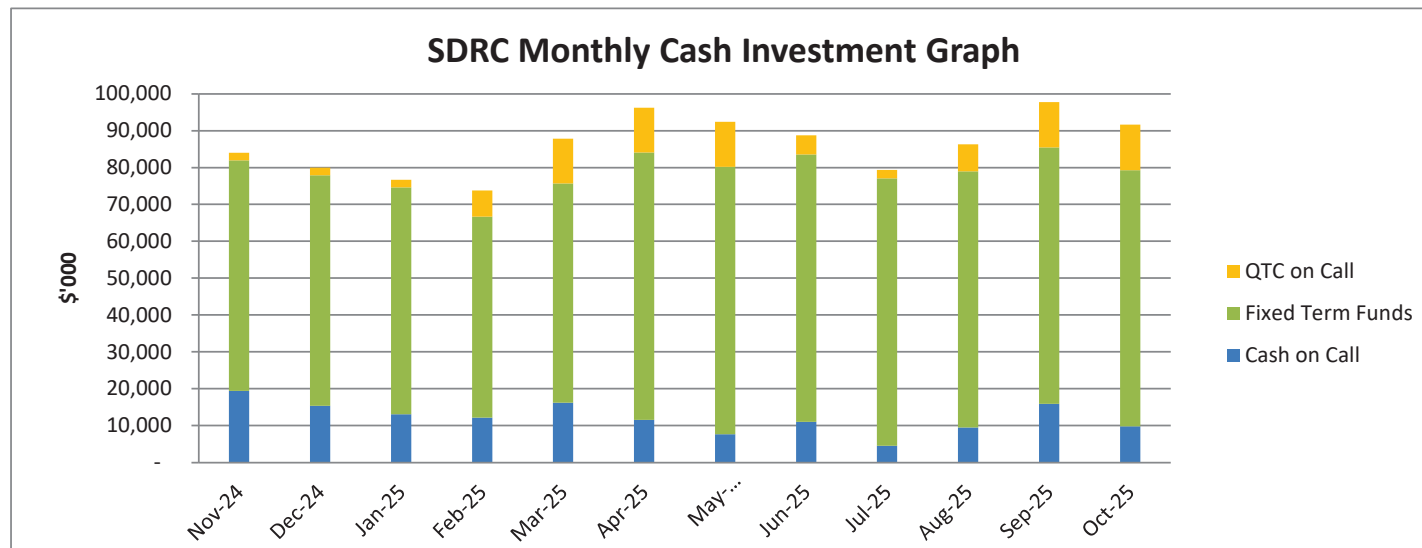
Southern Downs Regional Council
Capital Expenditure
As At 31 October 2025

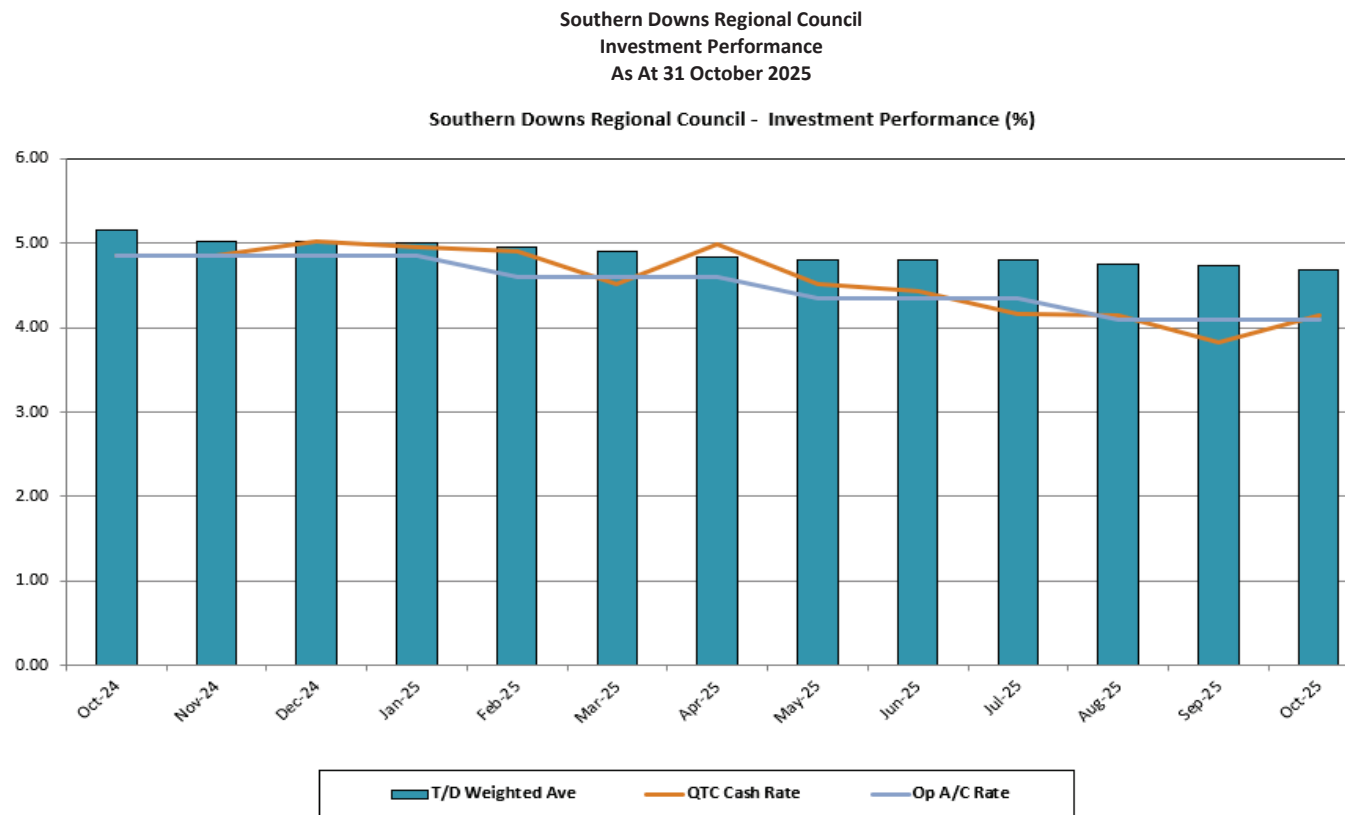


**Southern Downs Regional Council
Work in Progress (WIP) Status Report
As At 31 October 2025**



**Southern Downs Regional Council
Total Monthly Cash Investment Register
As At 31 October 2025**





**Southern Downs Regional Council
Borrowings Report
As At 31 October 2025**

QTC Loan Account	Balance	Payout Date
CBD Redevelopment Stage 2	310,696	Mar-28
Market Square Pump Station	144,992	Mar-28
General	1,049,203	Mar-28
General 2009	496,820	Mar-28
General 2009/10	75,500	Mar-28
General 2010/11	1,139,882	Mar-28
General 2011/12	2,421,073	Jun-32
General 2012/13	1,406,321	Dec-32
Warwick Sewerage Treatment Plant	111,956	Jun-26
Allora Water Main	2,695,757	Mar-34
Total Loan Balance	<u>9,852,199</u>	

13.2 Closing Report and Management Letter - 2024-25

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Acting Chief Financial Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council receive and note the Queensland Audit Office Final Closing Report and Management Representation Letter relating to the 2024-25 external audit.

REPORT

In September 2025, Council's external auditors (Crowe Audit Australia) conducted an audit in accordance with the external audit plan issued on 16 January 2025. The audit assessed the design and implementation of Council's internal controls and whether they are operating effectively.

Council received a Closing Report from the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) on 16 October 2025 (copy attached) which was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on the 16 October 2025 together with the draft financial statements. This report summarises the audit findings of Council's control environment, financial statement maturity and status of current / past audit issues. The report notes that the QAO is expected to issue an **unmodified audit opinion**. The Closing Report also provides a sustainability assessment which the Council was found to be favourable across all the relevant indicators.

During the audit the key areas of audit focus were the valuation of property, plant and equipment, treatment of significant capital expenditure, recognition and classification of grant revenue, probity propriety and compliance considerations in procurement and expenditure and landfill restoration provision. The audit found that these areas were not materially misstated, and the financial statements fairly represented the financial position of the Council.

Uncorrected Quantitative Misstatement Matter

Whilst the overall audit was positive and we expect to receive an unmodified opinion, the audit did identify approximately \$48.5 million worth of road, stormwater, other infrastructure and artwork assets where an inflationary increase to the asset value was not applied, this understatement of the current value of assets was not considered by management to be material to the overall net asset position of Council and no adjustment was made to the financial statements (either to the financial statements as a whole or to individual line items). As the materiality threshold for assets for the 2024-25 audit was \$51 million, the auditors agreed with this assessment.

Improvements in Audit

There has been significant improvement in the audit findings related to the internal controls for 2024-25 financial year with the auditors reporting no significant control deficiencies (see section 3 of the Closing Report) and only 1 prior year (low risk) issue remaining unresolved.

The audit identified only two process issues identified in the Interim report as still being in progress by management. This is an improvement from the previous year of four issues in progress.

The QAO Closing Report and Management Representation Letter are attached for Council noting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no major financial implications from the result of the 2024-25 audit.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

The accuracy of the financial statements in the area of asset valuations.

Opportunity

Business improvement process opportunities have been identified to assist in addressing deficiencies previously identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Nil.

External Consultation

External Auditors; Audit and Risk Management Committee

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Section 213 of the *Local Government Regulations 2012* states:

- (1) This section applies if the auditor-general gives the mayor of a local government a copy of the auditor general's observation report about an audit of the local government's financial statements.
- (2) An auditor-general's observation report, about an audit of a local government's financial statements, is a report about the audit prepared under section 54 of the Auditor-General Act 2009 that includes observations and suggestions made by the auditor-general about anything arising out of the audit.
- (3) The mayor must present a copy of the report at the next ordinary meeting of the local government.

Corporate Plan

Goal 4 Our Performance

4.4.2. Ensure our long-term financial sustainability is a pillar of our decision making

Policy / Strategy

Operational Plan 2023/24

Develop a Financial Sustainability Strategy

Legal

Council have met their legal obligations for financial reporting and the external audit.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Management Representation Letter 2024-25 [↓](#)
2. QAO Closing Report 2024-25 [↓](#)

20 October 2025

Ms R Vagg
Auditor-General of Queensland
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
CITY EAST QLD 4002



Dear Ms Vagg

**REPRESENTATIONS BY MANAGEMENT OF SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025 AND EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THAT DATE [up
to and including the date of this letter]**

This representation letter is provided for the audit of Southern Downs Regional Council's financial report for the year ended 30 June 2025. These representations are provided by us to assist you in forming an opinion on whether the financial report presents a true and fair view in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards, Local Government Regulation 2012 and other prescribed requirements.

We acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that the financial report is in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board and other prescribed requirements. We confirm that the financial report has been approved by management and is free of material misstatements including omissions.

We confirm that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made in appendix A to this letter are factually correct. These statements are made based on information available to us having made such enquiries as we considered necessary to appropriately informing ourselves on these matters.

We understand that your audit was:

- conducted in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards* which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards
- designed primarily for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial report of Southern Downs Regional Council taken as a whole, in accordance with the requirements of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*; and
- limited to tests of the financial records and other auditing procedures you considered necessary for that purpose.

For and on behalf of the Southern Downs Regional Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Hamilton', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Cr Melissa Hamilton
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Brophy', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Rachel Brophy
Chief Executive Officer

Dated:

Warwick Office 64 Fitzroy Street Warwick QLD 4370
Stanthorpe Office 61 Marsh Street Stanthorpe QLD 4380
Mail to: The CEO, Southern Downs Regional Council, PO Box 26 Warwick 4370
ABN 59 786 792 651

1300 MY SDRC (1300 697 372)
 mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au
 sdrc.qld.gov.au

Southern Downs online

Appendix A – Management representations

Access to information, documents and property

1. We confirm to the best of our knowledge and understanding that the auditors have been given full and free access to all documents and property belonging to, in the custody of, or under the control of Southern Downs Regional Council. In discharging our responsibility to provide full and free access:

We have provided you with:

- access to all information, in both electronic and other forms, of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial report such as records, documentation and other matters
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purposes of the audit
- unrestricted access to persons within Southern Downs Regional Council from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

2. We have made available details of all bank accounts.

Financial report preparation

3. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, as set out in the terms of the audit engagement letter, for the preparation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Local Government Regulation 2012; in particular, the financial report gives a true and fair view in accordance therewith.
4. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and reflected in the financial report.
5. The electronic presentation of the financial report is our responsibility. Our responsibility includes ensuring that the electronic version of the financial report and the independent auditor's report presented on the web site are the same as the final signed version of the financial report and independent auditor's report.

Financial statement disclosures

6. The financial report discloses all material accounting policy information used in the preparation of the financial report. We considered the substance of the underlying transactions as well as their legal form in selecting the appropriate accounting policies and related disclosures for the financial report.
7. Material matters relating to the following have been properly recorded and disclosed in the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards:
 - a) changes in accounting policies, estimate(s) and/or correction of any prior period error(s)
 - b) financial assets and/or liabilities
 - c) inventory recorded at lower of cost and net realisable value and adjusted for obsolescence
 - d) asset revaluations
 - e) asset impairment losses and/or reversals
 - f) all management judgements applied in the application of accounting policies assessed as having the most significant effect on the resultant amounts
 - g) all sources of estimation uncertainty in key assumptions underlying recorded assets and liabilities that may result in a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of such assets and liabilities in the next financial year

Appendix A – Management representations

- h) liabilities (including provisions), contingent liabilities or assets (including those arising under derivative financial instruments)
- i) contracts, events or transactions that were entered into/occurred during the financial year

Significant management assumptions

- 8. Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates are reasonable and supported. This includes significant judgements and assumptions used in:
 - measuring the fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities in accordance with AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*
 - assessing indicators of possible impairment of assets and testing for impairment in accordance with AASB 136 *Impairment of Assets*
 - reviewing the useful lives and residual values of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets, and allocating depreciation and amortisation on a systematic basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets in accordance with AASB 116 *Property Plant and Equipment*
 - measuring accruals and provisions for employee entitlements under AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*
 - assessing whether material contingent assets and liabilities exist under AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*.
 - determining whether contracts and arrangements are within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* and applying the relevant measurement and recognition requirements

Valuation of Assets

- 9. An assessment of the fair value of assets has been conducted within the reporting period to ensure that their carrying amount does not materially differ from fair value calculated at the end of the reporting period, in accordance with AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment*.
- 10. We have considered the requirements of AASB 136 *Impairment of Assets*, when assessing the impairment of assets and in ensuring that no assets are stated in excess of their recoverable amount.
- 11. Depreciation on relevant assets has been allocated on a systematic basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets. Useful lives and residual values of the assets were reviewed during the reporting period and adjusted where appropriate.

Related parties

- 12. We have disclosed to you the identity of Southern Downs Regional Council's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- 13. We have adequate processes in place to identify, record and manage related party relationships.
- 14. Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of Australian Accounting Standards

Appendix A – Management representations

Key Management Personnel

15. The key management personnel disclosed in related parties and key management personnel remuneration are a complete list of those persons who have the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly.

Subsequent events

16. All events that occurred subsequent to the date of the financial report and for which Australian Accounting Standards require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed. We are not aware of anything else that has occurred after the end of the financial year that would cause the financial report to be misleading.

Compliance with applicable laws, regulations and contractual agreements

17. We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial report.
18. Southern Downs Regional Council has been properly managed in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009 and Local Government Act 2009*.
19. We have complied, in all material respects with prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of relevant accounts, registers and other appropriate records.
20. We have complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the financial report in the event of non-compliance.

Uncorrected misstatements

21. The effects of uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial report as a whole. A list of all uncorrected misstatements is attached to this representation letter.

Legal

22. We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial report; and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and other prescribed requirements.
23. Southern Downs Regional Council has satisfactory title to all assets, and there are no liens or encumbrances on such assets nor has any asset been pledged as collateral.

Internal Control

24. We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud. We have established and maintained adequate internal controls to facilitate the preparation of the financial report, and adequate financial records have been maintained.
25. We acknowledge our responsibility to identify the risks that [entity name] is exposed to and for measuring, assessing and developing a prioritised action plan. We confirm that we have established, maintained, operated and demonstrated an appropriate framework of business controls, to cover all our operational, technical, commercial, financial and administrative activities.

Appendix A – Management representations

Fraud

26. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial report may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
27. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects Southern Downs Regional Council and involves:
 - management
 - employees who have significant roles in internal control
 - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial report¹.
28. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial report communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Future plans

29. There were no material commitments for the construction or acquisition of property, plant and equipment or to acquire other non-current assets, such as investments or intangibles, other than those disclosed in the financial report.
30. We have no plans or intentions that may materially affect the carrying values, or classification, of assets and liabilities.

Going concern basis of preparation

31. We have assessed Southern Downs Regional Council's ability to continue as a going concern and believe there are reasonable grounds to believe that Southern Downs Regional Council will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Financial Sustainability

32. The ratios in the current-year financial sustainability statement - audited ratios are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2024*.
33. We have appropriate systems and procedures in place to identify externally restricted cash that is used in the calculation of the "Unrestricted Cash Expense Cover Ratio" disclosed in the current-year financial sustainability statement - audited ratios.
34. We have appropriate systems and procedures in place to differentiate between the replacement of existing assets (renewals) and other additions.
35. The capital expenditure amount used in the calculation of the "Asset Sustainability Ratio" disclosed in the current-year financial sustainability statement - audited ratios represents only the capital expenditure on the replacement of existing assets (renewals).
36. We have appropriate systems and procedures in place to differentiate between capital and operating revenue; and to differentiate between operating and capital expenditure.

Other Information

37. We have informed you of all the documents that we expect to issue that may comprise other information, including the current year sustainability statement - contextual ratios and the long-term financial sustainability statement).

¹ ASA 240 *The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Fraud in an Audit of a Financial Report*, para 40(c).

Appendix A – Management representations

38. With regard to any other information that we have not provided to you prior to the date of the auditor's report, that we intend to prepare and issue such other information and that we expect to issue it by 31 October 2025 and will provide it to you to enable you to complete your required procedures.

Environmental issues

39. We have considered whether environmental matters could have a material impact on the financial report and conclude that:
- a) we are not aware of any material liabilities or contingencies arising from environmental matters, including those resulting from illegal acts;
 - b) we are not aware of environmental matters that may result in a material impairment of assets; or
 - c) if aware of such matters referred to in parts (a) and (b) above, we have disclosed to you all facts relating to those matters.

Insurance

40. We have established procedures to assess the adequacy of insurance cover on all assets and insurable risks, and where appropriate, assets and insurable risks are adequately covered by insurance.

Cyber Security risk

41. We acknowledge our responsibility to identify the risks that Southern Downs Regional Council is exposed to from cyber security attacks. We confirm that we have established, maintained and operated appropriate controls to respond to those risks.
42. Where there has been a significant data breach or financial loss from a cyber attack, we have:
- a) disclosed to you all information in relation to the breach
 - b) considered all incidents to the date of the financial report and for which Australian Accounting Standards require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Appendix A – Management representations

Uncorrected misstatements

The effects of uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial report as a whole. A list of all uncorrected misstatements is outlined below.

2024-25 Uncorrected misstatement

Summary of uncorrected quantitative misstatements

Our audit identified the following quantitative misstatements, which we reported to management. Management has assessed these misstatements as not material (either to the financial statements as a whole or to individual line-item presentations). We concur with management's assessment.

#	Details	Profit or loss Dr/(Cr)	Asset Dr/(Cr)	Liabilities Dr/(Cr)	Equity Dr/(Cr)
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1	Buildings	-	1,554	-	-
	Road, Drainage and Bridge	-	37,470	-	-
	Water	-	5,480	-	-
	Sewerage	-	3,977	-	-
	Asset Revaluation Surplus	-	-	-	(48,481)
<i>Adjustment relates to unapplied indexation across Buildings, Plant and Equipment, Roads, Drainage and Bridge, and Water and Sewerage assets.</i>					
	Total	-	48,481	-	(48,481)

2023-24 Uncorrected misstatement

#	Details	Profit or loss Dr/(Cr)	Asset Dr/(Cr)	Liabilities Dr/(Cr)	Equity Dr/(Cr)
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1	Indexation for the year not applied during the FY2024				
	Road Network	-	14,935	-	-
	Asset Revaluation Reserve – Roads and Bridges	-	-	-	(14,935)
	Stormwater Network	-	4,023	-	-
	Asset Revaluation Reserve – Stormwater	-	-	-	(4,023)
	Other Infrastructure		991		
	Asset Revaluation Reserve – Other Infrastructure				(991)
	Artwork	-	139	-	-
	Asset Revaluation Reserve – Artwork	-	-	-	(139)
	Total	-	20,089	-	(20,089)



Southern Downs Regional Council

16 October 2025



Ms Rachel Brophy
Chief Executive Officer
Southern Downs Regional Council
PO Box 26
WARWICK QLD 4370

Dear Ms Brophy

2025 Closing report

We present our closing report for Southern Downs Regional Council for the financial year ended 30 June 2025. It includes the results of our audit, the status of audit issues, identified audit misstatements, and other matters.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with our external audit plan. We confirm that up to the date of this report, we have maintained our independence obligations in relation to our conduct of this audit.

Our closing report is not the Auditor-General's observation report that needs to be tabled in a council meeting as required under section 213 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

Expected opinion

We expect to issue an unmodified opinion on the financial statements. Our audit opinion is subject to completion of our audit. We have included the key outstanding matters to be finalised below and will provide an update on these matters at the audit and risk committee meeting.

Control environment

In our interim report, we assessed that your internal control environment does support an audit strategy where we can rely upon your entity's controls in respect of expenses and payroll. We have confirmed that there has been no change to our initial assessment. Please refer to section 3 *Status of issues* for further details.

Materiality \$1,072,000

No change to planning materiality.

Estimated final fees

\$134,200

Outstanding matters

Item	Responsibility
Solicitor confirmations are pending from the following law firms: The Martinez HWL, CG Law and TP Fynes.	Management
Final quality review processes	Audit
Financial statements review – quality check over final version	Audit
Subsequent events update – review of transactions and events to date of signing	Management and Audit
Management representation letter & financial report certification – to be signed with the financial statements	Management

QAO is keen to hear your views about the audit services we provide and will seek your feedback via an online survey. This survey will help us understand what is working well and where there are opportunities for us to improve our engagement with you.

Queensland Audit Office
Level 13, 53 Albert Street, Brisbane Qld 4000
PO Box 15396, City East Qld 4002

Phone 07 3149 6000
Email qao@qao.qld.gov.au
Web www.qao.qld.gov.au
 Queensland Audit Office (QAO)

Thank you for your time this year, it has been a pleasure to work with you. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this report, please contact me on 0403 27 9096.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Preston
Engagement Partner (Crowe Audit Australia)

Enc.

cc. Mayor Melissa Hamilton
Ms Kerry Phillips, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee

1. Financial sustainability assessment

Councils are required to report a variety of metrics under the Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2024 (the [guideline](#)) issued by the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (the department).

The department has also published a risk framework with the guideline; however, the risk framework does not assign an overall risk of financial sustainability. Accordingly, we have not assessed council's financial sustainability.

As required under the Local Government Regulation 2012, we have audited the accuracy of calculating these ratios in line with the guideline and will issue an audit opinion on the current year financial sustainability statements. Our audit opinion does not include 3 contextual ratios disclosed by council in the current year financial sustainability statements.

Ratio	Commentary																								
Operating surplus ratio – The operating surplus ratio is an indicator of the extent to which operating revenues generated cover operational expenses. Any operating surplus would be available for capital funding or other purposes. <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Council</th><th>Target (minimum)</th><th>Tier average</th></tr><tr><td>2021</td><td>0.8%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>2.4%</td></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>-4.4%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>2.4%</td></tr><tr><td>2023</td><td>4.2%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>4.4%</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>-2.8%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>-3.5%</td></tr><tr><td>2025</td><td>5.4%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>0.0%</td></tr></table>	Year	Council	Target (minimum)	Tier average	2021	0.8%	0.0%	2.4%	2022	-4.4%	0.0%	2.4%	2023	4.2%	0.0%	4.4%	2024	-2.8%	0.0%	-3.5%	2025	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	Council's 5-year average is 0.6% This is greater than the 0.0% target for the tier, indicating that council is able to fund its core business operations. An average operating surplus ratio above 0% is an indication that council is managing its finances within its existing funding envelope and generating surplus funds for capital funding or other purposes.
Year	Council	Target (minimum)	Tier average																						
2021	0.8%	0.0%	2.4%																						
2022	-4.4%	0.0%	2.4%																						
2023	4.2%	0.0%	4.4%																						
2024	-2.8%	0.0%	-3.5%																						
2025	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%																						
Operating cash ratio – The operating cash ratio is a measure of a council's ability to cover its core operational expenses and generate a cash surplus excluding depreciation, amortisation, and finance costs. <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Council</th><th>Target (minimum)</th><th>Tier average</th></tr><tr><td>2021</td><td>25.5%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>28.6%</td></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>21.2%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>27.9%</td></tr><tr><td>2023</td><td>23.1%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>28.8%</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>21.5%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>22.9%</td></tr><tr><td>2025</td><td>31.3%</td><td>0.0%</td><td>0.0%</td></tr></table>	Year	Council	Target (minimum)	Tier average	2021	25.5%	0.0%	28.6%	2022	21.2%	0.0%	27.9%	2023	23.1%	0.0%	28.8%	2024	21.5%	0.0%	22.9%	2025	31.3%	0.0%	0.0%	Council's 5-year average is 24.5% This is greater than the 0.0% target for the tier, indicating that council is able to fund its capital expenditure operations. A positive operating cash ratio indicates that a council is generating surplus cash from its core operations, which suggests that council has the ability to self-fund its capital expenditure requirements.
Year	Council	Target (minimum)	Tier average																						
2021	25.5%	0.0%	28.6%																						
2022	21.2%	0.0%	27.9%																						
2023	23.1%	0.0%	28.8%																						
2024	21.5%	0.0%	22.9%																						
2025	31.3%	0.0%	0.0%																						

2025 Closing report

Ratio	Commentary
Unrestricted cash expense cover ratio – The unrestricted cash expense cover ratio is an indicator of the unconstrained liquidity available to a council to meet ongoing and emergent financial demands, which is a key component to solvency. It represents the number of months a council can continue operating based on current monthly expenses.	

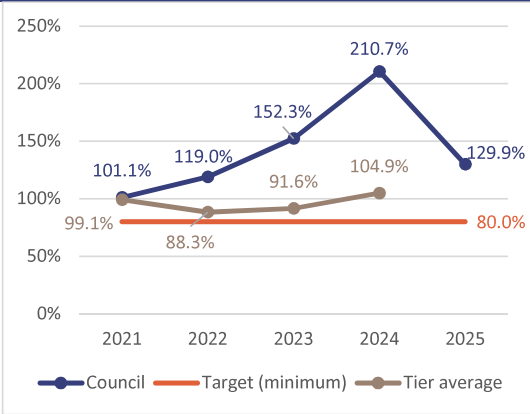
Council's unrestricted cash expense cover ratio at 30 June 2025 is

12.7 months

This is **greater** than the **4 months target** for the tier, indicating that council has sufficient cash available to fund future planned and unplanned expenses.

A higher unrestricted cash expense cover ratio indicates that a council has sufficient free cash available to contribute to the cost of future planned and unplanned expenditures such as infrastructure investment or disaster recovery.

Asset sustainability ratio – The asset sustainability ratio approximates the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed by a council are being replaced as they reach the end of their useful lives.
--

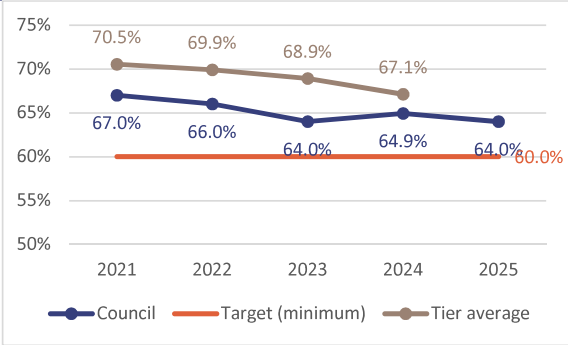


Council's 5-year average is

142.6%

This is **greater** than the **90% target** for the tier, indicating that council are spending money to renew their assets to compensate for assets nearing the end of their useful lives.

Asset consumption ratio – The asset consumption ratio approximates the extent to which council's infrastructure assets have been consumed compared to what it would cost to build a new asset with the same benefit to the community.
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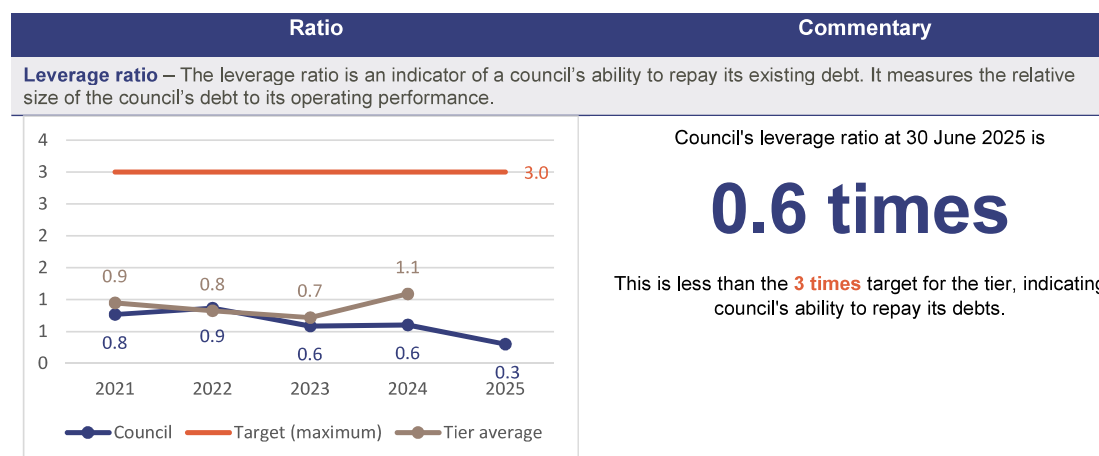


Council's 5-year average is

65.2%

This is greater than the **60.0% target** for the tier, indicating council's assets are being consumed in line with their estimated useful lives.

2025 Closing report

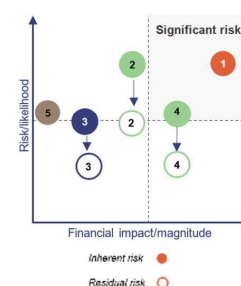


2. Audit conclusions

Areas of audit focus

In our external audit plan, we identified those items that we considered to present the greatest risk of material misstatement to the financial statements.

This chart displays our assessment of the inherent risks for the identified areas of audit focus, together with considering the effectiveness of your internal controls (residual risk), and the financial impact (magnitude).



The following table outlines our overall conclusions on these areas of audit focus.

Risk	Description	Audit conclusion
1	Valuation of property, plant and equipment An external valuation of infrastructure assets, covering the other infrastructure and artwork classes, is scheduled for the financial year ending 30 June 2025. - Property, plant and equipment (mainly comprising of infrastructure assets) is the most material balance in the financial statements. - Valuation involves significant estimates and judgements. - Limited market-based evidence of fair value due to the specialised nature of the assets (comparable items are rarely sold).	Testing performed We conducted audit procedures that included: - assessing the competence, objectivity and qualification of the valuation specialist. - assessing the appropriateness of the methodology and the assumptions used in the valuation process. - assessing the adequacy of management's review of the valuation process. - evaluating the relevance, completeness and accuracy of source data used in the valuation process; and - assessing the appropriateness of accounting entries posted as well as disclosures in the financial statements. - consideration was also be given to Council's methodology for ensuring completeness of asset information, identification of asset renewals and additions. Results and conclusion During the revaluation process of "other infrastructure" assets, it was identified that certain assets previously recognised were; not owned by Council but represented improvements made on Council land; were duplicate assets, or had a value below councils recognition threshold. These assets were initially derecognised by way of asset revaluation decrement. The write down of these assets was subsequently corrected to be classified as a capital expense / loss on disposal. Based on the

2025 Closing report

Risk	Description	Audit conclusion
		procedures performed, we have obtained sufficient appropriate evidence that the balance is not materially misstated.
2	Treatment of significant capital expenditure Council's 2024/25 capital expenditure totalled \$36m (2024: \$64m). - Key risks relate to: - appropriate classification of expenses between operating and capital works. - timely recognition of assets based on practical completion and related depreciation; and - impacts of expenditure classification on financial sustainability ratios.	Testing performed: We have performed the following testing that included - Targeted procurement testing relating to material contracts. - performing detailed tests over a sample of purchases to ensure they have been capitalised or expensed appropriately and classified appropriately as new assets or renewals. - reviewing the application of cost allocation models and the methodology for cost allocation. - scrutinising operating expense accounts for project costs that should be capitalised; and - reviewing procedures performed by Council to ensure work-in-progress balances have been commissioned on a timely basis in the fixed asset register and depreciated from the time of completion. Results and conclusion Based on the results of the procedures performed, we have obtained sufficient appropriate evidence that the balances and disclosures are not materially misstated.
3	Recognition and classification of grant revenue A significant portion of Council's revenue is in the form of grants (2025: \$22m, 2024: \$41m). - These grants have several conditions attached and are complex to account for under AASB 15 and AASB 1058. - Noted misstatements in the prior year audit. - Classification impacts on financial sustainability ratios.	Testing performed: We conducted audit procedures that included: - reviewing Council's classification of grants between recurrent and capital revenue. - assessing management's processes and controls to ensure revenue has been appropriately recognised in accordance with the accounting standards AASB 15 and AASB 1058; and - testing a sample of grant programs and assessing if their recognition was appropriate. Results and conclusion Based on the results of the procedures performed, an unadjusted difference was identified in respect of contract asset and liability balances. Management has assessed the impact as not material and has therefore elected not to adjust the financial statements for the current year. The matter will be rectified in the next financial year.
	Probity, propriety and compliance considerations in procurement and expenditure - As a local government entity management has a responsibility to consider its adherence to additional public sector considerations relating to the appropriateness of decision making. - Council undertakes large projects where legislative requirements guide tendering and probity process.	Testing performed: We performed audit procedures that included: - assessing controls over procurement and contract management and assessing compliance with legislative requirements. - performing tests of detail over a sample of expense transactions to ensure they comply with the Local Government Regulations 2012 and Council's procurement policy. - reviewing controls over credit cards and Councillor reimbursements. - assessing vendor Masterfile change controls. - reviewing delegation of authority and approval workflows; and - performing targeted analytics over expenditure. Results and conclusion Based on the results of the procedures performed, we have obtained sufficient appropriate evidence that relevant balances and disclosures are not materially misstated.

2025 Closing report

Risk	Description	Audit conclusion
	Landfill restoration provision	Testing performed
	Key risks are as follows: Valuation of provisions involves significant estimates and judgements in the areas of estimated costs and extent of remediation, timing of restoration works and long-term interest rates.	We conducted audit procedures that included: - assessing the assumptions, judgements and estimates used in determining the provision. - checking the accuracy and completeness of the inputs to the calculations; and - assessing compliance with AASB137 <i>Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets</i>. Results and conclusion Based on the results of the procedures performed, we have obtained sufficient appropriate evidence that the balances and disclosures are not materially misstated.

Commonwealth certificates

Each year, we are required under the relevant legislation and Commonwealth Government funding arrangement to provide an audit opinion on the following grants:

Grant acquittal	Status of the audit
Roads to Recovery	As at the date of this report, we have not completed our audit of the Roads to Recovery acquittal.
Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program	As at the date of this report, we have not completed our audit of the LRCI acquittals for Phase(s) 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Materiality

We have reassessed our audit materiality thresholds based on the year-end financial statement balances. Only minor changes have been made compared to those communicated in the External Audit Plan. Refer to the Materiality section for further details.

We used these thresholds in finalising our audit and assessing misstatements.

Overall materiality	\$1,072,000 (per external audit plan \$1,004,000)
Performance materiality	\$857,600 (per external audit plan \$803,200)
Clearly trivial threshold	\$107,200 (per external audit plan \$100,400)
Specific – property, plant and equipment¹	\$50,992,400 (per external audit plan \$50,992,000)
Specific clearly trivial threshold¹	\$5,099,240 (per external audit plan \$5,100,00)

Note: ¹ Specific materiality is only applicable to the valuation assertion of property, plant and equipment and to the associated asset revaluation surplus balances.

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Evaluation of quantitative misstatements

At the date of this report, we identified two quantitative misstatements. The unapplied indexation adjustment across Property, Plant and Equipment, totalling approximately \$49.6 million, remains uncorrected and would increase asset values and the asset revaluation reserve if processed. The second misstatement, relating to the clearing of unsubstantiated contract asset and liability balances (a \$0.67 million increase to revenue, \$0.13 million decrease to contract assets, and \$0.81 million decrease to contract liabilities), has been corrected in the financial statements.

Details of these corrected and uncorrected misstatements are included in section 6 *Misstatements*.

Evaluation of disclosure misstatements

We have also identified misstatements in disclosures that have not been corrected in the financial statements. These uncorrected disclosure misstatements do not materially misstate the financial statements.

Details of these corrected and uncorrected disclosure misstatements are included in section 6 *Misstatements*.

3. Status of issues

Internal control issues

The following table identifies the number of deficiencies in internal controls and other matters we have identified. Details of the deficiencies we identified during our final audit are outlined further in this section. Refer to section 5 *Matters previously reported* for the status of previously raised issues.

Year and status	Significant deficiencies	Deficiencies	Other matters*
Current year issues	-	-	2
Prior year issues – unresolved	-	-	1
Total issues	-	-	3

Note: *Queensland Audit Office only tracks resolution of other matters where management has committed to implementing action.

The following section details new control deficiencies and other matters identified as at 30 June 2025. It includes a response from management.

Our ratings are as follows. For more information and detail on our rating definitions, please see the webpage here: www.qao.qld.gov.au/information-internal-controls or scan the QR code.



Financial reporting issues

This table identifies the number of financial reporting issues we raised. Details of the financial reporting issues we identified during our final audit are outlined further in this section. Refer to section 5 *Matters previously reported* for the status of previously raised financial reporting issues.

Year and status	High risk	Moderate risk	Low risk
Current year issues	-	-	-
Prior year issues – unresolved	-	-	1
Total	-	-	1

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The following section details new financial reporting issues identified as at 30 June 2025. It includes a response from management.

Our risk ratings are as follows. For more information and detail on our rating definitions, please see the webpage here: www.qao.qld.gov.au/information-internal-controls or scan the QR code.



Financial statement preparation maturity assessment

In the 2023 financial year, management had self-assessed its financial statement process using the maturity model. Council had self-assessed its processes to be integrated.

This year, we have reviewed council's assessment using a combination of inquiry, observation, and review of the internal processes. Our review identified that its self-assessed scores and level of maturity were appropriate and remained consistent at integrated.

The following table sets out the range and average responses for council's financial statement preparation process for each component for the 2025 financial year.

Component	Developing	Established	Integrated	Optimised	Key
Quality month-end processes					
Early financial statement close process					Average score
Skilled financial statement preparation and use of technology					Minimum score
Resolution of financial reporting matters					Maximum score

Key: Ave. assessment Range of assessments

What has changed in the 2025 financial statement maturity model?

We refreshed the financial statement maturity model (model) in 2024 to include more guidance, add additional questions, better reflect contemporary practices, and improve functionality. The additional questions has allowed for a better assessment mechanism of council's financial statement maturity levels and have differed from the scores reported in 2023.

In addition, the model now enables entities to determine their desired state of maturity and then to compare this to their actual maturity based on completing their self-assessment. Where there is a significant deviation between desired maturity and the maturity level based on completing the model, entities may want to take action to improve their processes.

We suggest that council undertake an exercise to determine their desired level of maturity in the 2026 financial year keeping in mind their size and structure of the organisation.

Our a blog on this matter is [here](#).

We identified the following key strengths and opportunities to improve based on the 2025 assessment:

2025 Closing report

Key strengths	Improvement opportunities
- Procedures and Processes are in place. Staff are trained to perform month end processes. Monthly reporting is timely, accurate, and includes variance analysis. - Timetables and allocation of tasks are in place. Estimates and judgements are considered regularly. - Roles of staff are well defined. Integration reports between software systems. Processes for preparing and reviewing financial statements. - Position papers are prepared for higher risk matters. Audit and Risk Committee feedback sought on financial statements and financial reporting matters.	- Adapting monthly reporting to end user needs. Automating of reconciliations. Additional review of journal entries. - Additional engagement with external auditors. More regular reviews of estimates and judgements. More robust asset data, challenge of valuer assumptions, and timeliness of valuations. - Involvement of all Finance team staff in financial statement preparation and training. Improved processes to review financial statements by peers. - Earlier engagement with valuers and external auditors on indexation of assets, and revaluation program.

Recommendations from QAO reports for all entities

In our reports to parliament, we may make recommendations to all entities across Queensland's public sector and local governments. The most recent recommendations for all entities from our financial audit reports to parliament are below.

All entities should self-assess whether these recommendations are relevant to them.

Where the recommendations are relevant, your entity should action and close them out through your established governance processes for QAO recommendations.

Local government 2024 (Report 13: 2024–25) – recommendations for all councils

www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/reports-parliament/local-government-2024

REC 1 **Implement policies and procedures to ensure ex-gratia payments are appropriate and defensible, and the decisions made to make such payments are transparent.**

Consider the appropriateness of using non-disclosure agreements when making such payments

We recommend that all councils implement policies and procedures that specify when ex-gratia payments (which an entity is not legally required to make under a contract or otherwise) are appropriate. The policies and procedures should outline:

- who is authorised to approve ex-gratia payments
- under what circumstances it is appropriate for such payments to be made
- documentation to support
 - the reason and nature of the payment
 - the amount, including supporting calculations
- when it is appropriate to enter into non-disclosure agreements in making such payments.

REC 2 **Assess climate risks and add them to their risk registers**

We recommend that councils assess climate risks and develop strategies to address them.

They should consider updating their strategic plans, risk registers, and long-term budgets to reflect the financial and operating impacts of these risks.

REC 3 **Review the asset consumption ratio for water infrastructure assets and determine what action is required**

We recommend all councils review the asset consumption ratio for their water infrastructure assets. Where the ratio is below 60 per cent, councils should assess the need for repairs/renewals to their water infrastructure assets that will reinstate these assets to a level that provides the appropriate level of service to their community.

State entities 2023 (Report 11: 2023–24)

www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/reports-parliament/state-entities-2023

REC 1 **Manage the cyber security risks associated with services provided by third parties**

We recommend that all entities implement a process to manage the security risks relating to third-party services for information systems and technologies, and introduce procedures that will:

- identify how they use third-party services, the extent to which they use them, and the associated security risks
- establish due diligence (vetting and continuous monitoring) processes when engaging new third parties or continuing with third-party services
- define security standards and the appropriate contractual agreements to manage security risks
- establish a process to continually assess how well each third party manages its security risks and responds to and recovers from security incidents.

REC 2 **Implement robust policies and procedures to ensure special payments are appropriate, defensible, and transparent**

We recommend that all entities implement robust policies and procedures that specify when a special payment is appropriate and how it should be made. Guidance should outline who is authorised to approve special payments and what constitutes appropriate documentation to support:

- the reason and nature of the payment
- the approving officer
- the amount, including supporting calculations.

Local government 2023 (Report 8: 2023–24) – recommendations for all councils

www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/reports-parliament/local-government-2023

REC 1 **Implement processes to ensure policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and kept up to date**

Councils should regularly review and update their policies and procedures to ensure they are up to date and meet the needs of their operations.

Each council should develop a work plan to ensure all policies are reviewed at least every 3 years or when there are significant changes to the council's structure.

REC 2 **Provide an onboarding program for all elected councillors and mayors following the March 2024 elections**

Councils should educate all elected councillors and mayors on matters that are specific to their council, including unique challenges of their council and its strategic objectives and operations. This will ensure there is a smooth transition to the new council.

It should also reinforce their understanding of their responsibilities and encourage mayors and councillors to work effectively together and with council staff.

REC 3 **Annually review the registration status of employees undertaking engineering services**

Review the registration status of employees undertaking engineering services to make sure they are complying with the *Professional Engineers Act 2002*. Councils should do this on an annual basis.

4. Other required information

We are required to report certain matters to those charged with governance. The table below provides a summary of the matters we usually communicate at the end of our audit.

Matters for QAO to consider	How these were addressed
Disagreements with management	During our audit, we received full cooperation from management and had no unresolved disagreements over the application of accounting principles and the scope of our audit.

2025 Closing report

Matters for QAO to consider	How these were addressed
Significant difficulties	We did not encounter any significant difficulties during the audit.
Compliance with laws and regulations	We did not identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations having a material effect on the financial report.
Matters significant to related parties	We did not identify any significant matters relating to related parties during the audit.
Changes to accounting policies	We confirm there were no significant changes to accounting policies during the period,
Accounting for estimates and judgements	We have identified 4 key accounting estimates for Southern Downs Regional Council which relates to the significant judgements and estimates for Revenue Recognition, Valuation and depreciation of Property, Plant and Equipment, Provisions & Contingent Liabilities. Based on our audit procedures, we note the following regarding judgement and estimates: • There has been no significant changes in how management has performed its estimation and assessed any associated uncertainties compared to prior year. • Management experts have been used by management in respect of asset valuations and associated estimates. We did not engage an auditor's experts. • We did not identify any indicators of management bias. • We did not encounter any difficulties in obtaining sufficient audit evidence to support management's estimates and judgements. • Accounting policies in place appropriately reflect the accounting treatment of relevant estimates. The methodology adopted in determining the estimates are materially in accordance with accounting standards
Other matters significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process	We did not identify any significant matters relating to the financial reporting process during the audit.
Fraud and illegal acts	We enquired of management regarding: • knowledge of any fraud or suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity involving management, employees who have significant roles in internal control, or others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial report • knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial information. In addition to the above enquiries, we have also undertaken certain testing that we had detailed in our external audit plan, and we are not aware of any fraud or illegal acts during our audit.
Written representations we are requesting	We are required to obtain written representations from management, and where appropriate, those charged with governance. Our requested written representations are included with this report. We have discussed these with management, and they are comfortable to make these representations. Those charged with governance should also make appropriate enquiries of management to be satisfied with the written representations made.
Other information in the entity's annual report	We have not yet performed audit procedures to verify the other information in the entity's annual report as required by Australian Auditing Standard ASA 720 <i>The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Other Information</i> . Our review will examine whether financial and non-financial information in the annual report are consistent with the financial report.

5. Matters previously reported

The following table summarises control deficiencies, financial reporting issues, and other matters that we previously reported this year in our interim report and unresolved issues we raised in prior years.

Ref.	Rating	Issue	Status and comment
23-IR1	D	Lack of review of Masterfile changes – rates revenue Audit was unable to sight evidence of an established process and cadence of review relating to rates revenue Masterfile changes. Subsequent to the Interim report dated 30 June 2023, this matter was updated to a significant rating as a result of further moderation across the sector.	Resolved: The prior issue on lack of review has been resolved. All Masterfile amendment double checks are now recorded in ECM, with evidence provided (e.g., Change of Contact Details and Change of Ownership). Responsible officer: Chief Financial Officer Action date: 30/06/2025
23-IR2	D	Insufficient contract management processes Council did not have a centralised contract management process, including a central contract register. A contract register could maintain details such as contracts awarded to vendors, key contact KPI's and how these are monitored, progress tracking, fee escalations, scope variations and overall vendor performance.	Work in progress: Council now maintains grants register in Excel containing all relevant details and has commenced the rollout of the Tech One Contract Management module. As the project is still in its early stages, further implementation is required. Full implementation is expected to assist in rectifying the deficiency. Responsible officer: Chief Financial Officer Action date: 30/06/2026
24-FR3	L	Trust Accounts – planning balances The trust account register for planning balances, primarily consisting of Housing and Subdivision Bonds, includes amounts dating back to 1997. The total value of these balances is \$1.9 million.	Work in progress: Council is still working towards full resolution, with the planning team's recommendations from June 2024 being gradually implemented. To support this, a request has been made for a Project Officer position within the Directorate to address resourcing needs in 2025/26. This matter will continue to be monitored in FY26 audit. Responsible officer: Manager Planning and Development Action date: 30/06/2026

6. Misstatements

Summary of corrected quantitative misstatements

We identified the following quantitative misstatements during the audit. Management subsequently corrected them in the financial statements.

#	Details	Profit or loss Dr/(Cr)	Asset Dr/(Cr)	Liabilities Dr/(Cr)	Equity Dr/(Cr)
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1	Contract Asset	-	(135)	-	-
	Contract Liability	-	-	810	-
	Grant Income	(675)	-	-	-
<i>Adjustment relates to unapplied indexation across Buildings, Plant and Equipment, Roads, Drainage and Bridge, and Water and Sewerage assets.</i>					
Total		(675)	(135)	810	-

Summary of uncorrected quantitative misstatements

Our audit identified the following quantitative misstatements, which we reported to management. Management has assessed these misstatements as not material (either to the financial statements as a whole or to individual line-item presentations). We concur with management's assessment.

#	Details	Profit or loss Dr/(Cr)	Asset Dr/(Cr)	Liabilities Dr/(Cr)	Equity Dr/(Cr)
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1	Buildings	-	1,554	-	-
	Road, Drainage and Bridge	-	37,470	-	-
	Water	-	5,480	-	-
	Sewerage	-	3,977	-	-
	Asset Revaluation Surplus	-	-	-	(48,481)
<i>Adjustment relates to unapplied indexation across Buildings, Plant and Equipment, Roads, Drainage and Bridge, and Water and Sewerage assets.</i>					
Total		-	48,481	-	(48,481)

Summary of corrected/uncorrected disclosure misstatements

No corrected or uncorrected disclosure misstatements were identified during our audit of the financial statements.

7. Next year planning considerations

We identified the following matters during the current year audit for consideration in planning next year's audit.

Next year audit planning considerations	Potential effect on financial statements	Potential effect on audit
The Queensland Audit Office's Local Government 2024 (Report 13: 2024–25) noted that many councils face increasing challenges in maintaining and renewing water infrastructure assets, with around half of councils showing elevated risk based on the asset consumption ratio for water infrastructure. This indicates that renewal and maintenance expenditure may not be keeping pace with asset consumption.	Council should continue to review the condition and renewal strategies for its water and sewerage infrastructure to ensure long-term service delivery and financial sustainability. Council's Asset Management Plan and long-term financial forecasts should be aligned to reflect realistic renewal funding requirements.	The audit will focus on management's assessment of water infrastructure condition, renewal funding, and fair value assumptions. We will also consider any changes in QAO or Queensland Treasury guidance regarding sustainability and infrastructure management reporting.

Climate-related financial disclosures

Next year's planning considerations	Potential effect on your reporting obligations	Potential effect on your audit
Local governments in Queensland are considered a non-mandatory reporting entity for the purpose of climate-related financial disclosures in compliance with AASB S2 <i>Climate-related Disclosures</i> and have this audited under the ASSA 5010 timetable. The department of local government is awaiting guidance from Queensland Treasury that will apply to the state sector entities. This guidance is expected to form the basis of how and what local governments will need to consider if these standards are mandated for the sector. At the date of this closing report, these standards have not been mandated by the department of local government for the local government sector.	At the date of this closing report, there is no impact on your financial statement for the 2026 or future years. If your council chooses to voluntarily report against AASB S2, you should also consider who your report users are, and what their information needs are. We strongly encourage you to engage with the department of local government and us prior to making this decision. Planning to develop a valuable report is a significant commitment.	At the date of this closing report, there is not impact on your audit for the 2026 or future years. Any future impact will be dependent on the decision that the department of local government makes in terms of how and when climate related disclosures will be applied to the sector.



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13.3 Amendments to Schedule of General Fees and Charges 2025/26

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Management Accountant	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt the attached Amendments to the Schedule of General Fees and Charges for the 2025/26 Financial Year.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the amendments to the Schedule of General Fees and Charges for the 2025/26 financial year. The amendments were previously discussed at the Council Information Session (CIS) on the 29 October 2025. The amendments represent either wording (description clarification) changes or new fees.

Council's Schedule of General Fees and Charges 2025/26 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Qld Local Government Act 2009* (the Act) and the *Qld Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Reg) and is presented for Council's consideration and adoption. Council can change fees and charges throughout the year and adopt the updated Schedule of Fees and Charges at any time.

The General Fees and Charges to be amended are as follows:

A. Change to Wording (Description Clarification)

Page No	Fee	Reason for Change
19	Application for New Licence or Alterations to Existing Premise (plans required)	Correction to fees to match above Category "Application for Licence Renewals/New Licence for Existing Approved Premise (no plans required)"
25	Items with refrigerant gases – may include refrigerators, freezers, air conditioning units, washer/dryers, hot water systems, etc	Change to wording
26	Management Fee - charged in addition to applicable disposal fee, for management/reloading any noncompliant waste, or waste incorrectly declared at the weighbridge or deposited in the incorrect areas	Change to wording

30-31	Development Applications for Reconfiguring a Lot – Code Assessment Access Easement	Change wording to include “application only”
39	Modelling Capacity Impact Assessments (Water and Sewerage)	Amend the name of the “ <i>Hydraulic Model Pressure and Flow Test (Detailed Network Assessment)</i> ” to “ <i>Detailed Network Assessment – Sewer or Water</i> ”
40	Recycled Water	Change “Class B Stanthorpe” to “Stanthorpe Irrigators” to match wording in category below.
41	Recycled Water – Quarterly Usage Charge	Corrected Schools and Commercial Users to \$308 to match category above (from \$297).

B. New Fees

Page No	Fee	Purpose
23	Hog Hopper deposit	Inclusion of new fee for deposit of Hog Hoppers, for feral pigs. The fee is only a security deposit for a max. 2-week hire. No hire fee.
30-31	Development Applications for Reconfiguring a Lot – Code Assessment	Access Easement were lodged in conjunction with another development application element (MCU, ROL)
33	Other Planning Fees	Written Advice (Including 'Generally in Accordance with' and general written advice
34	Endorsement/Approval of plans or documents required by a condition of approval.	For example: acoustic report, EMP, swept paths, schedule of finishes, landscaping etc. (Note: This fee applies to each NEW document/set requested by conditions of the development approval)
34	Renewable Energy Community Benefit Scheme	Administrative cost associated with Council's involvement in the undertaking of a Renewable Energy Community Benefit Scheme
35	Development Applications for Operational Works	Associated with a Material Change of Use or Reconfiguring a Lot – Construction of a carpark only

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Southern Downs Regional Council Schedule of General Fees and Charges 2025/26 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act and the Regulation.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Fees and charges that are not set appropriately can potentially have financial implications with increased risk of assets or services not being maintained appropriately which could result in reputation damage.

Opportunity

With regular reviews of services and service delivery models, Council can influence the level and efficiency of services delivered. This can subsequently influence the fees and charges set by Council.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Staff, Managers, and General Managers.

A Councillor information session on 29th October

External Consultation

Nil.

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012.

Corporate Plan

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.1 Provide assurance through effective governance, audit and risk management practices.

4.4.2 Ensure our long-term financial sustainability is a pillar of our decision making.

Policy / Strategy

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

1. Changes to 2025-26 Schedule of Fees & Charges [↓](#)

Council General Meeting - 19 November 2025

Page No	Fee	Change/discussion
19	Application for New Licence or Alterations to Existing Premise (plans required)	Correction to fees to match above Category "Application for Licence Renewals/New Licence for Existing Approved Premise (no plans required)"
23	Hog Hopper	Inclusion of new fee for deposit of Hog Hoppers, for feral pigs. Fee is security deposit only for a max. 2-week hire. No hire fee.
25	Items with refrigerant gases – may include refrigerators, freezers, air conditioning units, washer/dryers, hot water systems, etc	Change to wording
26	Management Fee - charged in addition to applicable disposal fee, for management/reloading any noncompliant waste, or waste incorrectly declared at the weighbridge or deposited in the incorrect areas	Change to wording
30-31	Development Applications for Reconfiguring a Lot – Code Assessment Access Easement	Change wording to include "application only"
30-31	Development Applications for Reconfiguring a Lot – Code Assessment Access Easement where lodged in conjunction with another development application element (MCU, ROL)	New Fee
33	Other Planning Fees - Written Advice (Including 'Generally in Accordance with' and general written advice	New Fee
34	Endorsement/Approval of plans or documents required by a condition of approval. For example: acoustic report, EMP, swept paths, schedule of finishes, landscaping etc. (Note: This fee applies to each NEW document/set requested by conditions of the development approval)	New fee
34	Renewable Energy Community Benefit Scheme - Administrative cost associated with Council's involvement in the undertaking of a Renewable Energy Community Benefit Scheme	New Fee

Council General Meeting - 19 November 2025

35	Development Applications for Operational Works Associated with a Material Change of Use or Reconfiguring a Lot – Construction of a carpark only	New Fee
39	Modelling Capacity Impact Assessments (Water and Sewerage)	Amend the name of the “ <i>Hydraulic Model Pressure and Flow Test (Detailed Network Assessment)</i> ” to “ <i>Detailed Network Assessment – Sewer or Water</i> ”
40	Recycled Water	Change “Class B Stanthorpe” to “Stanthorpe Irrigators” to match wording in category below.
41	Recycled Water – Quarterly Usage Charge	Correct Schools and Commercial Users to \$308 to match category above (from \$297).

13.4 Council Statutory Meeting Schedule for January to December 2026

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Manager Governance	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt the attached Schedule for Council Statutory Meetings for January to December 2026.

REPORT

Report

In accordance with section 257 of the *Local Government Regulations 2012* Council is required to meet at least once in each month.

Council currently holds one Ordinary Council Meeting on the third Wednesday of each month. It is proposed that scheduling change for 2026 with the Ordinary Council Meetings to be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except for the December Ordinary Meeting which is proposed to be held on the third Wednesday of that month due to the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

It is also proposed that Ordinary Council Meetings continue to alternate between the Warwick and Stanhope Council offices, commencing at 9.00am.

Attached is the proposed schedule for Council Statutory Meetings for January to December 2026.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Nil

Opportunity

Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Council Information Session 5 November 2025.

External Consultation

Nil.

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Corporate Plan

Corporate Plan 2021 - 2026

Policy / Strategy

Council Meetings Policy PL-CS036

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Calendar for Council Statutory Meetings 2026 [↓](#)



Southern Downs
REGIONAL COUNCIL

SCHEDULE FOR COUNCIL STATUTORY MEETINGS 2026

MONTH	ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
January	28 January 2026 Warwick
February	25 February 2026 Stanthorpe
March	25 March 2026 Warwick
April	22 April 2026 Stanthorpe
May	27 May 2026 Warwick
June	24 June 2026 Stanthorpe
July	22 July 2026 Warwick
August	26 August 2026 Stanthorpe
September	23 September 2026 Warwick
October	28 October 2026 Stanthorpe
November	25 November 2026 Warwick
December	16 December 2026 Stanthorpe

Council Statutory Meetings are held monthly in Council Chambers alternating between Warwick and Stanthorpe

Commencement Time of 9:00am

 **Southern Downs**
REGIONAL COUNCIL

13.5 Application for Permanent Road Closure - Adjacent to Lot 3 on MPH26129 - Ahern Lane, Pratten 4370

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Land Management Officer	ECM Function No/s: 4027421

Recommendation

THAT Council, pursuant to Section 99(1) of the *Land Act 1994*, object to the application for a permanent road closure over part of the Road Reserve adjacent to Lot 38 on MPH 26129.

REPORT

Background

Council has received a request from the landowner located at Lot 38 on MPH 26129 seeking views on an application to permanently close a road reserve along the Eastern Boundary of the Lot, as shown in Attachment 1. The applicant seeks to permanently close the existing road reserve and purchase the land from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing, and Regional and Rural Development (Department of Resources), with the intention to amalgamate this with existing Lots and use it for grazing.

Views from Council are required to accompany an application for road closure to the Department of Resources. The applicant is the owner of the adjoining Lot 38 on MPH 26129 and is required to seek comments from Council on Part C – Form LA30 – *Statement in relation to an application under the Land Act 1994 (The Act) over State Land*.

Report

The permanent road closure applies to an unmade road that runs along the Eastern Boundary of Lot 38 on MPH 26129, the closure of the road reserve does not affect current or future access to any other lots in the area, however, Council is concerned with any future construction in this parcel of land may impact the flow of stormwater in that area. The approximate area of the dedicated road reserve proposed for closure is 0.8121 Ha.

The applicant has advised that they would amalgamate the area from the road reserve with their existing Lot 38 on MPH 26129. The applicant mentioned that the current area is unkept and they intend on using this for grazing and would install fencing to keep livestock in. If approved, the applicant can seek approval to construct a dwelling on this land.

In May 2025, views were sought from the Directorates of Council for permanent road closure over part of Road Reserve adjoining Lot 38 on MPH26129:

- Manager Infrastructure, Assets and Projects objects and raised concerns noting the topography of the surrounding land and likely impact of stormwater flows draining to the subject land. The concern is that future private ownership and use of the site may be impacted by stormwater, creating pressure for Council to undertake drainage works on Ahern

Lane. The Manager recommended that if the application is approved, a condition be added requiring the landowner to rectify, at their own cost, any impact arising from the stormwater flow.

- Manager Communities, Planning and Environmental Services - no objection, subject to the road reserve land being amalgamated with existing lot and no new Lots are created. Noted that conditions on future development will be subject to the requirements of that development and that there is limited power for conditions to manage the stormwater entering the lot.

If approved by the Department of Resources, the road reserve will be re-surveyed and be included in Lot 38 on MPH26129 as part of a single allotment, pursuant to section 99(4) of the *Land Act 1994*. The applicant would be able to carry out construction on this site and divert the flow of water.

Conclusion/Summary

As Council's Directorates have raised concerns and objections to the application for permanent road closure over the road reserve adjoining Lot 38 on MPH26129, it is recommended that Council advise the Department of Resources that Council is objecting to the application.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this request. All costs are met by the applicant.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Minimum risks to Council, as it is based on legislation and supports the applicants' current needs with access. The application will be decided by the Minister under the *Land Act 1994*.

Future operational risk if the applicant seeks to construct a dwelling on this parcel of land.

Opportunity

Council promotes the landowners' desire to use the land for their personal activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Views were sought from Council's Directorates as part of internal consultation.
Council Information Session 3 October 2025.

External Consultation

No external consultation was conducted by Council. The Department of Resources is the decision-maker for the application. Council is deemed an interested party given Council's role as road manager and is not required to consult with landowners.

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Council controls all roads in its local government area pursuant to section 60 of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

The application to permanently close a road is decided by the Minister pursuant to section 99(1) of the *Land Act 1994*. Only adjoining landowners or public utility providers can apply to permanently close a road.

Corporate Plan

Goal 1 Our People

Outcome: 1.1 Communities trust us to engage with them and advocate on their behalf.

Objective: 1.1.3 Build confidence in our communities by being visible, empathetic and by actively listening.

Policy / Strategy

Use of Roads Policy (PL-IS110). There are no conflicts with the roads policy.

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

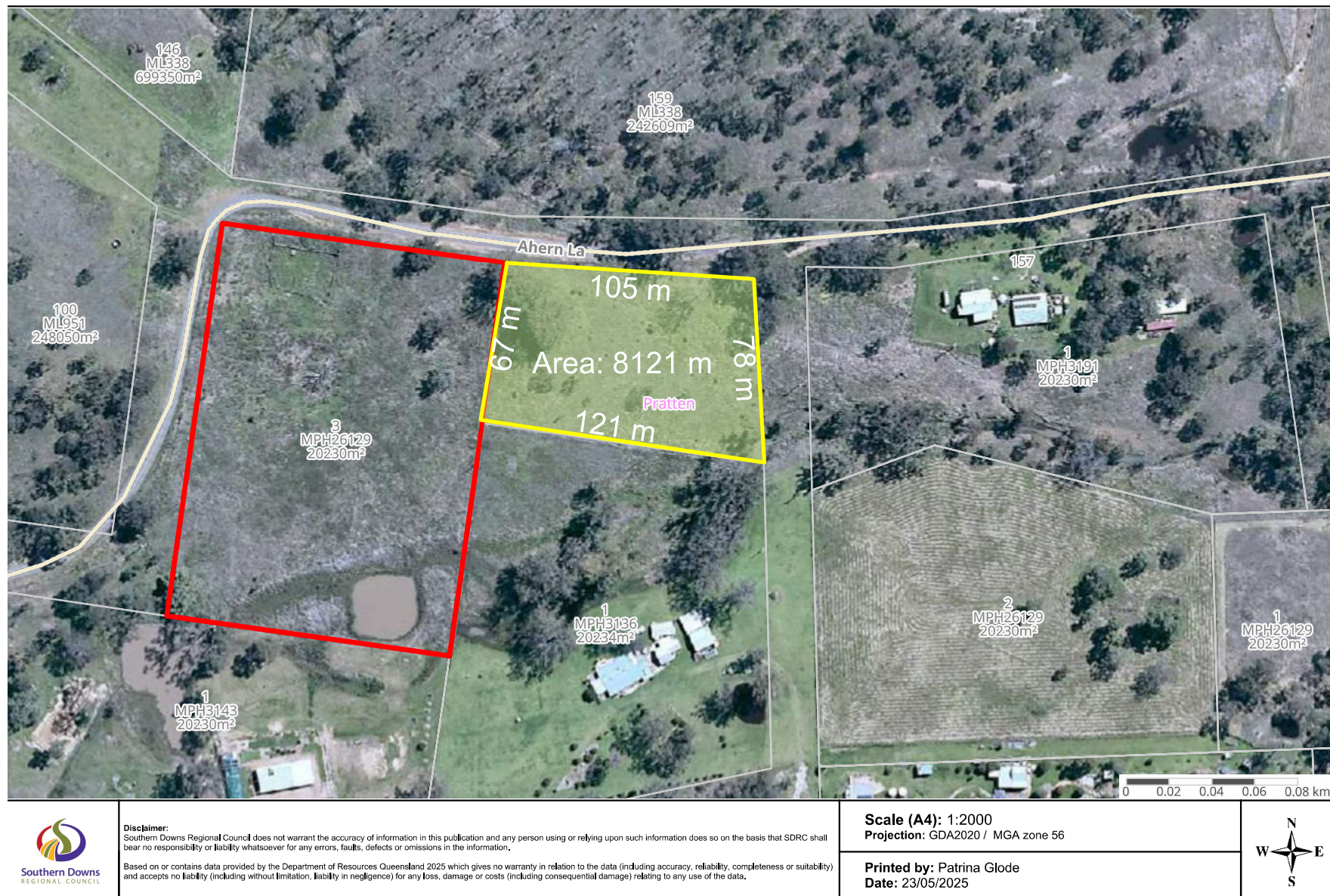
HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken using the *Human Rights Act 2019* and no violations were identified.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 [↓](#)

Attachment 1



13.6 Minutes of the Special Audit & Risk Management Committee Meeting held 16 October 2025

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Governance & Risk Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council receive and note the minutes from the Special Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting held on 16 October 2025

REPORT

For the information of Councillors, please find attached the minutes from the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) meeting held on 16 October 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

The ARMC is another layer of audit and protection in an aim to reduce risk and ensure Council's sound operations, governance and compliance with reporting requirements.

Opportunity

Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Manager Governance

External Consultation

Chair Audit & Risk Management Committee

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

The ARMC is established under the authority of section 105 of the *Local Government Act 2009*. The *Local Government Regulation 2012* provides further details about audit committees.

Corporate Plan

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.1 Provide assurance through effective governance, audit and risk management practices.

Policy / Strategy

Audit & Risk Committee Charter

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes of the Special Meeting of Audit and Risk Management Committee held 16 October 2025 [↓](#)



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 16 OCTOBER 2025



ORDER OF BUSINESS:

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4.2	Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025	2
5.	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	2
5.1	Audit & Risk Management Committee Meeting – 18 September 2025	2
6.	BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES – SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS	2
7	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S UPDATE	3
8.	NEXT MEETINGS	3
	February 2026	
9.	CLOSURE	3



**Minutes of the Special Meeting
Held at 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on 16 October 2025 at 9:00 AM**

MEETING WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

The Chair declared the meeting open 9:02am.

1. PRESENT

Committee Members

Mayor Hamilton

Via Microsoft Teams:

Kerry Phillips (Chairperson), Cr Joel Richters and Mel Jacobs.

Present Observers:

Cr Sheryl Windle (Deputy Mayor)
Rachel Brophy (Chief Executive Officer),
Dean Frost (General Manager Corporate Services)
Anthony Bigby (Manager Governance)
Jon Charles (Proxy for General Manager Infrastructure, Assets & Projects)
Helen Gross (Acting Chief Financial Officer)
Bruce Preston (Crowes - External Auditor)
Dianna Keir (Minute taker)

Observers via Microsoft Teams

David Adams (Queensland Audit Office)

2. APOLOGIES

Elizabeth (Liz) Alley (Tenterfield Shire Council).
Tony Trace

Observer - Dyan Currie (Acting Director Planning & Environmental Services)
Observer - Carolyn Eagle (Pacifica – Internal Auditors)

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

NIL

4. BUDGETING & FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 Queensland Audit Office - Closing Report

Resolution

Moved Chair K Phillips

Seconded Ms M Jacobs

THAT the Audit & Risk Management Committee receive and note the 2025 Closing Report as prepared by Crowe Australasia on behalf of QAO.

Carried



4.2 Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Resolution

Moved Chair K Phillips

Seconded Ms M Jacobs

THAT the Audit & Risk Management Committee:

1. Receive the Audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025;
2. Endorse the contents of the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 prior to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) signing the Management Certificate, subject to any further changes endorsed by the Queensland Audit Office.

Carried

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 Audit & Risk Management Committee Meeting – 18 September 2025

Resolution

Moved Chair K Phillips

Seconded Councillor M Hamilton

THAT the minutes of the Audit & Risk Management Committee Meeting held on Thursday 18 September 2025 be adopted.

Carried

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES – Summary of Action Points

Status	Issue No	Meeting Date	Detail	Target Due Date	Responsible Officer	Revised Completion Date	Comments
Incomplete	343	Jan-25	ICT - Project Management	Apr-25	ICT	Sep-25	The Chair requested detailed reporting be brought to the Committee specific to the project
Incomplete	349	Jun-25	Asset Management Road Map	Sep-25	MASP	Feb-26	That the Asset Management Roadmap and status update be presented at the September 2025 meeting.
Incomplete	352	Sep-25	Clarification sought if previously unidentified buildings have been represented on Council's asset register	Feb-26	MASP	Feb-26	

Item 343 Amended revision date to February 2026

0922 Meeting moved into confidential



7 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S UPDATE

The Committee noted the verbal update provided by the Chief Executive Officer.

8. NEXT MEETINGS

February 2026

9. CLOSURE

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:43 am.

14. INFRASTRUCTURE, ASSETS AND PROJECTS REPORTS

14.1 26_023 - McEvoy Street SPS Sewer Rising Main Replacement (Design & Construct)

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Water Capital Delivery - Major Maintenance Delivery	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Award the contract to Newlands Civil Construction for the value of \$3,093,487.81 ex GST over 2 Financial Years.
2. Allocate funding of \$2.560,000 in the 2026/27 Financial Year to be endorsed in the future budget.
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into any variations to the contract terms as deemed necessary for the duration of the contract.

REPORT

Background

The existing rising main was built in 1971 and is approaching its end of life.

The McEvoy Street SPS is a critical asset that receives flow from the industrial estate, sale yards and Morgan Park, an area that has undergone considerable growth.

The current system has the rising main discharging into the Condamine Street SPS catchment sewer main where the Percy Street SPS also discharges into.

The sewer main has become a chokepoint in the network and is now subject to regular overflows during peak wet weather events.

The assessed risk of failure has also subsequently increased and without renewal and upgrade will inhibit potential new growth.

Report

The Tender was advertised after approval by Procurement for 47 days from 21 August 2025 to 7 October 2025.

Tenders were received and assessed by an internal expert panel from:

Newlands Civil Construction (score of 84.3 by panel)
Company B (Score of 82 by panel)
Company C (Score of 62.3 by Panel)

Newlands Civil Construction had the highest overall score with the best value-for-money. They showed a good understanding of the project and Council's requirements. They have extensive experience in working with Council on similar projects.

Conclusion/Summary

Newlands Civil Construction had the highest overall score with the best value-for-money. They showed a good understanding of the project and Council's requirements. They have extensive experience in working with Council on similar projects.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All tenders were over the budget set for 25/26 for this project. The project will run over 25/26 and 26/27 financial years over ~10 months. Due to the nature of the project, the expected total cost is \$3,560,000.00, allowing 15% contingency. Expected expenditure will be approximately \$1m in FY25/26 and \$2.56m in FY 26/27, to be included in the budget bids currently being prepared. There will be no increase required in the budgeted amount in FY25/26 as \$1.2m was budgeted. Money will be available in FY26/27 from other lower priority water renewal projects in the 10-year Plan as a focus will be on design works over construction to ensure as many shovel-ready projects as possible are available to put forward for any available funding opportunities arise. The reallocation of budget in the FY 26/27 forward plan was based on the current risk profile of not completing this project and the project having a higher priority score than previous projects envisaged. There is also risk of significant capital increases if the entire project is not contracted now but delayed or undertaken in 2 parts.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

The largest risk lies with not carrying out the works, which makes environmental overflows much more likely as the infrastructure continues to deteriorate and restricts development growth in the catchment area by causing a bottleneck. This would lead to reputational risk for Council and possibly risks of being fined for environmental breaches.

The project itself entails some risk. The geotechnical investigations flag that there may be delays due to latent conditions. Extended wet weather could also cause delays. These will extend the completion time of the project with reputational and cost consequences likely.

Early consultation will take place with TMR and QR for approvals to cross land under their control once approval is given. This is planned to minimize risk due to delays in approvals.

Some portions of the project may use trenchless excavation to mitigate, as much as reasonably possible, the inconvenience to local businesses and residence during construction.

The tenders were higher than initial estimates but also include capacity upgrades to mitigate current overflow risks and allow for future growth. The increased tender prices are consistent with recent experiences in the specialized area of delivering water and sewerage infrastructure. Costs are increasing at a high rate, as they have been for some time. A 15% contingency has been allowed, but there is a high risk of further price escalation, especially if works are deferred or split into future contracts of work.

Opportunity

In replacing this infrastructure to ensure reliable service and protect the environment, the opportunity has been taken to increase capacity of the infrastructure to facilitate development growth in the catchment.

In FY26/27 the Water Capital team are concentrating on design works to prepare as many cases and designs as possible to take advantage of possible upcoming external funding opportunities. These are usually completed at around 10% of the costs of actual construction projects and will free up funds in next year's budget to complete the works that are planned to carry into that year. This project is also a higher priority score than previous planned works due to the risks already highlighted.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Internally, Operational staff were consulted in relation to asset condition and issues they were facing, and Works Department were consulted on road crossings and culverts.

Additional consultation with Finance Department due to due to multi-year funding in FY 26/27.

Consultation with Planning to identify infrastructure growth constraints in the current network.

Council Information Session 5 November 2025.

External Consultation

External consultation has been limited to DBYD investigations for the route to establish location of underground assets before route selection and investigations commence.

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

The Environmental Protection Act 1994 and associated revisions and regulations.

Corporate Plan

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.3 Our asset management is smart, effective and efficient with robust project selection pathways.

Outcome: 4.1 Our customers want to do business with us.

Objective: 4.1.3 We "get stuff done" and are solution seekers.

Goal 2 Our Places

Outcome: 2.2 Public places, services and facilities are accessible, sustainable and cost effective.

Objective: 2.2.1 Facilitate and plan for safe, accessible and affordable infrastructure, housing, health and communication services for the community, visitors and industry.

Policy / Strategy

Sewer Infrastructure Policy

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

15. COMMUNITIES, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORTS

15.1 Amended Planning Protocols Policy

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Manager Planning and Development	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt the amended Planning Protocols Policy as presented.

REPORT

Background

Policies are a major component of the governance framework for Councils and support the strategic direction including providing guidance to the decision-making process.

Earlier in 2025, the Queensland Government enacted the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, alongside updates to the *Planning Regulation 2017*.

These reforms significantly affect the assessment and development process for renewable energy projects, specifically wind and large-scale solar farms.

The changes reflect a growing emphasis on **community engagement, social impact, and regional benefit sharing**.

For Southern Downs Regional Council (SDRC), these changes present both regulatory responsibilities and strategic opportunities.

The reforms introduce four major changes relevant to Council:

- Social Impact Assessments (SIAs):** Proponents must prepare SIAs before lodging development applications with the State Government. SIAs must include analysis of workforce, housing and accommodation, economic and social impacts, and require authentic community and stakeholder engagement. Councils will have a role in reviewing and responding to these assessments.
- Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs):** Proponents must negotiate CBAs with the relevant local government before lodging applications with the State Government. CBAs aim to secure tangible benefits for host communities, such as local infrastructure, workforce development, or amenity improvements.
- Impact Assessable Development:** Wind and large-scale solar farms are now classified as impact assessable under the *Planning Regulation 2017*. This change triggers public notification, third-party appeal rights, and a more transparent assessment process. SDRC must manage and support this process locally.

4. **State-Led Assessment:** For consistency across Queensland, the State Government will act as the assessment manager for large-scale solar farms and wind farms. However, Council still plays a vital advisory and community advocacy role during State assessment processes.

Report

The purpose of the Planning Protocols Policy is to manage the participation of various stakeholders within development application and strategic planning processes. The policy provides clear guidance on the various roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved with planning processes, including the development of planning policy and determination of development applications.

The key change to the amended Planning Protocols Policy is the inclusion of section 1.1 within Appendix 7.1, which relates to the legislation changes specific to renewable energy projects.

It is Appendices 7.1 and 7.2 which clearly outline the roles of each stakeholder within the planning stages. Appendix 7.3 outlines the processes for meetings and exchanges, both when there is no application lodged and when an application has been lodged, including pre-lodgment meetings.

The original Planning Protocols Policy commenced in December 2024 and was aimed to provide clear guidance on the various roles and responsibilities for stakeholders involved in all aspects of planning. The amended Planning Protocols Policy will continue to deliver on this aim, by providing additional clarity and ensuring the legislative amendments are appropriately reflected.

Conclusion/Summary

That Council adopt the amended Planning Protocols Policy as presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Ineffective policy implementation due to a variety of potential impacts, such as resources, processes, understanding.

Opportunity

The policy provides clear guidance to all stakeholders within the development application and strategic planning processes.

Improved and clear business processes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

A briefing relating to the original Planning Protocols Policy was provided at the Councillor Information Session on 27 November 2024.

A briefing on the amendments to the Planning Protocols Policy was provided at the Councillor Information Session held on 5 November 2025.

External Consultation

Nil

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Planning Act 2016

Planning Regulation 2017

Corporate Plan

Goal 3 Our Prosperity

Outcome: 3.3 The Southern Downs is a destination of choice for business and visitors.

Objective: 3.3.1 Establish a reputation for working collaboratively with developers to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes.

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.1 Our customers want to do business with us.

Objective: 4.1.1 Deliver contemporary customer service experiences that align with the expectations of our customers and the community

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.1 Provide assurance through effective governance, audit and risk management practices.

Outcome: 4.5 We have genuine and effective partnerships.

Objective: 4.5.1 We act in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.

Outcome: 4.6 Our leaders are authentic.

Objective: 4.6.1 Our elected members are collaborative and actively work with Executive Management to deliver desired outcomes.

Policy / Strategy

Planning Protocol Policy

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Planning Protocols Policy PL-142 [↓](#)

PLANNING PROTOCOLS POLICY

PL-142

PLANNING PROTOCOLS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER	PL-142
DIRECTORATE:	Communities, Planning and Environmental Services
SECTION:	Planning and Development
RESPONSIBLE MANAGER:	Manager Planning and Development
DATE ADOPTED:	18 December 2024
DATE TO BE REVIEWED:	6 November 2026
DATE REVIEWED:	6 November 2025
APPROVED BY:	

REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
18 Dec 2024	1	Adopted by Council.
6 Nov 2025	2	Changes reflect Councillor portfolio changes and amendments to the planning legislation.



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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to manage the participation of various stakeholders within development application and plan making processes.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, Councillors and the Councillor Advisor, and is consistent with the legislative requirements relating to councillors in the *Local Government Act 2009*, the *Planning Act 2016* and the *Integrity Act 2009*.

This policy does not apply to social engagements that occur from time to time between Councillors, developers or submitters. However, Councillors should carefully consider the implications of social engagements with these persons and be mindful at all times of their obligations under the *Local Government Act 2009* and the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland.

This policy also applies to Councillor interactions with the community related to the making of planning instruments such as planning scheme amendments, new planning scheme preparation, infrastructures charges resolutions, neighbourhood/local area plans or the like.

3 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Planning Act 2016, Chapters 2 and 3*
- *Integrity Act 2009*
- *Public Records Act 2002*

4 POLICY DETAILS

4.1 POLICY STATEMENT

- (1) The ability of members of the community to discuss matters of interest in an open and transparent way with Councillors, and Council itself, is vital to efficient and effective Local Government.
- (2) Contact with Councillors is undertaken by many people in the community in relation to a broad range of matters. Lobbyists, developers and submitters seek access to Councillors to discuss potential and existing development applications and land use policy matters. The public has a clear expectation that such contact is carried out ethically and transparently.
- (3) It is always the aim of Council that all such interactions and any decisions relating to planning and development matters are legal, ethical and impartial. Such principles are reflected in section 4 the *Local Government Act 2009* (i.e. the “local government principles”) and section 12 of that Act (the responsibilities of Councillors).
- (4) This policy has been developed to provide clear guidance of the various roles and responsibilities involved with planning and development processes, including the development of planning policy and determination of development applications.



- (5) Council has delegated to the Chief Executive Officer powers under the *Planning Act 2016* to decide development applications. Some of these powers have then been subdelegated to appropriate employees.
- (6) The *Local Government Act 2009* outlines the particular requirements for Councillors in relation to managing prescribed conflicts of interests and declarable conflict of interests. This policy will also assist Councillors to avoid any potential conflicts of interests relating to development applications made to Council.
- (7) Council will also, from time to time, make or amend its Local Planning Instruments relevant to the regulation and assessment of development. This policy assists the stakeholders in determining when and how interactions between the relevant stakeholders should take place.
- (8) Appendix 1 outlines the roles of each stakeholder in the plan making processes and responsibilities for same, to ensure good governance and decision making.
- (9) Appendix 2 outlines the roles of each stakeholder in the development application processes and responsibilities for same, to ensure good governance and decision making.
- (10) Appendix 3 outlines the guidelines for Councillor interactions with Developers, Lobbyists and Submitters.
- (11) If a Councillor has a prescribed or a declarable conflict of interest in relation to a development application which is under assessment they must not:
 - (a) Interact with a developer or submitter in relation to that matter; or
 - (b) Influence, attempt to influence or discuss the matter with another Councillor who is partly responsible, or an employee who is wholly or partly responsible for deciding the matter.
- (12) Councillors and employees are required to adhere to the limits of their roles outlined in the Appendix. They will also assist other external parties to understand and act within the roles ascribed to them.

4.2 DOCUMENT CONTROLS

Council will review this policy biennially or in response to changes in law or best practice.

5 DEFINITIONS

TERM	MEANING
Applicant	The applicant for the application, as per the definition outlined in the <i>Planning Act 2016</i> .
Councillor	The Mayor and Councillors of the Southern Downs Regional Council.
Councillor Advisor	An appropriately qualified person appointed to assist the Mayor in preforming their responsibilities under the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Employee	A local government employee as defined pursuant to the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Development application	The meaning in the <i>Planning Act 2016</i> .
Developer	An applicant for a development approval, development application or a prospective applicant for a development approval, their advisors, and representatives including consultants. It includes any lobbyist acting on behalf of a developer. If the applicant is a body corporate, the term includes office holders and employees of the applicant. If the applicant is a partnership, the term includes partners and employees of the applicant. It also includes the owner of land that is the subject of a development application or prospective development application.

TERM	MEANING
Interaction	An engagement in relation to a development matter (including face to face, virtual or by telephone).
Lobbyist	The same meaning as defined in the <i>Integrity Act 2009</i> , that is, a person or entity who carries out lobbying for a third-party client.
Local Planning Instrument	The meaning in the <i>Planning Act 2016</i> and also includes Charges Resolutions or other similar documents created to form part of the development assessment process.
Submitter	A person who has made a submission, or expressed an intention to make a submission, about a development application or Local Planning Instrument as provided under the <i>Planning Act 2016</i> . It includes any lobbyist or consultant acting on behalf of a submitter.

6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy
- Charges Resolution (No. 4.2) 2023
- Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland
- Information and Records Management Policy
- Local Heritage Register
- Media Relations Policy
- Southern Downs Planning Scheme, v. 5



7 APPENDIX

7.1 APPENDIX 1 – ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS IN DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT

PLANNING STAGE	ROLES			
	Applicant/developer/lobbyist	Councillors	Council employees	Submitters/public
1. Development Application pre- lodgement meetings	Submit preliminary development application form information and attend pre-application meeting with employees.	- Receive developer information but avoid offering support or comment, either personally or on behalf of Council, to developers. Written correspondence should be encouraged to be sent via mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au also. - Respond to factual inquiries following advice from senior employees, discussing only matters that are publicly known when discussing with the general public. - Request details/information from employees on pre-lodgement discussions in accordance with Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy. - Must not interact with the developer if a conflict of interest is likely. - Refer to Appendix 7.3 for more guidance.	- Co-ordinate pre-lodgement meeting in a timely manner. - Provide copies of pre-lodgement meeting minutes to the attendees of the pre-lodgement meeting.	Nil
1.1 Renewable energy project application	- Proponents must prepare SIAs before a CBA can be negotiated. SIAs must be prepared in accordance with the <i>Planning Act 2016</i>, - Proponents must negotiate CBAs with the relevant local government before lodging applications with SARA. CBAs aim	- Stay informed on the legislative changes and the rationale behind community empowerment in project planning. - Advocate for community engagement that reflects diverse voices and interests within the region. - Monitor whether CBAs deliver real, lasting and sustainable value to your community. - Champion initiatives that link renewable energy projects with local job creation and infrastructure investment.	- Establish or update protocols for reviewing and providing input into Social Impact Assessments (SIAs). - Develop a policy and internal guidelines for negotiating and evaluating Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs). - Coordinate with planning, economic development, infrastructure, and community development teams to identify strategic priorities for benefit-sharing.	



PLANNING STAGE	ROLES			
	Applicant/developer/lobbyist	Councillors	Council employees	Submitters/public
	to secure tangible benefits for host communities, such as local infrastructure, workforce development, or amenity improvements.	Ensure Council decisions support transparency, fairness, and alignment with SDRC's long-term region plans.	- Build internal capacity for assessing housing and economic impacts related to renewable energy projects. - Track public notification and appeal processes for impact assessable developments. - Liaise with the State Government on all solar and wind farm proposals to ensure local voices are included in assessments.	
2. Development Application	Submit application.	Request details / information on any application in accordance with Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy.	- Receive and acknowledge application, including the assessing officer contacting the applicant. - Verbal briefing to the GM high complexity applications. GM to brief CEO as needed. GM to determine when , a briefing is to be provided on complex applications and development matters at a Council Information Session. - Make file available for viewing via PD Online and as requested in person.	Request details/information on any application via PD Online.
3. Information and Referral Stage	Respond to request for additional information and refer application to referral agency (if required).	Request details / information on any application in accordance with Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy.	- Issue request for further information (if required). - Receive referral agency response. - Engage with stakeholders to the application as necessary to progress its assessment.	Request details/information on any information request via PD Online.

PLANNING STAGE	ROLES			
	Applicant/developer/lobbyist	Councillors	Council employees	Submitters/public
4. Public Notification (where required)	Advertise the application in accordance with Act requirements.	- Receive informal objections and encourage a properly made submission to be made. Noting that there is a factsheet and template available on Council's website. - Forward any material received to the Chief Executive Officer, General Manager Communities, Planning & Environmental Services (General Manager), and Manager Planning & Development, encouraging correspondence to be sent via mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au. - Listen to applicant and/or submitter engage with interested parties only as outlined in Appendix 3	Acknowledge submissions through written correspondence.	Make a submission.
5. Decision (delegated)	Nil.	- Request details/information on any application in accordance with the Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy. - Raise any concerns with the Manager Planning & Development, General Manager or Chief Executive Officer.	- Assess and decide application. - Periodically provide a list of the delegated decisions made to the Council. - Chief Executive Officer, General Manager or Manager may refer application to Ordinary Council Meeting for determination. - Issue Decision Notice.	
6. Decision (Reported to Council)	- Respond to the concerns raised by the submitters, in correspondence to Council. - Request to address Councillors at an Ordinary Council Meeting in accordance with the Meeting Policy. - Applicant is notified of the date that the	- Listen to applicant and/or objector contact - Request details/information on any application in accordance with the Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy - Not accept lobbying/submissions within 48 hours* prior to Ordinary Council meeting. - Genuinely consider the development application, any submissions to the application, the legislation, Council's report, including the assessment and recommendations by employees. - Decide application by resolution of Council. - Where the Council decision is not consistent with employee recommendation, provide written planning reasons for the alternate recommendation.	- The applicant is notified in writing and verbally of the date that the officer report is being presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting, prior to the release of the formal meeting agenda. - Send a copy of the submissions to the Councillors within at least 24 hours of the release of the formal meeting agenda. - Prepare assessment report and recommendation for inclusion in Ordinary Council Meeting agenda. - Issue Decision Notice in accordance with decision of Council.	- Request to address Councillors at an Councillor Information Session in accordance with the Meeting Policy, if desired. - Submitters are notified informally of the date that the employee's report is being presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting, at least 48

PLANNING STAGE	ROLES			
	Applicant/developer/lobbyist	Councillors	Council employees	Submitters/public
	employee's report is being presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting.	Make public comment on the decision of Council in accordance with Council's Media Relations Policy.		hours prior to the Ordinary Council Meeting. Any properly made submission receives a copy of the decision notice in accordance with the legislation – may request further information about decision from employees or Councillors.
7. Negotiated decision (delegated)	Submit representations.	- Request details/information on any application in accordance with the Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy. - Not attend formal meetings between employees and applicants/consultants to discuss representations on conditions of approval. - Not interact with the developer or submitter/s in relation to the decision until after the appeal period has expired.	Decide representations and issue Negotiated Decision Notice.	
8. Negotiated decision (reported to Council)	Submit representations.	- Not attend meetings between employees and parties to the application to discuss representations. - Not accept lobbying/submissions within 48 hours* prior to Ordinary Council Meeting. - Where required, decide representations by resolution. - Where the Council decision is not consistent with the officer recommendation, provide written planning reasons for the alternate recommendation. - Not interact with the developer or submitter/s in relation to the decision until after the appeal period has expired.	- Prepare assessment report and recommendation for inclusion in Ordinary Council Meeting agenda. - Issue Negotiated Decision Notice.	Any properly made submission receives a copy of the Negotiated Decision Notice.

PLANNING STAGE	ROLES			
	Applicant/developer/lobbyist	Councillors	Council employees	Submitters/public
9. Appeal	• Lodge appeal with Planning and Environment Court or elect to be a co-respondent to any submitter appeal. • Restrict contact with Council to via legal representatives.	• Refrain from interactions with the appellants or co-respondents and should avoid commenting publicly about matters before the Planning and Environment Court.	• Provide confidential Councillor updates as required. • Ensure updates are provided for the Audit and Risk Committee meetings. • Liaise with Council's solicitors and experts as required.	• Lodge appeal with Planning and Environment Court or elect to be a co-respondent to any applicant appeal. • Restrict contact with Council to via legal representatives.

Note:

* Where additional information is provided through lobbying or submission within 48 hours of Ordinary Council Meeting, the item may be deferred to the next Ordinary Council Meeting and, where required, agreement sought for the extension of the decision-making period.

7.2 APPENDIX 2 – ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

PLANNING STAGE	ROLES			
	Applicant/developer/lobbyist	Councillors	Council employees	Submitters/public
1. Local Planning Instrument Preparation	Nil	• Raise policy issues with employees. • Formulate and review policy positions and strategic direction including confidential workshops/briefings.	• Provide information to Council and document Council's planning intentions.	Nil
2. Local Planning Instrument notification	• Provide input/submissions during stakeholder meetings and public consultation. • Make a properly made submission.	• Attend stakeholder/community engagement events to listen to community input. Written correspondence must be sent via mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au to ensure any submission can be considered properly made. • Listen to issues and engage with all interested parties only as outlined in Appendix 3. • Refer issues raised by stakeholders to employees through formal correspondence. • All submissions to be considered as part of the formal process must be properly made, including being submitted in the approved format, and received within the formal consultation timeframe.	• Prepare draft planning instruments for public advertising and conduct stakeholder/community engagement.	• Make a properly made submission. • Provide input/submissions during community engagement.
3. Local Planning Instrument Adoption	Nil	• Not accept lobbying/submissions within 48 hours* prior to Ordinary Council Meeting. • Adopt Local Planning Instruments by Council resolution.	• Prepare final report to Council including outcomes of consultation.	Nil

Note:

* Where additional information is provided through lobbying or submission within 48 hours of Ordinary Council Meeting, the item may be deferred to the next Ordinary Council Meeting.

7.3 APPENDIX 3 – GUIDELINES FOR COUNCILLOR INTERACTIONS WITH DEVELOPERS, LOBBYISTS AND SUBMITTERS

Adopting a structured approach to Councillors' interactions with developers and submitters will allow Councillors to engage appropriately in the public interest and reduce their risk of engaging in misconduct or corrupt conduct.

Under the *Integrity Act 2009*, lobbyists are required to inform Councillors that they are a lobbyist when making initial contact (for example, when seeking to arrange a meeting). In addition to the record keeping requirements detailed below, interactions between Councillors and lobbyists must be recorded in Council's Register of Contact with Lobbyists.

Nothing in this policy requires a Councillor to meet with a lobbyist at any time.

7.3.1 MEETING OR EXCHANGING OTHER COMMUNICATION WITH POTENTIAL DEVELOPERS AND LOBBYISTS (WHERE NO PROPOSAL IS PRESENTLY BEFORE COUNCIL)

Councillors may encourage responsible and appropriate development in Council's area. Councillors should not feel inhibited, in any communications, with potential developers and lobbyists (for a potential development), in promoting the benefits of developing in Council's local government area.

However, even in dealings with potential developers and lobbyists (for a potential development), Councillors: -

- Must make clear to potential developers and lobbyists that they can provide general information on the application process but cannot give definitive advice about any likely decision;
- Should suggest that the developer or lobbyist consider seeking independent professional advice;
- If applicable, must encourage potential development applicants and lobbyists to seek preliminary advice on their proposal by utilising the established process for pre-lodgement meetings with Council staff;
- Must not in any way represent the Council's possible attitude to the potential application.

Similarly, in relation to potential submitters to a development application, Councillors should not feel inhibited about discussing with potential submitters what is publicly known about a potential development application. Again, Councillors: -

- Must make clear to potential submitters that they can provide general information on the application process but cannot give definitive advice about any likely decision;
- Should suggest that the submitter consider seeking independent professional advice;
- Must not in any way represent the Council's possible attitude to the potential application.

In all dealings with a potential developer, lobbyist (for a potential development) or potential submitter, Councillors should keep and maintain a written record of same. This written record should detail, as a minimum, the date and time of the exchange, the format of the exchange (i.e. face to face meeting, telephone call, exchange of emails or exchange of correspondence), a summary of the matters raised with the Councillor and a summary of the Councillor's response. This written record is to be provided to the Chief Executive Officer, and Manager Planning and Development and recorded in Council's record management system, i.e. ECM.

7.3.2 MEETING OR EXCHANGING OTHER COMMUNICATION WITH DEVELOPERS, LOBBYISTS AND SUBMITTERS (AFTER A DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION HAS BEEN LODGED)

After a development application has been lodged, if a Councillor engages in any meetings, telephone discussions, email or other correspondence or exchange with a developer, lobbyist or submitter where they are seeking the Councillor's support or opposition (as the case may be) to a development application, any such response or comment from the Councillor must include the following statements:

- That any opinions expressed by the Councillor are personal to the Councillor and do not in any way represent the Council's possible attitude to the development application; and
- In relation to Council's possible decision on the application, that the Councillor's principal obligation is to serve the public interest by ensuring that his /her decision is:
 - consistent with the planning legislation, Council's planning scheme and policies; and
 - made after having appropriate regard to any officer's (or Council appointed consultant's) advice; and
 - not influenced by any other irrelevant or inappropriate consideration, including (but not limited to) the personal circumstances of the applicant or landowner.

Meetings between Councillors and developers, lobbyists or submitters where specific issues concerning the application are to be discussed, must only occur by arrangement through the office of Council's CEO (or delegate) and only in circumstances where a Council officer as delegated by the CEO (with adequate knowledge of the development application) is also present.

Where development matters arise during the course of an otherwise unrelated meeting, Councillors should:

- Where it is not practical to immediately cease the discussion, make all reasonable attempts to include an Executive Council officer with adequate knowledge of the development application in the conversation.
- Offer to arrange a further meeting to discuss the matter, in accordance with the fore mentioned clause.
- Provide a written summary to the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) of the exchange as per the below clause.

Councillors must keep a written record summarising the matters discussed during any meeting, telephone discussion, email or other correspondence or exchange. This written record should detail, as a minimum, the date and time of the meeting or exchange, a summary of the matters raised with the Councillor and a summary of the Councillor's response, and any follow up actions. This written record is to be provided to the Chief Executive Officer, General Manager and Manager Planning and Development and recorded in Council's record management system, i.e. ECM.

7.3.3 COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT PRE-LODGEEMENT MEETINGS

Proponents of development, lobbyists or consultants may seek formal pre-lodgement advice from Council's technical officers by way of the Council's established pre-lodgement advice service.

At times proponents of development, lobbyists or consultants may request that a Councillor attend a pre-lodgement meeting. All requests for such attendance must only occur by arrangement through the office of Council's CEO (or delegate) and only in circumstances where a Council officer (as delegated by the CEO and with adequate knowledge of the development application) is also present.

When Council staff are formally notified of such a request, an invitation to attend the meeting will be sent to the Councillor identified by the proponent of development, lobbyist or consultant. The maximum number of Councillors at a pre-lodgement meeting will be two (2).

Whilst attending a formal pre-lodgement meeting, Councillors:

- Must act as observers only; and
- Must refrain from making any comments about the matters being discussed, including their personal views of the proposal or the advice being given by officers.

After the meeting, Councillors may engage with the proponent in accordance with section 7.3.1 above.

The matters discussed at a pre-lodgement meeting should be treated as commercial in confidence, and other than in a confidential Council session, must not be discussed with parties not present at the pre-lodgement meeting. The pre-lodgement meeting outcomes document is not a publicly available document under the *Planning Act 2016*, and should not be released to any parties not present at the meeting without permission of the proponent and the Chief Executive Officer, except where allowed by other Council policies and procedures.

7.3.4 PRESENTATIONS TO ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

All requests for Deputations are to be in accordance with Council's Meeting Policy.

In receiving such presentations and submissions, Councillors will act in accordance with the principles and requirements as set out in sections 7.3.1 to 7.3.3 above.

15.2 Renewable Energy Community Benefit System Policy

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Strategic Advisor	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopts the Renewable Energy Community Benefit System Policy as presented.

REPORT

Background

Policies are a major component of the governance framework for Council. They support the strategic direction and guide the decision-making process.

Report

The purpose of the Renewable Energy Community Benefit System Policy is to manage the process of negotiation of Community Benefit Agreements and Council's inputs to Social Impact Assessments under the *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit), and Other Legislation Amendments Act 2025*. This legislation amended the *Planning Act 2016* and *Local Government Act 2009* to establish a framework for certain types of renewable energy development to require Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs).

Under section 106T of the *Planning Act 2016*, a regulation may prescribe development that is a material change of use of premises to be development for which social impact assessment is required. As at the date of this policy section 51F of the *Planning Regulation 2017* prescribes the following types of development as the development that requires social impact assessment:

- (a) a material change of use of premises for a solar farm that has a maximum instantaneous electricity output of 1MW or more;
- (b) a material change of use of premises for a wind farm.

For this type of development, the assessment manager, who is the State Assessment Referral Agency, cannot accept a development application or change application as properly made unless it is accompanied by:

- (a) a SIA report, and
- (b) an executed Community Benefit Agreement (CBA), or
- (c) a notice from the Chief Executive (State Assessment Referral Agency) stating that a SIA report and/or a CBA is not required for the Development Application.

The above requirements are known as the Community Benefit System.¹

What is a community benefit agreement?

A **community benefit agreement** is defined under the *Planning Act 2016* to mean an agreement, entered into under Part 6B, division 4 of the *Planning Act 2016*, about providing a benefit to a community in the locality of development requiring Social Impact Assessment the subject of a Development Application or Change Application, including, for example –

(a) providing or contributing towards infrastructure or another thing for the community;

or

examples of infrastructure and other things for the community –

- a sports facility or library for the community;
- a training program to upskill members of the community.

(b) making a financial contribution to the community.

Example for paragraph (b) – giving a donation to a fund established for the benefit of the community.

Council's reporting requirements and fees for negotiating CBAs

If a financial contribution under a CBA is made for a particular thing, Council must use the financial contribution for that purpose: section 106ZL of the *Planning Act*. In each Annual Report, Council must set out the total amount of financial contributions made to the local government under an instrument mentioned in paragraph (a) that were spent by the local government in the financial year and the purposes for which the contributions were spent: section 189A of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Under section 106ZM of the *Planning Act 2016*, Council may charge an entity a fee in relation to negotiating a CBA, including participating in a mediation process in relation to the CBA, whether or not the CBA is ultimately signed.

The policy provides clear guidance on the various roles and responsibilities of the proponents and Council to negotiate inputs to Social Impact Assessments and Community Benefit Agreements.

The proposed Renewable Energy Community Benefit System Policy is new and is aimed to provide clear guidance on the various roles and responsibilities for stakeholders involved in all aspects of negotiating Community Benefit Agreements and inputs into the process of Social Impact Assessments.

Conclusion/Summary

That Council adopts the Renewable Energy Community Benefit System Policy as presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

¹ Community Benefit Agreements Guidance for Local Governments and Proponents prepared by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, July 2025.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Ineffective policy implementation due to a variety of potential impacts, such as resources, processes, understanding.

The proposed policy allows Council a structured and consistent approach to Community Benefit Agreements as required by the legislation. While a policy is not mandatory under the legislation, failure to have an identified approach decreases the transparency of key priorities for Council and support for their inclusion in negotiations.

Opportunity

The policy provides clear guidance to all stakeholders within the negotiation phase for Social Impact Assessments and Community Benefit Agreements allowing clarity of business process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Councillor Information Session on 5 November 2025.

External Consultation

Nil

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit), and Other Legislation Amendments Act 2025

Planning Act 2016

Planning Regulation 2017

Corporate Plan

Goal 3 Our Prosperity

Outcome: 3.3 The Southern Downs is a destination of choice for business and visitors.

Objective: 3.3.1 Establish a reputation for working collaboratively with developers to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes.

Goal 4 Our Performance

Outcome: 4.1 Our customers want to do business with us.

Objective: 4.1.1 Deliver contemporary customer service experiences that align with the expectations of our customers and the community

Outcome: 4.4 Council has embedded risk management, good governance, transparency and accountability into what we do.

Objective: 4.4.1 Provide assurance through effective governance, audit and risk management practices.

Outcome: 4.5 We have genuine and effective partnerships.

- Objective:** 4.5.1 We act in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.
- Outcome:** 4.6 Our leaders are authentic.
- Objective:** 4.6.1 Our elected members are collaborative and actively work with Executive Management to deliver desired outcomes.

Policy / Strategy

Planning Protocol Policy

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

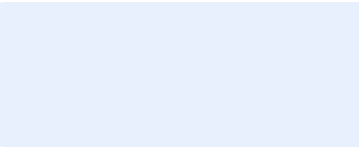
ATTACHMENTS

1. Renewable Energy Community Benefit System Policy - Draft [↓](#)

RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY BENEFIT SYSTEM POLICY

PL-115

RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY BENEFIT SYSTEM POLICY

POLICY NUMBER	PL-115
DIRECTORATE:	Communities, Planning and Environmental Services
SECTION:	Planning and Development
RESPONSIBLE MANAGER:	Manager Planning and Development
DATE ADOPTED:	Click or tap here to enter text.
DATE TO BE REVIEWED:	Click or tap here to enter text.
DATE REVIEWED:	[Date Reviewed]
APPROVED BY:	

REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
11 Nov 2025	1	Policy created

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1 PURPOSE

This policy aims to:

- Provide a consistent framework for negotiating and managing CBAs.
- Ensure CBAs deliver meaningful, long-term community benefits.
- Define the minimum financial contribution formula.
- Outline applicable fees and charges.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all renewable energy developments in the Southern Downs Regional Council area that require SIAs under Queensland's planning laws.

3 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Community Benefit System was established under the *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit), and Other Legislation Amendments Act 2025*, which amended the *Planning Act 2016* and *Local Government Act 2009*.

Under section 106T of the *Planning Act 2016*, certain renewable energy developments—specifically solar farms (≥1MW) and wind farms—must undergo a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and enter into a Community Benefit Agreement (CBA).

A development application must include:

- A completed SIA report,
- An executed CBA, or
- A notice from the Chief Executive (SARA) stating that an SIA and/or CBA is not required.

A CBA is a formal agreement under the *Planning Act 2016* to provide benefits to communities near renewable energy developments that are impacted by the development. These benefits may include:

- Infrastructure (e.g., critical water infrastructure or community infrastructure such as sports facilities, libraries)
- Community programs (e.g., training, education)
- Financial contributions (e.g., donations to a fund benefiting the community)

Council's Reporting Requirements and Fees:

- Financial contributions must be used for their intended purpose.
- Council must report annually on contributions received and how they were spent.
- Council may charge fees for negotiating CBAs, including mediation, regardless of whether an agreement is reached.

4 POLICY DETAILS

4.1 COUNCIL'S EXPECTATIONS

Council expects that:

- CBAs will deliver tangible, community-driven benefits informed by the SIA.
- Developments are well-planned and enhance local liveability.

- Proponents will engage early and meaningfully with Council and the community.
- SIAs are co-designed with Council.
- Community division is avoided through inclusive consultation.

4.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CBAs must be negotiated and administered in accordance with the following embedded principles:

- a) **Strategic Alignment:** CBAs should support Council's strategic plans
- b) **Community Responsiveness:** Reflect community needs via meaningful engagement during the development of the SIA.
- c) **Transparent Governance:** CBAs must include clear accountability measures, including timelines, milestones, responsible parties, defined benefit streams, key principles for operational delivery and monitoring processes, and where appropriate, security arrangements.
- d) **Fairness and Equity:** Ensure fair and equitable distribution of benefits across impacted communities.
- e) **Integrity of Purpose:** CBAs are not a substitute for the proponent's statutory obligations. They are a goodwill- based supplement to regulatory compliance.

4.3 CBA NEGOTIATION FEES

Fees are set annually in the budget resolution process and are found in Council's Fees and Charges Schedule.

Fees are payable before negotiations begin and are non-refundable.

Mediation costs are fully recoverable from the proponent.

4.4 COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONTRIBUTION FORMULA

If the CBA is about making a financial contribution to the community, a minimum Community Benefit Contribution shall apply. The minimum Community Benefit Contribution is based on the type of energy project and its generation or storage capacity, expressed in megawatts (MW).

The following minimum Community Benefit Contribution will apply under all relevant CBAs executed within the 2025/26 Financial Year.

1. PROJECT TYPE	2. BASE COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONTRIBUTION PER MEGA WATT (MW) CAPACITY PER ANNUM, INDEXED AS SET OUT BELOW	3. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	4. TOTAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONTRIBUTION PER MW CAPACITY PER ANNUM, INDEXED AS SET OUT BELOW
Solar	\$850	5%	\$892.50
Wind	\$1,050	5%	\$1,102.50
	\$ per approved Mega Watt Hour		
Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)*	\$150	5%	\$157.50
Energy Storage Developments (Hydro)*	\$850	5%	\$892.50

* BESS and Hydro are not currently subject to the Community Benefit System but may be included in the future.

Indexation

Community Benefit Contributions will be adjusted annually based on the ABS Producer Price Index – Output of Road and Bridge Construction (ANZSIC 4121), Base Quarter Q2 2025.

Administrative costs

Administrative costs (column 3 above) are used for managing and reporting on CBA-funded initiatives and are in addition to the contributions and the CBA negotiation fees set.

4.5 PAYMENT TERMS FOR COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONTRIBUTIONS

- Payments begin from the Operational Works Approval date.
- Year 1: 10% when development approval takes effect, 90% paid quarterly.
- Ongoing: Quarterly (or annual) payments until decommissioning or agreed project end date.
- Security: May require a bank guarantee or bond equivalent to 12 months' contributions.
- Late payments incur interest at 2% above the QTC rate.
- Alternative payment terms may be negotiated and agreed in the CBA.

4.6 ALLOCATION OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONTRIBUTIONS

Where a CBA specifies a contribution towards a particular thing, Council must use the financial contribution for that purpose.

If a CBA is about making a financial contribution to the community, Council will allocate Community Benefit Contributions (CBCs) as deemed appropriate by Council.

When negotiating each CBA, consideration will be given to applying CBCs towards one or more of the following three primary contribution streams, or another stream that benefits the community:

1. **Council Legacy Projects:** critical projects and infrastructure delivering long-term, region-wide benefit responding to the broader impacts of the development.
2. **Community Legacy Initiatives:** community facilities such as pools, parks, active transport networks, playgrounds and projects that celebrate our community, our history or our unique region.
3. **Community Sponsorships:** community sponsorships supporting grassroots initiatives delivered by local community groups, sporting clubs, schools, and not-for-profit organisations.

Projects, initiatives and sponsorships will be determined by Council and informed by relevant Council plans, strategies and policies. Projects, initiatives or sponsorships may otherwise be identified by Council in consultation with relevant affected communities and/or proponents and their Social Impact Assessment.

4.7 ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING

- Contributions are held in a dedicated reserve and form part of the annual budget.
- Interest earned is reinvested into the reserve.
- Annual financial reporting on CBCs through Council's financial statements.
- Executed CBAs are published on Council's website.
- Proponents' contributions will be publicly acknowledged and credited.

4.8 COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONDITIONS

4.8.1 PURPOSE

Community Benefit Conditions set out how Council expects renewable-energy proponents to provide a benefit to the community by addressing, avoiding and mitigating the direct social, environmental and infrastructure impacts identified through a project's Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP).

These seek to ensure that communities are not disadvantaged as a result of hosting a development and that the cost of managing project-generated impacts is borne by the proponent, not the community.

4.8.2 SCOPE

Covers mitigation of direct impact to people, property, services or the environment of construction, operation and decommissioning activities. It includes temporary and cumulative effects associated with clustered or sequential projects.

Community Benefit Conditions are mandatory where impacts are identified through an SIA and must be completed before or concurrent with the relevant project stage that gives rise to the impact.

4.8.3 CATEGORIES OF MITIGATION

Mitigation initiatives may include (but are not limited to):

1. Infrastructure and Transport – Traffic management, upgrades, repairs, maintenance or safety improvements to impacted transport infrastructure and networks.
2. Housing and Accommodation – Measures to reduce short-term housing pressure, such as worker accommodation management plans, temporary accommodation facilities, or housing partnership contributions.
3. Community Services and Safety – Resourcing of emergency-response capacity, waste-management, health or policing services or telecommunications directly affected by the project workforce.
4. Environmental Protection and Amenity – Dust, noise or light mitigation; revegetation; erosion control; landscape screening; rehabilitation of disturbed land.
5. Local Business and Workforce Impacts – Support programs that address disruption to existing local business operations, access, or labour availability during peak construction.

Mitigation measures must be specific, time-bound and evidence-based, with clear performance indicators agreed through the CBA negotiation process.

4.8.4 KEY PRINCIPLES

The following Key Principles will apply to Community Benefit Conditions:

1. Causation – Only covering impacts directly caused or intensified by the project.
2. Proportionality – Mitigation responses must be commensurate with the scale and severity of the impact.
3. Additionality – Mitigation cannot be substituted by Community Benefit Contributions.
4. Timeliness – Delivery must coincide with, or precede, the onset of the impact.
5. Verification – All mitigation outcomes are to be verified and documented prior to project completion or transition to operations.

4.8.5 FUNDING AND DELIVERY

- Community Benefit Condition costs are entirely the responsibility of the proponent and are separate from any CBCs.
- May include direct works, third-party contracts, or in-kind contributions agreed by Council.
- Council must approve all designs and specifications for mitigation works involving Council-owned assets prior to the works being performed. Assets must be returned to Council in a compliant condition at no cost to Council.
- Mitigation obligations will generally be formalised as conditions of development approval or incorporated into the CBA.

4.8.6 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Proponents must prepare a Mandatory Mitigation Plan outlining commitments, delivery timeframes, budgets, and responsible parties.

- Council will monitor delivery against this plan through milestone reporting and site verification.
- Any proposed variation or delay must be approved by Council, supported by evidence that community risk will not increase as a result.
- Non-compliance may trigger enforcement under the relevant planning approval or under the CBA dispute-resolution provisions.

4.9 DEFINITION LEGACY PROJECT

A Legacy Project is a physical, social, or economic investment delivered in partnership with a major development that provides enduring value to the Southern Downs community. It must demonstrably extend beyond the operational life and immediate footprint of the development, creating long-term benefits that are intergenerational in impact, regionally significant in scale, and aligned with Council's strategic priorities.

To be considered a Legacy Project, an initiative should seek to meet the following criteria:

1. **Enduring Impact:** The project should provide ongoing benefit to the community well beyond the life of the associated development
2. **Strategic Alignment:** The project should align with one or more of Council's endorsed strategic plans, such as the Corporate Plan or any other approved Council Strategy.
3. **Community Value:** The project should address a demonstrated need or opportunity that materially enhances liveability, connectivity, environmental outcomes, economic participation, or cultural identity.
4. **Regional Relevance:** The project should deliver benefit at a district or regional scale, not solely to the immediate development area.
5. **Co-Investment or Leverage:** Preference will be given to projects that leverage additional public or private funding, increase capability or capacity, or reduce future costs to ratepayers.

4.10 EXCLUSIONS

CBAs must not:

- a) Offset statutory infrastructure charges, development conditions, or state or federal government responsibilities.
- b) Confer unfair or preferential benefit to individual parties.
- c) Environmental obligations under state or federal law.

4.11 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Council is the responsible body for the final approval of a CBA and any amendment to a CBA.
- b) Council may resolve to delegate signing authority.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Corporate Plan
- 10 Year Capital Program
- Community Benefit System Governance Framework
- Renewable Energy Initial Proposal Checklist
- Social Impact Assessment Template
- Social Impact Assessment Community Engagement Template and Checklist
- Community Benefit System Overview Factsheet
- Planning Act changes factsheet
- Social Impact Assessment Guideline July 2025

15.3 Material Change of Use: Adrian P Bakker C/- Revolution Town Planning - 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Planning Officer	ECM Function No/s: MCU\02648.01

APPLICANT:	Adrian P Bakker C/- Revolution Town Planning
OWNER:	Adrian P Bakker
ADDRESS:	108 Coochie Road, Dalveen
RPD:	Lot 2 SP268864
ASSESSMENT AGAINST:	Southern Downs Planning Scheme (v.5)
ZONE:	Rural (Sandstone Rises and Traprock Hills precinct)
PROPOSAL:	Minor change to Function facility (Existing shed, up to 60 guests), Caretaker's accommodation and Short-term accommodation (Five (5) units - One (1) existing dwelling house (up to eight (8) guests) and Four (4) cabins), over three (3) stages
LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT:	Impact
SUBMITTERS:	Nil
REFERRALS:	Nil
COUNCILLOR INFORMATION SESSION DATE:	8 October 2025 and 5 November 2025
FILE NUMBER:	MCU\02648.01

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

THAT Council approve in part the change application made in relation to the Development Permit dated 27 May 2025 for Material Change of Use for the purpose of Function facility (Existing shed, up to 60 guests), Caretaker's accommodation and Short-term accommodation (Five (5) units - One (1) existing dwelling house (up to eight (8) guests) and Four (4) cabins), over three (3) stages, on land at 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen, described as Lot 2 SP268864.

REPORT

Background

On 28 May 2025, Council issued a Development Permit (dated 27 May 2025) for the purpose of Function facility (Existing shed, up to 60 guests), Caretaker's accommodation and Short-term accommodation (Five (5) units - One (1) existing dwelling house (up to eight (8) guests) and Four (4) cabins), over three (3) stages, on land at 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen, described as Lot 2 SP268864, subject to conditions (File Ref: MCU\02648).

A report in relation to the change application was presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 15 October 2025.

On 15 October 2025, Council made a procedural motion to defer the agenda item to the November Ordinary Council Meeting in accordance with the applicant's request. Subsequently, the applicant's request has been fulfilled, and this report seeks to table the initial change application request.

The approved plans are as follows:



Figure 1: Approved Part Site Plan (north)



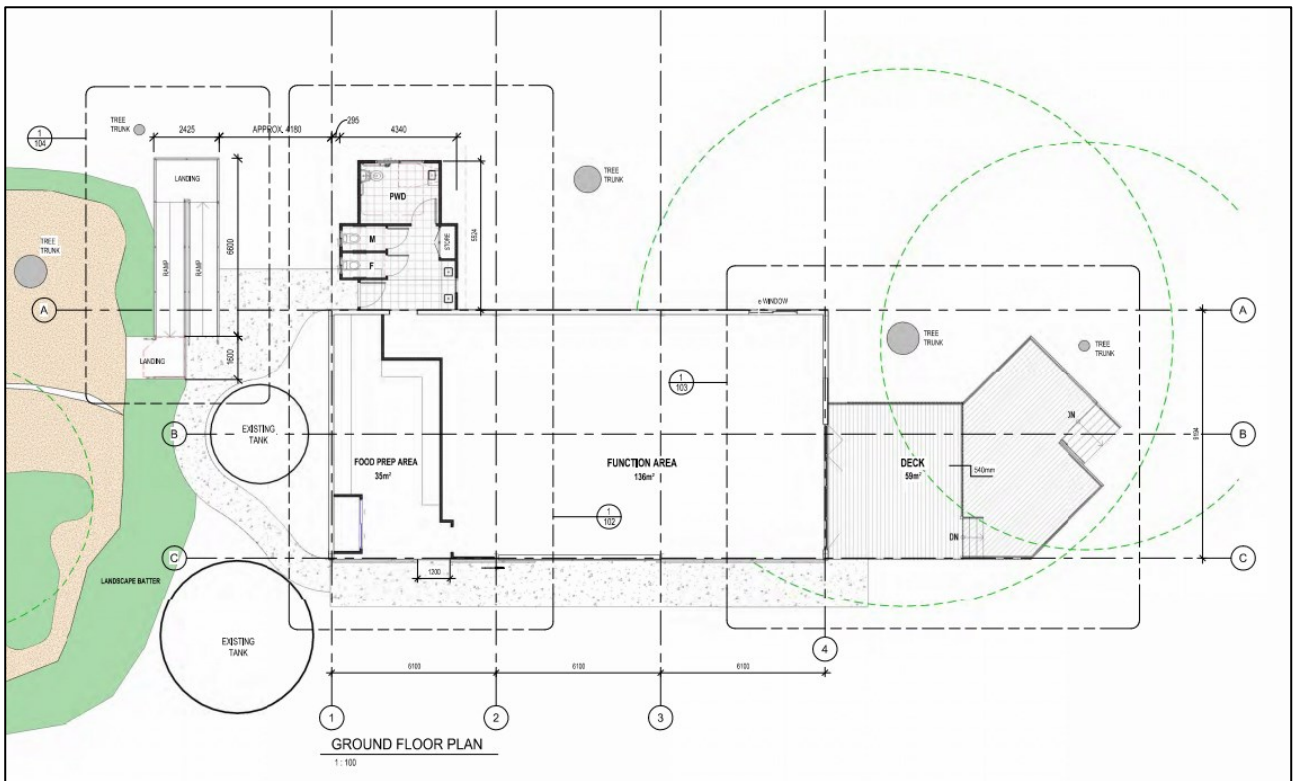


Figure 4: Approved Function facility Floor Plan

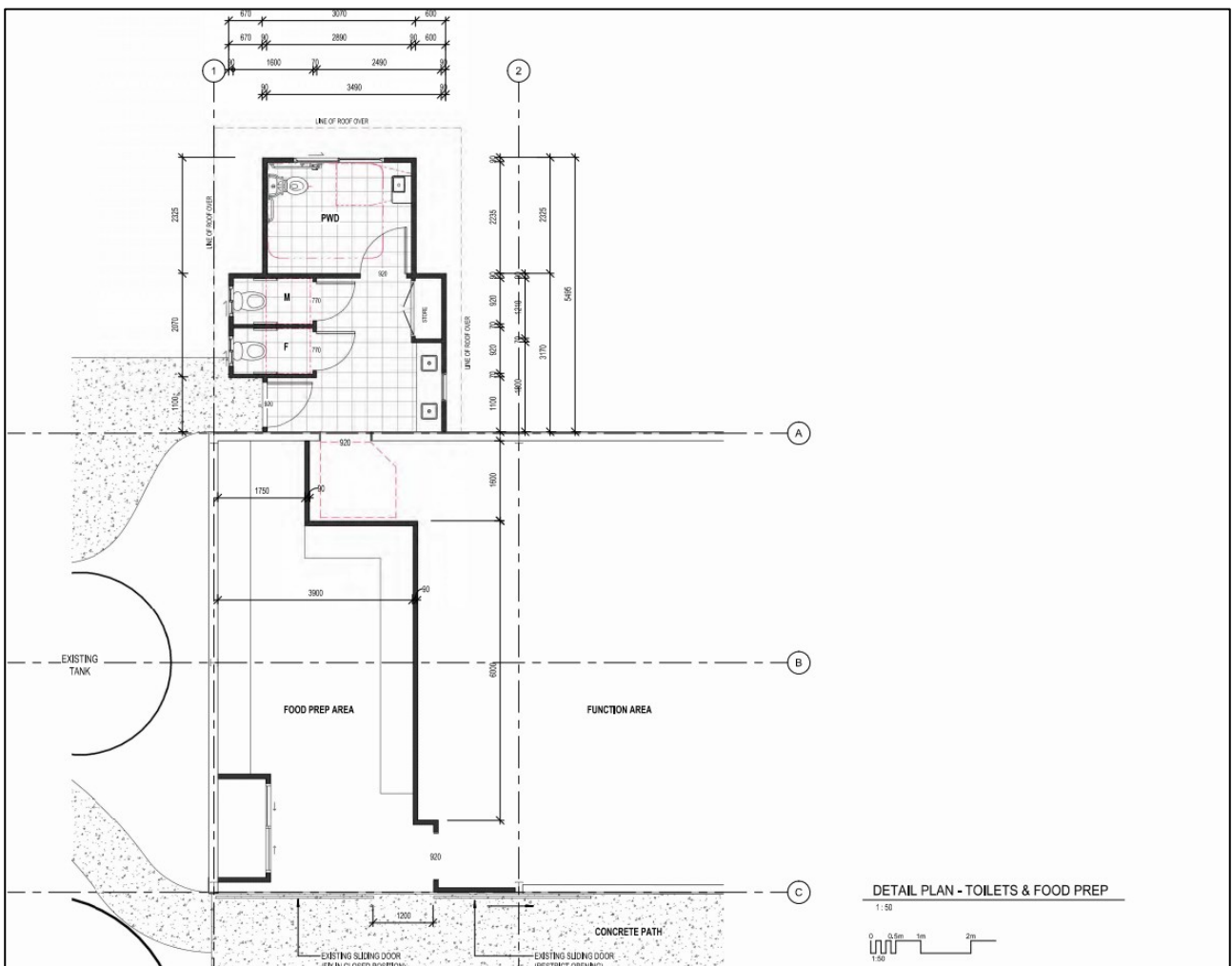


Figure 5: Approved Toilets and Food Prep Floor Plan for Function facility

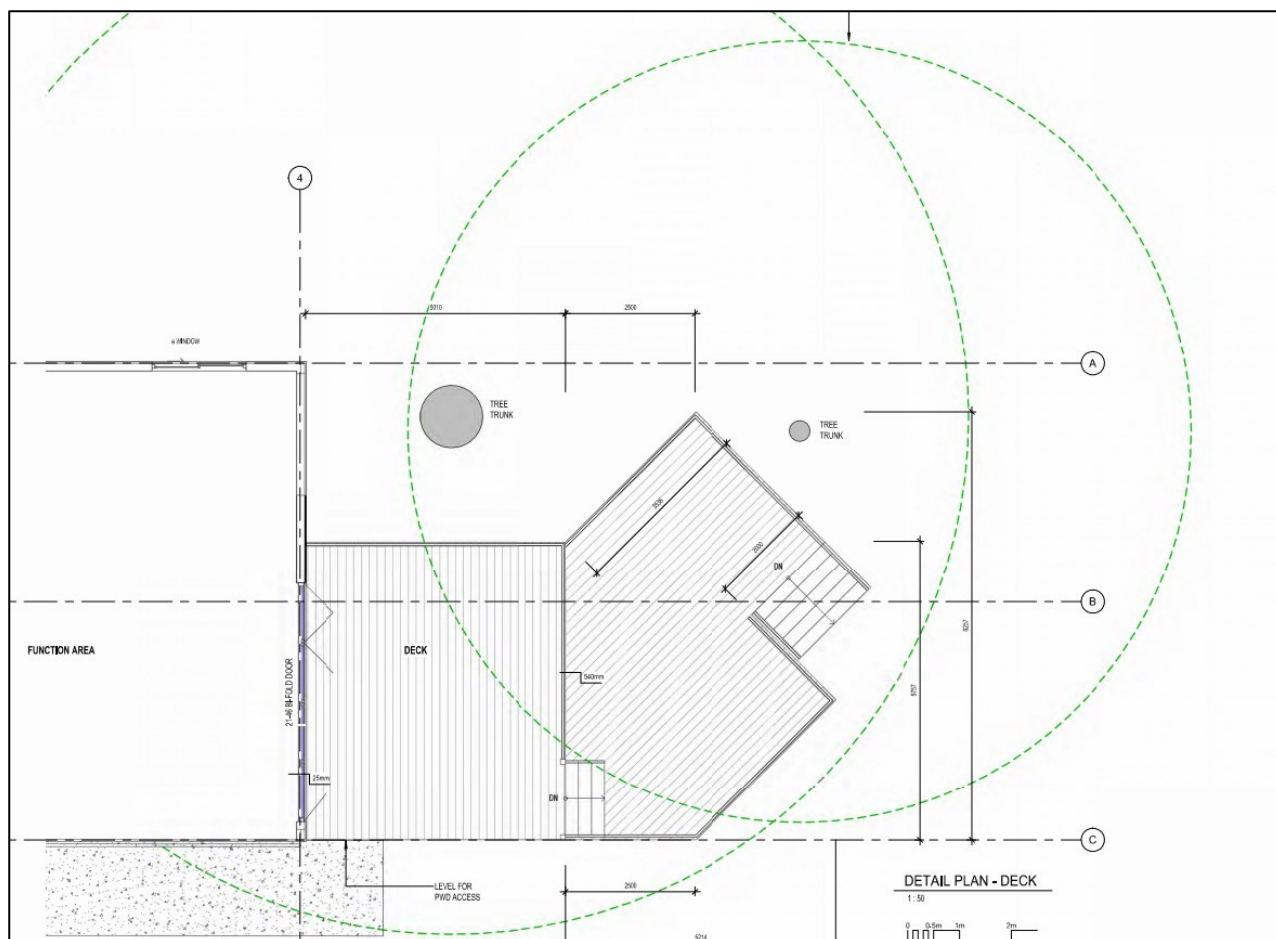


Figure 6: Approved Deck attached to Function facility

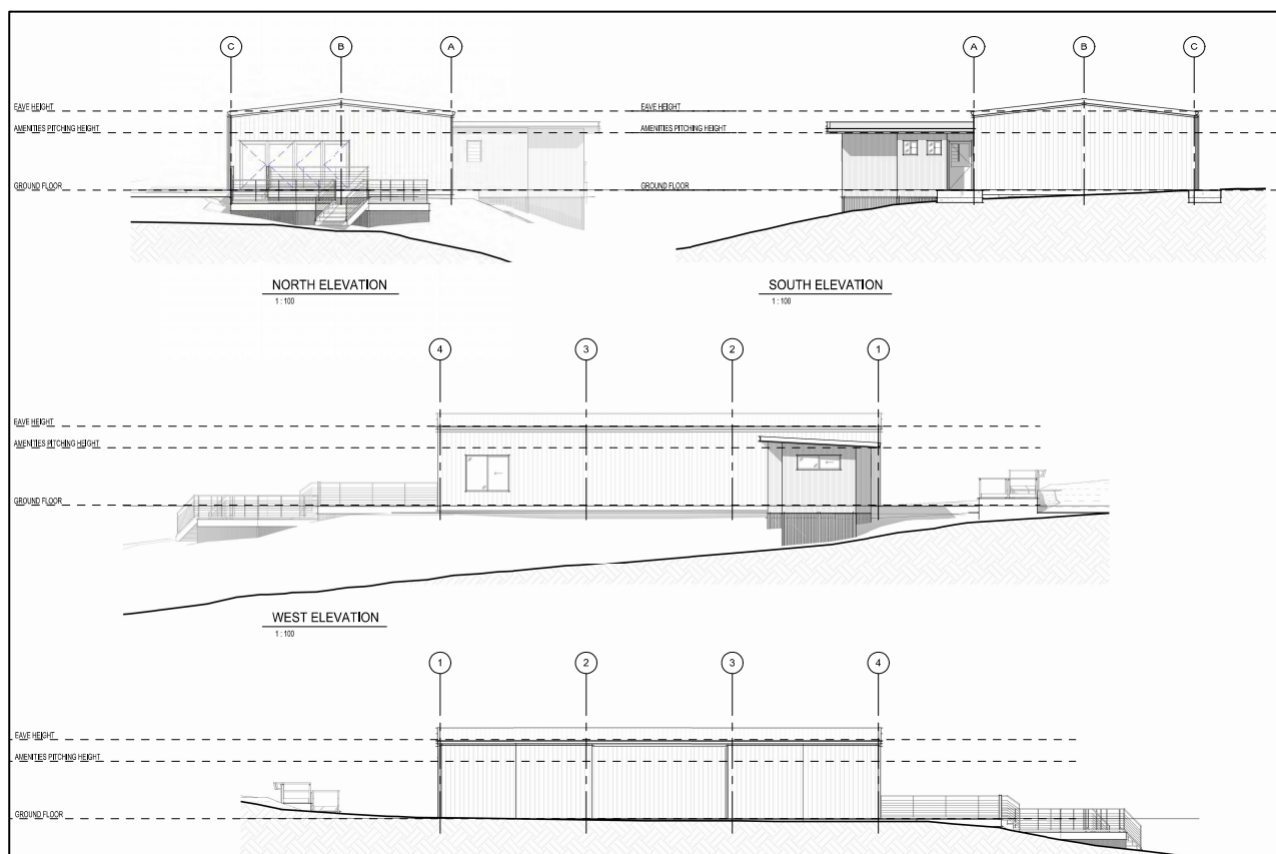


Figure 7: Approved Function facility elevations



Figure 8: Approved Function facility illustrative views

Report



Figure 9: Aerial of subject site

The subject land has an area of 106.8 hectares and is situated within the locality of Dalveen. The land maintains frontage to Coochie Road, which is a gravel constructed road without kerb and channel. The land is burdened by an access easement which provides access to Coochie Road for the subject premises and Lot 1 SP268864. Lot 1 SP268864 is a landlocked parcel of land which otherwise cannot access a constructed road without the access easement. An all-weather driveway exists within the access easement, which is known as Tower Road (private). Tower Road (private) is a private road and is not a road regulated or maintained by Council.

The premises contains dense regulated vegetation, which consists of both Category B and Category C vegetation. The premises also contains a Dwelling house and multiple associated outbuildings. The existing infrastructure is located in close proximity to Lot 1 SP268864, which contains a Telecommunications facility. The landlocked Lot 1 SP268864 is also burdened by a covenant which restricts the use of the land for telecommunication purposes only, ensuring the land cannot be used for anything other than a Telecommunications facilities. An aerial image of the Telecommunications facility is shown in Figure 10. Based on the aerial imagery, no fencing exists along the full boundary of the landlocked Lot 1 SP268864.



Figure 10: Aerial imagery of Telecommunications facility within Lot 1 SP268864

The development approved the operation of a Function facility for up to 60 guests from an existing outbuilding on the subject premises. In addition, the approval permits the utilisation of the existing Dwelling house for Short-term accommodation, the construction of four (4) cabins for Short-term accommodation and the construction of a Caretaker's accommodation on the land. The development will be completed over three (3) stages. The staging of the development is as follows:

Stage 1

- Conversion of the existing shed for the purpose of Function facility (up to 60 guests);
- Conversion of the existing Dwelling house for the purpose of Short-term accommodation (up to eight (8) guests); and
- Construction of a Caretaker's accommodation.

Stage 2

- Construction of two (2) cabins for the purpose of Short-term accommodation.

Stage 3

- Construction of two (2) cabins for the purpose of Short-term accommodation.

The applicant seeks a Change to an Existing Approval (Minor Change) to the development.

Proposed change

The application for a Minor change seeks to alter Conditions 1, 5, 9, 16, 20, 21, 22, 32, 34 and 43 and delete Conditions 17, 18, 24, 25, 26, 27, 36, 45 and 48.

The assessment of the proposed alterations to the conditions have been grouped together for the following reasons:

- Conditions 5, 20, 21 and 22 relate to noise and the hours of operation;
- Conditions 17 and 18 relate to Building and Plumbing permits;
- Conditions 24, 25, 26 and 27 relate to waste;
- Conditions 34 and 36 relate to landscaping and fencing; and
- Conditions 43 and 45 relate to carparking.

Conditions 5, 20, 21 and 22

The applicant has made representations to alter Conditions 5, 20, 21 and 22, which relate to noise and the hours of operation. The conditions and the applicant's proposed changes are tabled as follows:

Table 1: Conditions 5, 20, 21 and 22 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Land Use and Planning Controls		
5.	The Function facility shall generally operate only between the hours of 8.00am to 10.00pm. Hours of operation may be extended until midnight with the support of a Register Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ) Acoustic Engineering Report submitted to and approved by Director Planning and Environmental Services. The extension of hours would also require the undertaking of all works outlined as necessary in an Acoustic Engineering report.	The Function facility shall generally operate only between the hours of 8.00am to midnight 10.00pm. Hours of operation may be extended until midnight with the support of a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ) Acoustic Engineering Report submitted to and approved by Director Planning and Environmental Services. The extension of hours would also require the undertaking of all works outlined as necessary in an Acoustic Engineering report.
<u>Council response provided by Regulatory Services Coordinator</u>		
Condition 5 <i>[Change] Not supported – facility is located in a rural area so the potential for noise nuisance from amplified music to this time of night is considered to be quite high.</i> <i>Condition allows more effective regulation than alternate options from an environmental nuisance / default noise standard perspective. Onus on the operator to demonstrate compliance rather than Council demonstrating non-compliance</i>		
Amenity and Environmental Controls		
20.	Noise levels emitted from the premises must not exceed 5dB(A) above the background noise levels in the locality when measured at the boundary of an affected residential dwelling and must not exceed 10dB(A) above the background noise levels in the locality when measured at the boundary of a commercial premises. This may include the need to use noise attenuating materials in the building.	Noise generated by the development must not cause environmental harm or environmental nuisance or exceed the Acoustic Quality Objectives listed in the Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy 2019 when measured at any sensitive receptor. Noise levels emitted from the premises must not exceed 5dB(A) above the background noise levels in the locality when measured at the boundary of an affected residential dwelling and must not exceed 10dB(A) above the background noise levels in the locality when measured at the boundary of a commercial premises. This may include the need to use noise attenuating materials in the building.
21.	Amplified or live music shall not be permitted outside of the building operating as a Function facility after 6.00pm, and no amplified or live music is to be played after 10.00pm. If amplified music is proposed after 6pm, it must be contained indoors and all	Amplified or live music and amplified devices associated with the Function Facility use are only permitted to be played, made or used within the shall not be permitted outside of the building operating as Function Facility

	windows and doors are to remain shut at all times.	between the hours of 8AM and 10PM and: - the amplified or live music and amplified device must be played, made or used within the Function Facility Building and the sound pressure level of the amplified or live music or amplified device must not exceed 102dB(A) when measured at 1m from the noise source; or - the amplified or live music and amplified device must be played, made or used within the designated outdoor area for amplified or live music and amplified devices detailed in the Approved Operational Management Plan (and the Noise Management Plan therein) and the sound pressure level of the amplified or live music or amplified device must not exceed 75dB(A) when measured at 1m from the noise source.
22.	When requested by Council, an assessment, including noise monitoring must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced person(s) to investigate any complaint of environmental nuisance and/or environmental harm (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistaken belief). Upon completion of the assessment, the results must be submitted to Council within 10 business days. This must be undertaken in accordance with any direction given by Council at the time. If the results of the assessment indicate, or where it is determined by an authorised person, that environmental nuisance and/or environmental harm is being caused, abatement or control measures must be implemented as recommended by a suitably qualified and experienced person and/or Council.	Where a complaint of noise nuisance being caused by the approved development is received by Council and/or where Council reasonably considers the noise limits specified within this development approval are being exceeded or noise generated by the approved development is causing environmental; nuisance or harm, upon the request of Council a noise investigation must be undertaken to investigate whether the noise limits specified within this development approval are being exceeded or noise generated by the approved development is causing environmental; nuisance or harm. The noise investigation must be undertaken by a Suitably Qualified Person in accordance with the Department of Environment and Science Noise Measurement Manual 2020. The results of the investigation must be provided to Council within 28 days of the request or a longer period if specified in any such request or agreed with Council. Where the noise investigation concludes that the approved development is exceeding the noise limits specified within this development approval or noise generated by the approved development is causing environmental; nuisance or harm, the investigation must also recommend mitigation measures and/or procedures to ensure the approved development does not exceed the noise limits specified within this development approval or cause environmental nuisance or harm. The approved development must implement

		the mitigation measures and/or procedures recommended in the noise investigation within one (1) month of the completed noise investigation being given to Council. The effectiveness of the implemented mitigation measures and/or procedures must be confirmed by written notice provided to Council by the author of the noise investigation within one (1) month of the recommended mitigation measures and/or procedures being implemented. When requested by Council, an assessment, including noise monitoring must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced person(s) to investigate any complaint of environmental nuisance and/or environmental harm (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistaken belief). Upon completion of the assessment, the results must be submitted to Council within 10 business days. This must be undertaken in accordance with any direction given by Council at the time. If the results of the assessment indicate, or where it is determined by an authorised person, that environmental nuisance and/or environmental harm is being caused, abatement or control measures must be implemented as recommended by a suitably qualified and experienced person and/or Council.
Council response provided by Regulatory Services Coordinator		
		<i>Condition 20</i> <i>[Change] Not supported. The purpose behind the 5 dB(A) limitation is designed to mitigate the potential for environmental nuisance / harm from occurring in the first instance.</i> <i>Given the rural location the AQOs [Acoustic quality objectives] in the Policy may actually be higher than what is currently received by sensitive receptors in the local area at night time.</i> <i>Condition 21</i> <i>Current condition permits amplified music inside the function centre until 10.00 p.m. Are they requesting amplified music outdoors to 10.00 p.m.? – then definitely no given the above reasons.</i> <i>Outdoor amplified music would have a greater noise impact on other sensitive receptors than potentially that from indoors at the function venue.</i> <i>Condition 22</i> <i>[Change] Not supported – as indicated above the onus is on the operator to undertake noise monitoring to demonstrate compliance rather than put the onus (and expense) on Council to demonstrate non-compliance.</i>

The applicant has not provided an Acoustic Engineering Report prepared by an RPEQ to support any changes to the noise conditions. Conditions 5, 20, 21 and 22 have consistently been imposed on development approvals for Function facilities by Council.

Council's Environmental Health team has raised concerns regarding the applicant's proposed changes to the Conditions of Approval. The concerns specifically relate to the onus of compliance to be placed on the operator of the Function facility, rather than Council. The Conditions of Approval as they currently stand are considered lawful conditions and place the obligation of compliance on the operator of the development. As previously mentioned, Council has imposed the same conditions for various other Function facility developments throughout the region, ensuring a consistent approach. It would not be reasonable for Council to amend the aforementioned Conditions of Approval without the support of an approved Acoustic Engineering Report prepared by an RPEQ.

Therefore, it is recommended Conditions 5, 20, 21 and 22 remain unchanged.

Condition 9

Table 2: Condition 9 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Land Use and Planning Controls		
9.	No person is to reside in the Stage 1 Short-term accommodation building for more than 45 days consecutively, or more than 90 days in any 12 month period. The approved accommodation must not be occupied by persons for the purpose of permanent accommodation. No person is to reside in any Stage 2 and 3 Short-term accommodation cabin for more than 35 days consecutively, or more than 90 days in any 12 month period. The approved accommodation must not be occupied by persons for the purpose of permanent accommodation.	All stays within the Short – term Accommodation must be for a period of less than three (3) months. No person is to reside in the Stage 1 Short-term accommodation building for more than 45 days consecutively, or more than 90 days in any 12 month period. The approved accommodation must not be occupied by persons for the purpose of permanent accommodation. No person is to reside in any Stage 2 and 3 Short-term accommodation cabin for more than 35 days consecutively, or more than 90 days in any 12 month period. The approved accommodation must not be occupied by persons for the purpose of permanent accommodation.
		<u>Applicant's justification</u>
		<i>Noting the above definition (definition of Short-term accommodation within Planning Regulation 2017) and the fact that where functions are held, Condition 10 limits occupancy of the Short – Term Accommodation to persons associated with the function we are almost certain that no stay in the Short-Term Accommodation will ever need to exceed seven (7) days, let alone three (3) months. In any case, the changed condition now reflects the use subject of the development application and not a random subjective use description unique to the Southern Downs Local Government Area. Moreover, the Condition as proposed is consistent with the use term definition prescribed in the Planning Regulation 2017</i>

Condition 9 relates to the restriction of guest stays for the Short-term accommodation use. The condition is consistent with the definition of Short-term accommodation in the *Planning Regulation 2017*, as a period of 90 days is equivalent to a three (3) month period as outlined in the definition. Consecutive guest stays have been restricted to 45 days and 35 days for Stage 1 and Stages 2 and 3, respectively, due to the proposed water storage available to each building. Limiting the

number of days to the provision of the volume of water available at the site is a condition regularly applied to similar developments across the region.

Therefore, based on the water storage proposed for the development and the applicant's intended use of the development, the condition is recommended to remain unchanged.

Condition 16

Condition 16 reads as follows:

Table 3: Condition 16 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
<i>Building and Site Design</i>		
16.	The design, colours and materials of the Function facility building and the Short-term accommodation cabins are to be in accordance with the rural character of the area. Details of the design, colours and materials of the buildings are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issue of any Development Permit for Building Work. The buildings are to be constructed in the approved design, colours and materials.	The colours and materials and finishes for the of the Function facility building and the Short-term accommodation buildings must be earthy and/or neutral and complement the surrounding landscape. <i>Note: Examples of suitable colours and materials for the building include a colour palette utilising colours generally in accordance with the following Hex Colour Codes #274625, #828b7d, #e4e1d0, #bcc5b8, #ada79d, #000000, #3d3d3d, #f0efef, #cbcac8, #bca98c, #93703f, #d3b484, #dbdbdc, #8c8778, #69442e, #9d8461, #f8ead6, #cfdba6, #ceb68b, #acbb90, #d6dcc5, #aa7c57, #fdf0d0, #eee1c7.</i> cabins are to be in accordance with the rural character of the area. Details of the design, colours and materials of the buildings are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issue of any Development Permit for Building Work. The buildings are to be constructed in the approved design, colours and materials.
		<u>Applicant's justification</u>
		<i>It is noted that the Applicant will likely engage with this condition so as a building development permit may be issued for Stage 1 building work associated with the approved development prior to this Change Application being decided, however, the change is requested nonetheless.</i>

The proposed colours outlined by the applicant consist of whites, creams, greys, greens and browns. The colours outlined by the applicant are considered to be consistent for the appearance of the development within a rural locality. Despite this, the application has not provided architectural plans of the proposed buildings for the Function facility and Short-term accommodation that detail the design, colours or materials of the buildings. However, to provide additional clarity to the condition, the applicant's proposed note will be incorporated into the condition.

The condition is recommended to remain unchanged with the exception of the additional note outlining examples of colours, and is as follows:

Building and Site Design

16. The design, colours and materials of the Function facility building and the Short-term accommodation cabins are to be in accordance with the rural character of the area. **Details of the design, colours and materials of the buildings are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issue of any Development Permit for Building Work.** The buildings are to be constructed in the approved design, colours and materials.

Note: Examples of suitable colours for the proposed buildings may include the following Hex Colour Codes: #274625, #828b7d, #e4e1d0, #bcc5b8, #ada79d, #000000, #3d3d3d, #f0efef, #cbcac8, #bca98c, #93703f, #d3b484, #dbdbdc, #8c8778, #69442e, #9d8461, #f8ead6, #cfdba6, #ceb68b, #acbb90, #d6dcc5, #aa7c57, #fdf0d0, #eee1c7.

Conditions 17 and 18

The applicant has requested the deletion of the following Building and Site Design conditions:

Table 4: Conditions 17 and 18 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Building and Site Design		
17.	A copy of the Certificate of Compliance for Plumbing and Drainage Works is to be provided to Council (see advisory note below).	Deleted. A copy of the Certificate of Compliance for Plumbing and Drainage Works is to be provided to Council (see advisory note below).
18.	A copy of the Form 21 (Final Inspection Certificate) and the Form 11 (Certificate of Occupancy) issued for the building works are to be provided to Council prior to the use commencing (see advisory note below).	Deleted. A copy of the Form 21 (Final Inspection Certificate) and the Form 11 (Certificate of Occupancy) issued for the building works are to be provided to Council prior to the use commencing (see advisory note below).

The imposition of Conditions 17 and 18 were to ensure the buildings are constructed in accordance with the building and plumbing approvals required to be obtained. It should be noted that a similar condition has also been imposed for Operational Works, being Condition 55 (which has not proposed to be deleted by the applicant).

The deletion of these two conditions will not remove the requirement for the applicant to obtain the final inspection certificates for building works and plumbing and drainage works, as it is a legislative requirement under the *Building Act 1975* and the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018*. Therefore, the recommendation is to support the applicant's request.

The advisory note for each respective condition is recommended to be retained, however, advisory note (x) will be amended to refer to the Final Inspection Certificate for Plumbing and Drainage Works, as per the *Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2019*.

Conditions 24, 25, 26 and 27

The following Conditions 24, 25, 26 and 27 relate to Amenity and Environmental Controls:

Table 5: Conditions 24, 25, 26 and 27 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Amenity and Environmental Controls		
24.	A sufficient number of suitable waste receptacles must be provided on site at all times. Waste receptacles must be regularly serviced to prevent unsightly accumulations	Waste generated by the approved development must be collected, stored and disposed of and managed in accordance with the Approved Operational Management

	of waste or environmental harm being caused. A waste collection contractor must be engaged to supply suitable waste and recycling receptacles and service waste and recycling receptacles.	Plan (and the Waste Management Plan therein). A sufficient number of suitable waste receptacles must be provided on site at all times. Waste receptacles must be regularly serviced to prevent unsightly accumulations of waste or environmental harm being caused. A waste collection contractor must be engaged to supply suitable waste and recycling receptacles and service waste and recycling receptacles.
25.	All wastes are to be suitably collected and disposed of so as not to adversely impact on the environment.	Deleted. All wastes are to be suitably collected and disposed of so as not to adversely impact on the environment.
26.	No materials or goods associated with the development are to be displayed or stored within the car park or landscaped areas, or outside the boundaries of the site.	Deleted. No materials or goods associated with the development are to be displayed or stored within the car park or landscaped areas, or outside the boundaries of the site.
27.	Any rubbish and litter resulting from events must be collected daily and disposed of immediately following the event at an approved Waste Management Facility. The site is to be left in a clean and tidy condition.	Deleted. Any rubbish and litter resulting from events must be collected daily and disposed of immediately following the event at an approved Waste Management Facility. The site is to be left in a clean and tidy condition.
24-27.	<u>Applicant's Justification</u> <i>A waste management plan was submitted with the development application which details waste management procedures and practices to ensure that waste generated by the development is collected, stored and disposed of and managed in accordance with relevant laws and policies. Moreover, the Waste Management Plan submitted with the development application facilitates a waste management outcome that encourages sustainable practices such as limiting single use products, requires caterers to remove their own waste from the site, encourages the sorting of waste into relevant waste streams for disposal and encourages recycling among other requirements.</i> <i>In this regard, the Waste Management Plan submitted with the development application provides more detailed practices and procedures around waste generation, collection and disposal than Conditions 24 – 27 and in doing so will provide a waste management outcome far superior to the outcome facilitated by Condition 24 – Condition 27.</i> <i>It should also be noted that some of the requirements of these conditions are both unreasonable and impractical. The unreasonable and/or impractical parts of the conditions include the requirement for (may not be limited to);</i> <i>• a waste contractor to collect and dispose of waste generated by the approved development; and</i> <i>• rubbish and litter to be collected daily and disposed of immediately following an event (after midnight).</i> <i>Moreover, the Conditions do not specifically refer to or differentiate how waste must be managed for all components of the approved development. Instead, the conditions focus very much on the Function Facility use and in this regards include contradictory or competing requirements. The Waste Management Plan submitted with the development</i>	

	<i>application considers waste management more holistically and will manage waste associated with the approved development more effectively.</i>
	<u>Council response provided by Regulatory Services Coordinator</u>
	<i>Conditions 24, 25 & 27 relate to waste management. Condition 26 – is more about the display or storage of goods – not waste management principles?</i> <i>WMP (Waste Management Plan) identifies records will be kept – maybe a condition to ensure that these are made available to authorised persons on request. Premises would be subject to accommodation and food inspection moving forward – so could monitor condition of waste management areas / facilities during these visits.</i> <i>WMP would address most / if not all that the [Decision Notice] conditions are trying to achieve.</i>

Section 4.1 of the Waste Management Plan (WMP) provided addresses the required waste storage for each component of the development, including but not limited to the quantity of waste receptacles required. The WMP details the following regarding the collection of waste:

Within this framework, the operator under this WMP shall: ...

- *Engage an appropriate contractor/s to conduct services, if or as required.*
- *Ensure the waste collection contractor/s has access to the bins on collection days.*

The above-mentioned elements of the WMP contradict the applicant's statement 'some of the requirements of these conditions are both unreasonable and impractical', in reference to the requirement to engage a waste contractor for the disposal of waste. Notwithstanding the applicant's justification supporting the deletion of Condition 24, the WMP provided addresses the items within the condition and thus, the condition will be amended to refer to compliance with the WMP being achieved.

Similar to above, the WMP is considered to adequately manage the collection and disposal of waste to ensure no environmental harm and thus, it is recommended that Condition 25 can be deleted.

The WMP however, does not regulate the frequency of waste collection on-site for events as required as part of Condition 27. Condition 27 is a standard requirement imposed on Function facility developments by Council, and is aimed to ensure potential environmental harm caused by guests of the Function facility is minimised through the site being left in a clean and tidy condition, and waste collected immediately following an event. As required by Condition 7, and outlined in *Proposed Development 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen Traffic Impact Statement, 24-664 Revision B dated 18 December 2024*, prepared by *Pekol Traffic and Transport*, the maximum number of events held per week is limited to one (1). This means that waste resulting from an event is to be collected once per week. The requirement for the disposal of waste once per week is not considered to be an onerous or unreasonable expectation for a Function facility development, and thus, the condition will be retained. To provide further clarification to the condition for the applicant, a note will be included referring to Condition 7.

Condition 26 relates to the storage of materials and goods associated with the development, and not the storage of waste or waste products. No alternative has been proposed to alter the condition regarding the storage of goods and materials. In the absence of an alternative for the storage of goods, it is recommended Condition 26 remains unchanged.

Condition 25 is recommended to be deleted, and Conditions 24 and 27 is recommended to be amended as follows:

24. *A sufficient number of suitable waste receptacles must be provided on site at all times. Waste receptacles must be regularly serviced to prevent unsightly accumulations of waste or environmental harm being caused. A waste collection contractor must be engaged to supply suitable waste and recycling receptacles and service waste and recycling receptacles. The management of waste and waste receptacles must be in accordance with Sections 4.0, 4.1,*

4.2, 4.3 and 5.0 of the Waste Management Plan, prepared by Revolution Town Planning, submitted as part of Operational Management Plan Function Facility & Short – Term Accommodation, Coochie Road, Dalveen, Version 3, dated 25 June 2025, prepared by Revolution Town Planning.

27. Any rubbish and litter resulting from events must be collected daily and disposed of immediately following the event at an approved Waste Management Facility. The site is to be left in a clean and tidy condition.

Note: The maximum number of events held per week is limited to one (1), as outlined by Condition 7.

Condition 32

Table 6: Condition 32 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Amenity and Environmental Controls		
32.	Lighting is to be provided within the development including adjacent to the internal driveways. Any lighting is to be located such that there is no interference with any residences. Details of the proposed lighting are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issuing of any Development Permit for Building Works. Lighting is to be provided in accordance with the approved plan.	Lighting is to be provided within the development including adjacent to the internal driveways within carparking areas and all areas of frequent pedestrian activity including around buildings associated with the approved development. Lighting must be designed and installed in accordance with AS/NZS 1158.0:2005 – Lighting for Roads and Public Spaces and AS/NZS 4282 - Control of the obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting. Any lighting is to be located such that there is no interference with any residences. Details of the proposed lighting are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issuing of any Development Permit for Building Works. Lighting is to be provided in accordance with the approved plan.
<u>Applicant's justification</u>		
<i>The existing condition as constructed suffers from ambiguity, a lack of specificity and lack of finality. For example, the condition does not contain any guidance as to where within the development the lighting is required to be installed (except stating 'including the internal driveways') and to what standard the lighting is to be installed (i.e. what standard Council expects the lighting to satisfy) and what particular 'details' regarding the lighting are required to be included when the details are given to Council. The condition is unenforceable and likely of no effect in its current form.</i> <i>Despite this, we acknowledge that for many reasons adequate lighting within the development is an important aspect of the operators managing the liability that exists when persons attend the site to use the Function facility or Short – Term Accommodation (there is an argument that in requiring approval of the lighting by Council, Council may be liable for any accident or injury that was found to have occurred on the land as a result of inadequate lighting). As such, the changed condition specifically references areas within the development that lighting must be installed and nominates a standard to which the lighting must be provided. In this context, it is not necessary to require approval of the lighting for the development as compliance with the condition is measurable and the outcome able to be objectively determined.</i>		

It is considered necessary to retain the condition and to ensure any lighting erected internal to the site does not interfere with any nearby residences, and to ensure access to the site is lit for the safety of the guests entering and existing the property. However, to further provide finality to the condition, the statement within condition will be amended to include reference to the Australian Standards as outlined by the applicant.

As such, the condition is recommended to be amended as follows:

32. *Lighting is to be provided within the development including adjacent to the internal driveways. Any lighting is to be located such that there is no interference with any residences, **in accordance with the Australian Standards for external lighting. Details of the proposed lighting are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issuing of any Development Permit for Building Works. Lighting is to be provided in accordance with the approved plan.***

All vehicle operation areas must be illuminated in accordance with the requirements of Australian Standard AS1158 "Lighting for roads and public spaces".

Conditions 34 and 36

The applicant has proposed to alter Condition 34 and delete Condition 36, both of which relate to landscaping or fencing, and are as follows:

Table 7: Conditions 34 and 36 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Amenity and Environmental Controls		
34.	A fence 1.8 metres high shall be erected along the all boundaries of the adjoining Lot 1 SP268864, except within the access easement. This fencing is to be provided at the developer's cost.	A fence or other suitable barrier, a minimum of 1.8 metres high shall must be erected along the all boundaries of the adjoining Lot 1 SP268864, expect within the access easement or within Lot 1 SP2688641, to prevent access to the Telecommunications Facility and associated infrastructure. The required fence or barrier may be chainwire and be provided at no cost to Council. This fencing is to be provided at the developer's cost.
<u>Applicant's justification</u>		
<i>It is noted there [are] existing barriers on Lot 1 that prevents access to the Telecommunications Facility and associated infrastructure. No further barrier is required to ensure the safety of visitors utilising the Function Facility and/or Short-Term Accommodation. Moreover, given the Neighbourhood Disputes (Dividing Fences and Trees) Act 2011 makes provision for the cost of fencing on dividing boundaries to be shared between landowners, the requirement for fencing to be provided at the developer's sole cost is not reasonable. It may be the case that in following the process outlined in the Neighbourhood Disputes (Dividing Fences and Trees) Act 2011 would result in the owner or Lot 2 bearing the full cost of the fencing but that is irrelevant. It is only relevant that a barrier be provided and it not be at the cost of Council.</i>		
36.	A landscaping strip is to be planted within the subject premises (being Lot 2 SP268864), in between the northern boundary of the adjoining Lot 1 SP268864 and the driveway and carparking spaces 7-17, as shown in the following diagram: <i>[diagram shown in Figure 11]</i>	Deleted. A landscaping strip is to be planted within the subject premises (being Lot 2 SP268864), in between the northern boundary of the adjoining Lot 1 SP268864 and the driveway and carparking spaces 7-17, as shown in the following diagram:

Applicant's justification

It is not clear what planning purpose is furthered by this condition. We assume the landscaping is to provide some buffering or screening but it is not clear what is being buffered or screened by the landscaping. The Statement of Reasons for the development approval appears to conclude the same (PO5 of the Short – term Accommodation Code), noting we consider the statement 'the proposed carparking in this location will impact on the use of the Telecommunications Facility' to be a little perplexing and consider it may have been intended to read 'the proposed carparking in this location will not impact on the use of the Telecommunications Facility'.

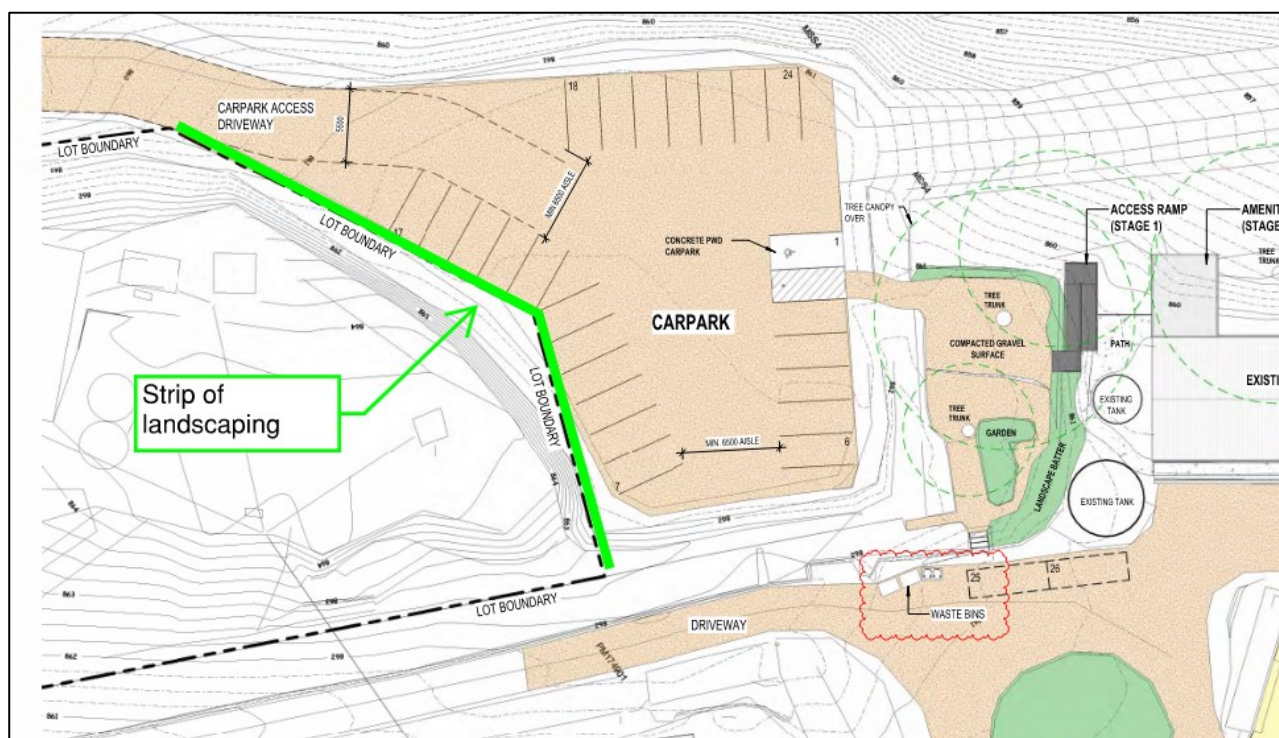


Figure 11: Diagram referred to in Condition 36

The conditions have been imposed on the basis of the following provisions of the planning scheme, with additional justification provided in red:

Landscaping code

AO8

- (a) *Where the number of parking spaces in an off-street parking area exceeds 10:*
- (i) *One advanced tree with a minimum canopy at maturity of 3 m in diameter is provided for every 10 carparking spaces (or part thereof). At least half of the required number of trees is to be located within the carpark area (not around the periphery).*
 - (ii) *The landscaping comprises trees with clear trunks to a minimum height at maturity of 2 m and open, low growing shrubs and ground covers to a maximum height of 1.2 m.*
 - (iii) *A minimum mulched area of 3 m² is provided around each tree. This area is to be planted with low growing shrubs or ground covers. The trees are to be protected by tree guards, bollards or similar.*

PO8 Landscaping of off street carparking areas is designed to:

- *Reduce the visual impact of the carpark;*
- *Provide for shade;*
- *Ensure landscaping is protected from vehicle damage;*

- *Minimise risk of crime; and*
- *Minimise contaminated runoff entering the stormwater system and water courses.*

The development has proposed to construct a twenty-four (24) space carpark. Due to the rural nature of the land, the development not being visible from the road, and the existing surrounding dense vegetation the proposed carparking area is considered to be visually appropriate and designed for the area.

As the proposed carparking will be constructed along the boundary with the abutting Lot 1 SP268864, **and the area within the immediate proximity of the abutting Lot 1 SP268864 will result in a significant increase in the quantity and movement of people and guests on the site as a result of the development,** to minimise the risk of crime and reduce the unlawful traversing of land by visitors of the development who will be unfamiliar with the site, a fence with a height of at least 1.8 metres is to be erected along all boundaries of Lot 1 SP268864, apart from in-line with the access easement. To reduce the visual impact of the carpark and help reduce any unlawful trespassing of land, a strip of landscaping will be required to be planted along the southern edge of the carpark, being carparks 7-17. The landscaping is to be planted within the subject land and is to be planted between the lot boundary of Lot 1 SP268864 and carparks 7-17.

By imposing conditions, the development can comply with the Performance outcome.

Overall, it is considered the applicant's proposed alterations to Condition 34 achieve the same intent as the existing condition and as such, is recommended to be retained, with a minor amendment to correct a typographical error. Condition 36 is also recommended to be retained as it is necessary to achieve compliance with PO8 of the Landscaping code.

Conditions 43 and 45

The applicant has proposed to replace the wording of Condition 43 in full, and to delete Condition 45 as follows:

Table 8: Conditions 43 and 45 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Car Parking and Vehicle Access		
43.	Car parking for the Function facility and the Stage 1 Short-term accommodation shall be provided on site in accordance Plan No 240262 DD, Issue E Sheet 002, dated 14 February 2025, prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd. For Stage 2, car parking for the two (2) Short-term accommodation cabins shall be provided on site in accordance Plan No SK01, Revision A, dated 15 April 2025, prepared by Revolution Town Planning. All car parking, driveway and loading areas shall be constructed in gravel or similar materials, drained, laid out and regularly maintained, and constructed in accordance with <i>Planning Scheme Policy – Carpark Construction</i>. The carpark may remain gravel, provided it is appropriately maintained and does not cause a dust nuisance. If complaints are received (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistaken belief) or the vehicle	A minimum of twenty – three (23) on-site carparking spaces and an overflow carparking area together with associated manoeuvring areas must be provided to service the Function Facility and Short-term Accommodation uses. The carparking and associated manoeuvring areas must be: (a) generally located as detailed on the approved plans; (b) appropriately delineated and dimensioned in accordance with the requirements of AS2890- Off Street Carparking; Facilities (reflective dot markers may be used to delineate carparking spaces); (c) except in the case of the overflow carparking area, constructed of compacted gravel treated with a dust suppressant (at the time of construction and applied on a regular basis in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions);

	entrance and driveway become eroded with material becoming deposited outside of the site or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the carpark shall be sealed to Council's standards.	(d) designed to manage stormwater so as stormwater does not pond within or adjacent the carparking areas and stormwater runoff does not cause actionable nuisance on adjoining properties; (e) maintained generally as constructed with maintenance carried out on the gravel pavement and grassed overflow carparking area on an as needs basis so as it remains safe and trafficable for a 2WD vehicle in most conditions; and (f) available to users of the Function Facility and Short-term Accommodation at all times.
45.	An Overflow Parking Area is to be made available in an overflow area during function events. The overflow car park area is to be identified with Bunting Safety Flags and signage is to be made available to direct vehicle drivers to a suitably located car park. Any bunting or temporary signage for the overflow parking area, can be erected the day before the event and removed, at the latest by, the day after the event. The overflow carpark area may remain grass, provided it is appropriately maintained and does not compromise the safety of patrons during wet events. If complaints are received (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistake belief) or the overflow car parking area becomes eroded or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the carpark shall be constructed in gravel to Council's standards.	Deleted. An Overflow Parking Area is to be made available in an overflow area during function events. The overflow car park area is to be identified with Bunting Safety Flags and signage is to be made available to direct vehicle drivers to a suitably located car park. Any bunting or temporary signage for the overflow parking area, can be erected the day before the event and removed, at the latest by, the day after the event. The overflow carpark area may remain grass, provided it is appropriately maintained and does not compromise the safety of patrons during wet events. If complaints are received (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistake belief) or the overflow car parking area becomes eroded or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the carpark shall be constructed in gravel to Council's standards.
43. 45.	<u>Applicant's justification</u> <i>Both Condition 43 and Condition 45 as constructed suffer from ambiguity, a lack of finality and do not further the planning purpose they are likely intended to further. In this respect it is noted the Conditions:</i> <i>do not require a specific number of carparking spaces to be provided;</i> <i>include phrases such as (emphasis added) 'the vehicle entrance and driveway become eroded with material becoming deposited outside of the site or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the carpark shall be sealed to Council's standards' and therefore lack the certainty and finality required for a lawful condition of development approval and the conditions are likely unenforceable and of no effect.</i> <i>Reference Council's Planning Scheme Policy – Carpark Construction, parts of which the carpark will not be able to satisfy.</i>	

It is considered the conditions as changed are not ambiguous, are final and provide both Council and the Applicant certainty. Most importantly, the conditions as changed will further the planning purpose intended to be furthered by the conditions in so far as they ensure that the on-site carparking required to be provided by the development will maintain the safety and efficiency of the road network, is conveniently located and is safe for pedestrians and vehicles.

The applicant has proposed to delete and replace the existing conditions.

The conditions have been imposed on the basis of the following provisions of the planning scheme, with additional justification provided in red for consideration:

Carparking and loading code

AO3 *Except in the case of a dwelling house, parking areas including parking spaces, queuing areas, loading, set down and pickup areas and driveways are constructed in accordance with Planning Scheme Policy – Carpark Construction.*

PO3 *The carpark is constructed to an acceptable standard in keeping with the character and standards in the locality.*

Access to the proposed Function facility and Short-term accommodation will be via an existing all-weather internal driveway. The carparks and the loading, set down and pickup areas will also be constructed in gravel. The carpark will be imbedded with markers and bollards to define each space. Conditions will be imposed to ensure the development complies with the Acceptable outcome. *The Planning Scheme Policy – Carpark Construction outlines the construction requirements for an off-street carpark, including drainage and pavement requirements. The number of carparking spaces has been demonstrated in the plans provided, which will form part of the approved suite of plans. Any decrease in the number of carparks as a result of any future amendments to the approved plans would likely require a new assessment.*

Whilst the applicant's commentary is noted in that the requirements of the Planning Scheme Policy – Carpark Construction vary (being either gravel or sealed construction standards for development in the Rural zone when required), the condition imposed refers to the carpark being required to be constructed in gravel or similar material. This is due to the previous assessment determining that the construction standards can be gravel rather than sealed. Therefore, the requirements of the Planning Scheme Policy – Carpark Construction for the construction of a gravel constructed carpark prevail over the sealed carpark requirements.

The applicant has also indicated an 'overflow carparking' area will be provided. To ensure the car parking does not dominate the rural scenic values of the location, the informal 'overflow carparking' may remain grassed, provided it is appropriately maintained and does not compromise the safety of patrons during wet events. The carpark may be required to be constructed in gravel to Council's standards if the area becomes eroded or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements.

~~By imposing~~ *Through the retention of* conditions *as originally imposed*, the development can comply with the outcomes of the Code.

Condition 48

The applicant has requested the deletion of Condition 48, and has provided the following justification:

Table 9: Condition 48 analysis

CONDITIONS IMPOSED		APPLICANT'S PROPOSED CHANGES
Roadworks		
48.	Prior to commencing the use, provide written advice from the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) that no	Prior to commencing the use, provide written advice from the Department of

change to the intersection of Coochie Road and New England Highway is required as a result of the development. The advice should have regard for the impact of development traffic, and the stock-grid adjoining the intersection. As required, complete any necessary works identified in consultation with DTMR.	Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) that no change to the intersection of Coochie Road and New England Highway is required as a result of the development. The advice should have regard for the impact of development traffic, and the stock-grid adjoining the intersection. As required, complete any necessary works identified in consultation with DTMR.
<u>Applicant's justification</u>	
<i>While we acknowledge the development application was subject to Impact Assessment, the issue addressed in this condition is not an issue that is the responsibility of the Applicant or landowner to address. Moreover, the condition in its current form suffers from a lack of certainty and finality and as a consequence is likely unlawful and of no effect.</i> <i>Firstly, the Applicant is not aware of or privy to any discussions between Council and DTMR about the cattle grid. The Applicant is not aware the circumstances under which it was installed at the intersection of Coochie Road and the New England Highway or by whom it was installed. Secondly, there is no reasonable reason that the Applicant be required to be part of any dispute between Council and DTMR in regards who is responsible for maintenance or removal of the cattle grid.</i> <i>The Statement of Reasons mentions Council sent a letter 'on 5 January 2015 outlining that Council had inspected the grid and it was in reasonable order but outlined that Council will not accept responsibilities for its maintenance and upkeep. It was also outlined that a landowner would need to maintain the grid in good order'.</i> <i>The above statement is bizarre in so far as it is not clear to whom a letter was allegedly sent and it is not clear on what legal basis Council has determined that Council are not responsible for maintenance or upkeep of the grid and it is the responsibility of 'a landowner' to maintain the grid in good working order.</i> <i>Section 95 of the Land Title Act 1994 states 'The land in all roads dedicated and opened for public use under the following Acts vests in, or remains vested in, the State'. Section 60 of the Local Government Act 2009 states 'A local government has control of all roads in its local government area'. Further, Section 72 of the Local Government Act 2009 provides local government with the power to assess 'the impacts on roads from certain activities' and Section 75 of the Local Government Act 2009 provided local governments with the power to take action in relation to unauthorised works on roads.</i> <i>Put simply, Council is responsible for the management and regulation of works on roads within its local government area unless that responsibility is divested for all or part of the road or works within the road through the execution of a statutory and legally binding document that states otherwise. As above, The Applicant is not aware the circumstances under which the grid was installed at the intersection of Coochie Road and the New England Highway or by whom it was installed and nor is it reasonable or relevant to the development application to impose a condition that suggests the owner of the land to which the development application relates is suddenly responsible for it now.</i> <i>The condition offends the common law principles relating to conditions of development approval noted above and is consequently unlawful and of no effect (i.e. it requires the proponent to discuss an unrelated matter with a third party, and such discussions are within an unknown legal framework and have the potential to bind the landowner of the land subject of the development application to take unknown actions that are within an unknown legal framework. It is not clear how [sic] consideration of such matters is either reasonable, relevant or whether the owner of the land subject of the development application has any right or responsibility to do so).</i> <i>It is suggested that if Council were concerned about such, they could have requested third-</i>	

party advice from DTMR during assessment of the development application under Section 34 of the Development Assessment Rules under the Planning Act 2016, Section 68 (or anytime in the last 10 years) and organised for any actions to be carried out. It is noted that if the works are unauthorised works, under Section 75 (7) of the (bold text added) 'Local Government Act 2009 'If the local government dismantles or alters the works, or fixes any damage caused by the works, the person (i.e. the person responsible for undertaking the unauthorised works) must pay the local government the reasonable costs incurred by the local government in doing so'.

If the works are unauthorised works and Council has knowingly left the unauthorised works in the road reserve for at least the last ten years, then Council has accepted the works or at best has negligently ignored the unauthorised works. If the works are authorised works, it is assumed Council is aware of whom constructed the works and under what authority the works were constructed, and it is within that legal framework that the matter must be resolved.

Condition 48 was imposed to ensure the safety of road uses at the intersection of Coochie Road and the New England Highway as a result of the development, as the development will increase the traffic on Coochie Road. At the intersection with the New England Highway, Coochie Road contains a cattle grid and a fence, all within the road reserve. The combination of the cattle grid and fence restricts the flow of traffic and does not allow two-way traffic, as shown in Figure 12 as follows:



Figure 12: Photo of cattle grid entrance at New England Highway

Whilst Coochie Road is a Council controlled road, as Coochie Road intersects with the New England Highway, advice has been received that the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) are responsible for the first 30.0 metres of the intersection.

As part of the assessment of the change application (minor), the application material was referred to the State Assessment Referral Agency (SARA) and the DTMR for third party advice. Whilst SARA refrained from providing commentary on Condition 48 due to no referral being required, DTMR provided the following commentary and request to Council:

Given the increase in development related turning traffic at the Coochie Rd – New England Hwy intersection, especially with additional event patrons who are unfamiliar with this location, on road safety grounds, I wish to confirm with you that DTMR objects to the removal of condition 48.

DTMR has undertaken an assessment and advise that the following intersection safety treatments will be required:

- Upgrade Coochie Rd – New England Hwy intersection to a BAL intersection standard, and
- Widen /remove the cattle grid to enable two way traffic to cross at the existing grid location, and
- Seal the intersection turnout from the existing sealed road edge to the existing cattle grid location, and
- Install advance side road intersection signs on both New England Hwy intersection approaches – green backing with supplementary side road street name and distance to intersection plates.

It is also preferable, to improve intersection legibility, that the existing fencing within the boundaries of the road corridor is removed.

The above is to be completed at the applicant expense and completion of the above works would satisfy condition 48.

As a result of the advice received from DTMR in relation to Condition 48, it is recommended the applicant's request is refused and the condition be retained. To provide further clarity, the condition should be amended to include a note with reference to the requirements outlined by DTMR. The note will ensure that should DTMR alter their requirements, the condition does not have to be altered as the intention of a note is for explanatory purposes.

The condition is recommended to be amended as follows:

48. *Prior to commencing the use, provide written advice from the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) that no change to the intersection of Coochie Road and New England Highway is required as a result of the development.*

The advice should have regard for the impact of development traffic, and the stock-grid adjoining the intersection. As required, complete any necessary works identified in consultation with DTMR.

Note: The following intersection safety treatments may be required:

- *Upgrade Coochie Road - New England Highway intersection to a Basic Left-turn (BAL) intersection standard; and*
- *Widen/remove the cattle grid to enable two-way traffic to cross at the existing grid location; and*
- *Seal the intersection turnout from the existing sealed road edge to the existing cattle grid location; and*
- *Install advance side road intersection signs on both New England Highway intersection approaches – green backing with supplementary side road street name and distance to intersection plates; and*
- *Remove the existing fence within the road reserve of Coochie Road.*

Please note that all works should be identified and constructed in consultation with DTMR, and is to be at no cost to Council.

Condition 1

The applicant has requested to include the Operational Management Plan as an approved plan, as part of Condition 1. The Operational Management Plan provides a 'framework for the management of Function Facility and Short-Term Accommodation and Short-Term Accommodation operations'.

Condition 2 of the development permit states that if 'there is any conflict between the conditions of this approval and the details shown on the approved plans and documents, the conditions of approval prevail'. The conditions imposed provide a compliance framework to ensure the site operates in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Scheme for this type of development. Should any part of the Operational Management Plan conflict with a Condition of Approval, as stated in Condition 2 the Conditions of Approval prevail.

Therefore, Condition 1 is recommended to be amended to include the *Operational Management Plan Function Facility & Short – Term Accommodation, Coochie Road, Dalveen, Version 3, June 2025*, prepared by *Revolution Town Planning*, as an approved plan.

On review of the change representations, Condition 13 refers to section 7 of version 2 of the Operational Management Plan, rather than version 3. There are no changes to section 7 between version 2 and version 3 of the Operational Management Plan. It is therefore recommended that Condition 13 is to be amended as follows to reflect the change.

Approved Plans

1. *The development of the site is to be generally in accordance with the following proposal plans submitted with the application, and subject to the final development being amended in accordance with the conditions of this approval.*

Plan Name	Plan No.	Date
<i>Part Site Plan South – prepared by Revolution Town Planning</i>	SK01	19 April 2025
<i>Part Site Plan North – prepared by Revolution Town Planning</i>	SK02	19 April 2025
<i>Part Site Plan – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd</i>	240262 DD Issue E Sheet 002	14 February 2025
<i>Floor Plan – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd</i>	240262 sk. Sheet 101 [D]	29 August 2024
<i>Detail Plan – Toilets – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd</i>	240262 sk. Sheet 102 [A]	29 August 2024
<i>Detail Plan – Deck – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd</i>	240262 sk. Sheet 103 [A]	29 August 2024
<i>Building Elevations – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd</i>	240262 sk. Sheet 401 [A]	29 August 2024
<i>Illustrative Views – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd</i>	240262 sk. Sheet 901 [A]	29 August 2024
<i>Proposed Development 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen Traffic Impact Statement – prepared by Pekol Traffic and Transport</i>	24-664 Revision B	18 December 2024
<i>Operational Management Plan Function Facility + Short-term accommodation, Coochie Road, Dalveen – prepared by Revolution Town Planning</i>	Version 3	25 June 2025

Land Use and Planning Controls

13. *The proposed Caretaker's accommodation is to include a site office for the management of the development. The site office is to be accessible to guests of the development, and is to include, but is not limited to including, all documents and records listed in section 7 of the Operational Management Plan Function Facility + Short-Term Accommodation, Coochie Road, Dalveen, Version 2 3, dated 25 June February 2025, prepared by Revolution Town Planning.*

Infrastructure Charges

Charges Resolution (No. 4.2) 2023 commenced 13 December 2023.

Stage 1

Development Type	Network	Charge Rate	Proposed	Credit	Charge
Residential – Caretaker's	Transport and Parks	18% of \$21,500/dwelling	1 dwelling	1 dwelling	Nil

accommodation		unit			
Accommodation (short term) - Short term accommodation	Transport and Parks	18% of \$10,750/cabin or dwelling unit	1 dwelling unit	Nil	\$1,935.00
Places of assembly - Function facility	Stormwater	\$8/impervious m ²	-	-	Nil
	Other	30% of \$53.50/m ² GFA (\$16.05/m ²)	191m ²	Nil	\$3,065.55
TOTAL:					\$5,000.55

Office use only For Caretaker's accommodation and Short-term accommodation			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	6%	\$645.00	RC243
Transport	12%	\$1,290.00	RC241
Water supply	28%	NA	RC244
Sewerage	49%	NA	RC245
Stormwater	5%	NA	RC242

Office use only For Function facility only			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	0%	NA	RC243
Transport	30%	\$3,065.55	RC241
Water supply	35%	NA	RC244
Sewerage	35%	NA	RC245
Stormwater	\$8/m ²	NA	RC242

Stage 2

Development Type	Network	Charge Rate	Proposed	Credit	Charge
Accommodation (short term) - Short term accommodation	Transport and Parks	18% of \$10,750/cabin or dwelling unit	3 cabins or dwelling units	1 cabin or dwelling unit	\$3,870.00
TOTAL:					\$3,870.00

Office use only			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	6%	\$1,290.00	RC243
Transport	12%	\$2,580.00	RC241
Water supply	28%	NA	RC244
Sewerage	49%	NA	RC245
Stormwater	5%	NA	RC242

Stage 3

Development Type	Network	Charge Rate	Proposed	Credit	Charge
Accommodation (short term) - Short term accommodation	Transport and Parks	18% of \$10,750/cabin or dwelling unit	5 cabins or dwelling units	3 cabins or dwelling units	\$3,870.00
TOTAL:					\$3,870.00

Office use only			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	6%	\$1,290.00	RC243
Transport	12%	\$2,580.00	RC241
Water supply	28%	NA	RC244
Sewerage	49%	NA	RC245
Stormwater	5%	NA	RC242

In accordance with Section 122 of the *Planning Act 2016*, the infrastructure charge is payable when the change of use happens.

Officer's Check List (Internal use only & not to be included in the Infrastructure Charges Notice)		
Officer	IC Calculations Checked	Date
Assessing Officer	✓	11 August 2025
Coordinator		
Manager		

Recommendation

THAT the change application in relation to the Development Permit dated 27 May 2025 for Material Change of Use for the purpose of Function facility (Existing shed, up to 60 guests), Caretaker's accommodation and Short-term accommodation (Five (5) units - One (1) existing dwelling house (up to eight (8) guests) and Four (4) cabins), over three (3) stages, on land at 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen, described as Lot 2 SP268864, be approved in part, and the conditions be amended as follows:

Schedule 1 - Southern Downs Regional Council Conditions

Approved Plans

- The development of the site is to be generally in accordance with the following proposal plans submitted with the application, and subject to the final development being amended in accordance with the conditions of this approval.

Plan Name	Plan No.	Date
Part Site Plan South – prepared by Revolution Town Planning	SK01	19 April 2025
Part Site Plan North – prepared by Revolution Town Planning	SK02	19 April 2025
Part Site Plan – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd	240262 DD Issue E Sheet 002	14 February 2025
Floor Plan – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd	240262 sk. Sheet 101 [D]	29 August 2024
Detail Plan – Toilets – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd	240262 sk. Sheet 102 [A]	29 August 2024
Detail Plan – Deck – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd	240262 sk. Sheet 103 [A]	29 August 2024
Building Elevations – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd	240262 sk. Sheet 401 [A]	29 August 2024
Illustrative Views – prepared by Southern Downs Building Design Pty Ltd	240262 sk. Sheet 901 [A]	29 August 2024
Proposed Development 108 Coochie Road, Dalveen Traffic Impact Statement – prepared by Pekol Traffic and Transport	24-664 Revision B	18 December 2024
Operational Management Plan Function	Version 3	25 June 2025

Land Use and Planning Controls

13. The proposed Caretaker's accommodation is to include a site office for the management of the development. The site office is to be accessible to guests of the development, and is to include, but is not limited to including, all documents and records listed in section 7 of the *Operational Management Plan Function Facility + Short-Term Accommodation, Coochie Road, Dalveen, Version 2 3*, dated *25 June February* 2025, prepared by *Revolution Town Planning*.

Building and Site Design

16. The design, colours and materials of the Function facility building and the Short-term accommodation cabins are to be in accordance with the rural character of the area. **Details of the design, colours and materials of the buildings are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issue of any Development Permit for Building Work.** The buildings are to be constructed in the approved design, colours and materials.

Note: Examples of suitable colours for the proposed buildings may include the following Hex Colour Codes: #274625, #828b7d, #e4e1d0, #bcc5b8, #ada79d, #000000, #3d3d3d, #f0efef, #cbcac8, #bca98c, #93703f, #d3b484, #dbdbdc, #8c8778, #69442e, #9d8461, #f8ead6, #cfdba6, #ceb68b, #acbb90, #d6dcc5, #aa7c57, #fdf0d0, #eee1c7.

17. ~~Deleted. A copy of the Certificate of Compliance for Plumbing and Drainage Works is to be provided to Council (see advisory note below).~~
18. ~~Deleted. A copy of the Form 21 (Final Inspection Certificate) and the Form 11 (Certificate of Occupancy) issued for the building works are to be provided to Council prior to the use commencing (see advisory note below).~~

Amenity and Environmental Controls

24. A sufficient number of suitable waste receptacles must be provided on site at all times. Waste receptacles must be regularly serviced to prevent unsightly accumulations of waste or environmental harm being caused. A waste collection contractor must be engaged to supply suitable waste and recycling receptacles and service waste and recycling receptacles. *The management of waste and waste receptacles must be in accordance with Sections 4.0, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 5.0 of the Waste Management Plan, prepared by Revolution Town Planning, submitted as part of Operational Management Plan Function Facility & Short – Term Accommodation, Coochie Road, Dalveen, Version 3, dated 25 June 2025, prepared by Revolution Town Planning.*
25. ~~Deleted. All wastes are to be suitably collected and disposed of so as not to adversely impact on the environment.~~
27. Any rubbish and litter resulting from events must be collected daily and disposed of immediately following the event at an approved Waste Management Facility. The site is to be left in a clean and tidy condition.
- Note: The maximum number of events held per week is limited to one (1), as outlined by Condition 7.*
32. Lighting is to be provided within the development including adjacent to the internal driveways. Any lighting is to be located such that there is no interference with any residences, *in accordance with the Australian Standards for external lighting.* **Details of the proposed lighting are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issuing of any Development Permit for Building Works.** Lighting is to be provided in accordance with the approved plan.

All vehicle operation areas must be illuminated in accordance with the requirements of Australian Standard AS1158 "Lighting for roads and public spaces".

Fencing, Landscaping and Buffers

34. A fence 1.8 metres high shall be erected along ~~the~~ all boundaries of the adjoining Lot 1 SP268864, ~~except except~~ within the access easement. This fencing is to be provided at the developer's cost.

Roadworks

48. Prior to commencing the use, provide written advice from the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) that no change to the intersection of Coochie Road and New England Highway is required as a result of the development.

The advice should have regard for the impact of development traffic, and the stock-grid adjoining the intersection. As required, complete any necessary works identified in consultation with DTMR.

Note: The following intersection safety treatments may be required:

- *Upgrade the Coochie Road – New England Highway intersection to a Basic Left-turn (BAL) intersection standard; and*
- *Widen/remove the cattle grid within Coochie Road to enable two-way traffic to cross at the existing grid location; and*
- *Seal the intersection turnout from the existing sealed road edge to the existing cattle grid location; and*
- *Install advance side road intersection signs on both New England Highway intersection approaches – green backing with supplementary side road street name and distance to intersection plates; and*
- *Remove the existing fence within the road reserve of Coochie Road.*

Please note that all works should be identified and constructed in consultation with DTMR, and is to be at no cost to Council.

Advisory Notes

- (x) **Plumbing and Drainage Approval is to be obtained** in accordance with the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018* for the proposed plumbing and drainage works. The application for Plumbing and Drainage approval must be submitted to Council with the appropriate **forms, plans and fees** associated with this application. A **Final Inspection Certificate of Compliance** must be issued for the works prior to the use commencing.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

15.4 Material Change of Use - Wayne R Lavender C/- NSPIRE Planning & Design: 19 O'Connell Street, Ellinthorp

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Manager Planning and Development	ECM Function No/s: MCU\02661

APPLICANT:	Wayne R Lavender C/- NSPIRE Planning & Design
OWNER:	Wayne R Lavender
ADDRESS:	19 O'Connell Street, Ellinthorp
RPD:	Lot 93 RP15888
ASSESSMENT AGAINST:	Southern Downs Planning Scheme, v5
ZONE:	Rural zone (Basalt quality grazing precinct)
PROPOSAL:	Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office)
LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT:	Impact
SUBMITTERS:	Three (3) properly made submissions
REFERRALS:	Not Applicable
CIS DATE:	29 October 2025
FILE NUMBER:	MCU\02661

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

THAT the application for Material Change of Use for a Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office) on land at 19 O'Connell Street, Ellinthorp, described as Lot 93 RP15888, be approved subject to conditions.

REPORT

Background

The site has been subject to one previous development application which is publicly available on eProperty:

- BLD\18411: Building Works – Storage Shed for Plumbing Materials & Tools – approved 11 January 2022

The building approval has since lapsed, as the final inspection was not given, as per the applicant's Planning Report.

Report



Figure 1: Site locality

The site has a site area of 1,012 square metres and is in the Rural zone (Basalt quality grazing precinct).

The site fronts O'Connell Street, a gravel road with no kerb and channel, and includes an existing storage shed for plumbing materials and tools. The site is partially mapped within the Bushfire hazard overlay, cleared of vegetation and is not provided with existing infrastructure connections.

The applicant seeks approval for a Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office) through the use of the existing shed and internal alterations. The existing shed has a gross floor area of 166.0015 square metres, including a 3 metre wide verandah. The proposed alterations include two (2) office spaces, an amenities room, storage areas and a tandem carport.

The proposed Low impact industry will operate between 6:30am to 6:30pm, Monday to Saturday, with a maximum of two (2) staff members at any one time.

The shed will be accessed via a gravel driveway and turning bay. The site will be serviced with on-site water and sewerage facilities and reticulated electricity and telecommunications. The proposal will also be landscaped within the 6 metre front setback and side and rear setbacks with a width of 2 metres.

The applicant states:

The proposed development intends to install internal wall and amenities into the existing shed that gained building approval as a class 10 by Southern Downs Regional Council on 11 January 2022 but not given a final inspection so it lapsed.

Side and rear setbacks are within the standard building regulations. Given the use on this site, it is unlikely to be an issue as little agricultural pursuits exist or likely to exist in this location particularly given the small lots in the area.

The plumbing business services the general area around the rural surroundings.

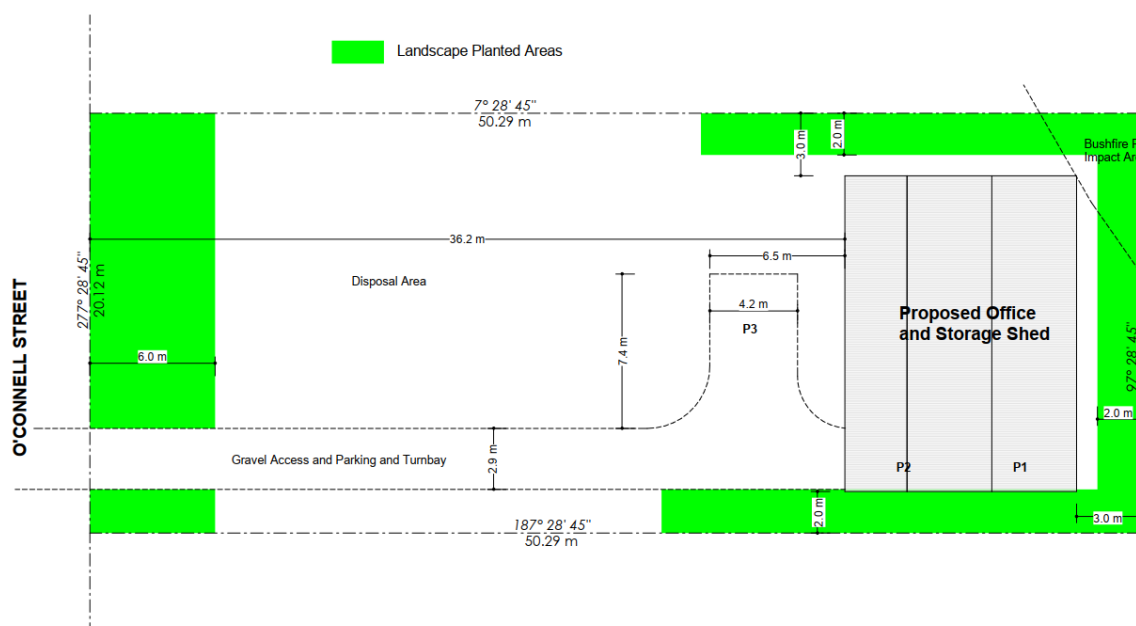


Figure 2: Proposed site plan

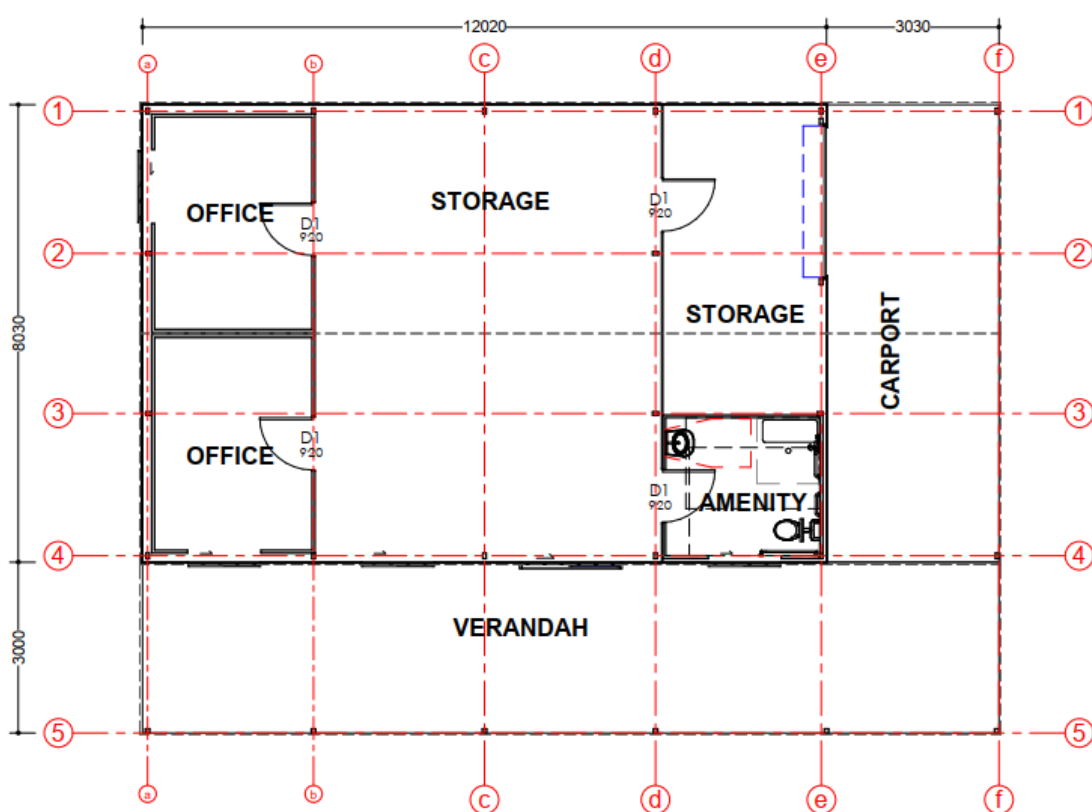


Figure 3: Proposed floor plan

Properly Made Submissions

Public notification for this development was undertaken for 16 business days from 11 September 2025 to 3 October 2025. The following actions were undertaken:

- A notice was published in Town and Country Journal on 11 September 2025.
- Notices were placed on the land on 10 September 2025.

- A notice was given to the owners of all land adjoining the land on 8 September 2025.

Compliance with the notification process has been achieved. Three (3) properly made submissions were received during the public notification period. The relevant matters raised are provided below. The applicant did not provide a response to the submissions raised.

Matters raised in submissions	Council Response
Residential character The locality is predominantly a residential area within Rural zoned land. A Low impact industry would not be approved in most residential areas. Residents live in the locality for the quiet amenity and small community environment.	It is noted that the surrounding locality is predominantly made up of residential dwellings on small rural lots. However, the site and locality are contained within the Rural zone (Basalt quality grazing precinct). The Strategic framework does anticipate industrial uses outside the Industry zone in certain circumstances. Section 3.9.3.2(7) of the Strategic framework states that <i>use of land for industrial purposes is only acceptable if the land has adequate sealed access and is flat, free from flooding and otherwise suitable for industrial development. Where land has these characteristics, development may be supported if the size, scale, location, design and nature of the proposed development are such that the amenity and character of the locality is maintained, the use does not have an adverse impact on the environment and the level of services required by the development, including electrical infrastructure, can be provided.</i> The site is accessed via O'Connell Street, an unsealed road without kerb or channel, which does not comply with the minimum road construction requirements, as per Table 9.4.7.4. However, it is considered unreasonable to impose a condition to seal O'Connell Street given the small scale nature of the proposed use and anticipated traffic generation, which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. To ensure vehicle movements are limited to the site a condition has been imposed which excludes any customers attending the site. Therefore, the existing road conditions are considered adequate for the proposal. The site is flat, free from flooding and is suitable for industrial development. The proposal is small in scale and makes use of the existing shed with minor alterations. The proposal has a maximum of two (2) staff members and proposed operational hours between 6:30am and 6:30pm, Monday to Saturday. However, a condition will be included to limit the hours of operation to 7:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Saturday, excluding public holidays to ensure the use does not impact the residential amenity of the locality. A Landscaping Plan will be conditioned to ensure screen landscaping is provided to the shed and to mitigate adverse impacts to the locality. The proposal does not include vegetation clearing and can be provided with reticulated electricity and telecommunications. On-site water and sewerage facilities will be conditioned to service the proposed development.

Matters raised in submissions	Council Response
Increased traffic and amenity/safety Increased traffic will: - disturb the serenity of the area and create safety risks. The local roads are used for active transport (i.e. walking and cycling); - cause excessive dust, leading to more maintenance for surrounding properties; and - have adverse impacts to the current wildlife in the area.	The proposed development will be accessed by utility vehicles and small light trucks, with a traffic generation commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day O'Connell Street currently does not have a posted speed limit. O'Connell Street is currently an unsealed, gravel road without kerb or channel, which does not comply with the minimum road construction requirements, as per Table 9.4.7.4. However, it is considered unreasonable to impose a condition to seal O'Connell Street given the small scale nature of the proposed use and anticipated traffic generation, which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. To ensure vehicle movements are limited to the site a condition has been imposed which excludes any customers attending the site. Therefore, the existing road conditions are considered adequate for the proposal. It is not expected that the use will lead to excessive dust emissions due to the nature of the use and limited traffic generation associated with the use. Further the minor increase in daily traffic generation is not expected to lead to adverse impacts to wildlife. It is the responsibility of drivers to drive to the road conditions and to be wary of wildlife.
Noise and fuel emissions Delivery trucks will likely keep the motor running when loading/unloading which will disturb the peace and pollute the air. Excessive noise via business operations (e.g. early operating hours) will also cause dogs in nearby properties to bark, causing further noise disturbance.	The proposed development will be conditioned to comply with the relevant noise standards. Noise levels must not exceed 5dB(A) above the background noise levels at the boundary of nearby residential dwellings. The operational use of vehicles cannot be enforced through development conditions. However, the proposal is small in nature given the limit of two (2) staff members and three (3) carparking spaces with a daily traffic generation which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. A condition has been imposed to ensure deliveries are limited to the hours of 7:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Saturday, excluding public holidays and that no customers are permitted to attend the site.
Inadequate fencing The existing fencing on the site is inadequate to provide visual screening. The fence should be upgraded and solely the responsibility of the applicant.	A vegetation planting and screen fence 1.8 metres high will be conditioned at the developer's cost along the side and rear boundaries to provide visual screening. This screen fencing is to be no more than 1.2 metres high within six (6) metres of the road boundary. A Landscaping Plan will also be conditioned and includes two (2) metre wide landscaped areas along the side and rear setbacks and a six (6) metre wide landscape buffer along the street frontage.

Matters raised in submissions	Council Response
Future businesses The approval of a Low impact industry may result in further approvals for commercial businesses. The proposal should be refused, and the area should remain residential.	It is noted that the surrounding locality is predominantly made up of residential dwellings on small rural zoned lots of a size typically found in towns and villages. However, the site and locality are contained within the Rural zone (Basalt quality grazing precinct). The proposed development will be conditioned accordingly so it complies with the relevant assessment benchmarks. Any future development in the locality will need to demonstrate compliance with the relevant assessment benchmarks.
Devalued land The proposed development will deter potential buyers and devalue the surrounding land.	The future property prices in the area are not a matter which can be considered in the assessment of a planning application, this is not a planning matter.
Use of vacant lots The proposed development may use the nearby vacant lots for a turning circle which will damage the grassed areas.	The proposed development is limited to the use of the subject site (Lot 93 RP15888).
Incorrect plans The submitted Wastewater Disposal Report has the incorrect address.	It is noted that the On-site Wastewater Disposal Report prepared by Osborn Consulting Engineers, dated 10 March 2025, incorrectly states the site as 21 O'Connell Street and Lot 94 RP15888. A condition of approval will be included requiring the submission of an on-site waste water disposal report for the site to be reviewed and endorsed by Council.

Assessment against the Planning Scheme

Benchmarks applying to the development
The following codes of the Southern Downs Planning Scheme are benchmarks applying to the development: – Strategic framework – 6.2.10 Rural zone code – 8.2.3 Bushfire hazard overlay code – 9.3.5 Industry uses code – 9.4.2 Carparking and loading code – 9.4.4 Landscaping code – 9.4.5 Outdoor lighting code – 9.4.6 Physical infrastructure code

The proposed development complies with all Acceptable outcomes of the relevant codes, except those addressed below.

Strategic framework

3.3 Settlement pattern

3.3.10 Element – Land use impacts

3.3.10.1 Specific outcomes

(7) The location of industry, intensive animal industry operations and sensitive uses, particularly residential activities, are managed to protect the health, well being, amenity and safety of

communities and individuals from the impacts of air, noise and odour emissions and from the impacts of hazardous materials and to support and protect industry and rural uses in appropriate locations.

The proposed development is small in scale and makes use of the existing shed to retain a built form that reflects the local area. The use is not expected to generate significant air, noise or odour emissions.

The proposal has a maximum of two (2) staff members and will be accessed by utility vehicles and small light trucks, with four (4) vehicle movements expected per day. The proposal will be conditioned to ensure noise levels do not exceed 5dB(A) above the background noise levels at the boundary of nearby residential dwellings.

A Landscaping Plan will also be conditioned and includes two (2) metre wide landscaped areas along the side and rear setbacks and a six (6) metre wide landscape buffer along the street frontage. A screen fence 1.8 metres high will also be conditioned along the side and rear boundaries to provide visual screening.

3.6 Natural resources and landscape

3.6.2 Element – Rural land and production areas

3.6.2.2 Land use strategies

(3) Eight precincts have been identified within the Rural zone. These precincts have been determined having regard to land type, land use, land resources, nature conservation values, water values, scenic amenity and the existing pattern of lot sizes. The precincts therefore summarise the opportunities and constraints for new development in the Rural zone including agricultural diversification. Protection of the agricultural land resource is important in all of the precincts and uses and activities that compromise the agricultural resource in the precincts will not be supported. The Alluvial plains, Basalt quality grazing, Walloon arable and Granite Belt precincts contain the greatest concentrations of agricultural land and intensively cultivated land. Development in these precincts will only be supported if it is complementary and compatible with the dominant agricultural land uses.

The site is within the Rural zone (Basalt quality grazing precinct), and the proposed development is not ancillary to the agricultural land uses of the area. However, the proposed Low impact industry will service the locality through the provision of plumbing goods. The site also does not have significant agricultural capacity given the small lot size and that it is not on land identified as Agricultural land classification - class A and B under the State Planning Policy.

3.9 Economic development

3.9.3 Element – Industry

3.9.3.1 Strategic outcomes

(2) Alternative locations for industries are available subject to satisfactory access provisions and compatible integration into the surrounding area and protection of the environment.

3.9.3.2 Land use strategies

(7) Development of land for industrial purposes outside the Industry zone may be acceptable particularly where the industry has a rural focus or is dependent on the use of goods produced in the rural area or in the case where the industry services a local catchment. The use of land for industrial purposes is only acceptable if the land has adequate sealed access and is flat, free from flooding and otherwise suitable for industrial development. Where land has these characteristics, development may be supported if the size, scale, location, design and nature of the proposed development are such that the amenity and character of the locality is maintained, the use does not have an adverse impact on the environment and the level of services required by the development, including electrical infrastructure, can be provided.

(8) New industrial development is not located on the edge of towns or villages where it contributes to the piecemeal or unplanned development of these centres or where it potentially contributes to ribbon development.

The surrounding locality is predominantly made up of residential dwellings on small rural lots. However, the site and locality are contained within the Rural zone (Basalt quality grazing precinct) and has opportunity for a mix of land uses, provided that the development complies with the relevant assessment benchmarks.

The site is accessed via O'Connell Street, an unsealed road without kerb or channel, which does not comply with the minimum road construction requirements, as per Table 9.4.7.4. However, it is considered unreasonable to impose a condition to seal O'Connell Street given the small scale nature of the proposed use and anticipated traffic generation, which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. To ensure vehicle movements are limited to the site a condition should be imposed which excludes any customers attending the site. Therefore, the existing road conditions are considered adequate for the proposal.

The site is flat, free from flooding and is considered suitable for industrial development as the proposal is small scale and with the imposition of conditions is not expected to have an adverse impact on the surrounding locality. The proposal is small in scale and makes use of the existing shed with minor alterations. The proposal has a maximum of two (2) staff members and proposed operational hours between 6:30am and 6:30pm, Monday to Saturday. However, a condition will be included to limit the hours of operation to 7:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Saturday, excluding Sunday and public holidays to ensure the use does not impact the residential amenity of the locality.

A Landscaping Plan will be conditioned to ensure screen landscaping is provided to the shed and to mitigate adverse impacts to the locality. The proposal does not include vegetation clearing and can be provided with reticulated electricity and telecommunications. On-site water and sewerage facilities will be conditioned to service the proposed development.

Rural zone code

AO4.2 *Uses other than Dual occupancy, a Home based business or Short-term accommodation (not exceeding 12 guests) have access to the Region's road network via fully constructed sealed roads from the property boundary.*

The proposed Low impact industry is accessed via O'Connell Street, an unsealed gravel road, classified in the 2023 Road Hierarchy as a Rural Minor Access Road. As the road is not sealed, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO4 *The safe and efficient operation of roads and access is maintained having regard to the nature of vehicles using the road, the location of uses that may be adversely affected by noise or dust generated by the use of the road and the location and design of access.*

The site will be accessed via an approved vehicle crossover. The use is small scale with a traffic generation, which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. To ensure vehicle movements are limited to the site a condition has been imposed which excludes any customers attending the site. It is not expected that the use will lead to excessive dust emissions due to the nature of the use and limited traffic generation associated with the use. Therefore, the existing road conditions are considered adequate for the proposal.

AO8 *In partial fulfilment of this PO –*

- (a) All new industrial buildings are set back at least 100 m from the Cunningham Highway and New England Highway and 60 m from all other roads.*
- (b) All other buildings are located at least 20 metres from any sealed road and at least 60 metres from any gravel road.*

The proposal is setback approximately 36 metres from O'Connell Street and approximately 53 metres from Dalrymple Creek Road. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO8 *Development is sensitive and responsive to the scenic amenity of the area. The appearance and siting of buildings, other structures, carparking areas or signage is compatible with the scenic*

character of the area, particularly when viewed from roads. The development is sensitive to the design of any nearby structures and is respectful and sympathetic to any Local heritage place.

The site has a depth of less than 60 metres therefore it cannot provide a setback of 60 metres. The existing shed has a front setback of 36.2 metres, which exceeds the front building line of properties along O'Connell Street. The proposal does not increase the existing building envelope as the proposed building work is limited to internal alterations. A Landscaping Plan will also be conditioned and includes two (2) metre wide landscaped areas along the side and rear setbacks, in proximity to the shed, and a six (6) metre wide landscape buffer along the street frontage to screen the development.

Bushfire hazard overlay code



Figure 4: Bushfire hazard overlay mapping

AO3.1 The use is sited on land that is determined as not having a bushfire hazard by a site specific bushfire hazard assessment.

OR

- The use is sited on locations of lowest hazard on the lot (where the whole of an allotment is identified as having the same level of bushfire hazard, all locations are taken to be of lowest hazard on the lot);
- The use is setback at least 1.5 times the predominant mature canopy tree height or 20 metres (whichever is the greater) from hazardous vegetation;
- The use is sited at least 10 m from any retained vegetation strips or small areas of vegetation;
- The use is sited so that the elements of the development least susceptible to fire are located closest to the bushfire hazard;
- The use has on site water storage, of not less than 10,000 litres for each building, that is kept exclusively for fire fighting purposes and, if a tank, is fitted with approved fire fighting fittings;
- Efficient, practical access to buildings and water supply for fire fighting appliances is constructed and maintained; and
- The occupants of the development have more than one effective and reasonable route of escape by standard motor vehicle once they have exited the subject site.

A site specific bushfire hazard assessment has not been provided.

PO3 *Any proposed use does not compromise the safety of people or property from bushfire.*

The site is partially mapped within the Bushfire hazard overlay, with a small portion of land in the north west corner, impacted by the potential impact buffer. However, the existing shed, and access to O'Connell Street, is outside of the potential impact buffer. The site is not in proximity to retained vegetation strips or mature vegetation. The proposed use will be limited to two staff members who in a bushfire event can safely evacuate the site via the surrounding road network. Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with the Bushfire hazard overlay code.

Industry uses code

AO1.2 *The land is not in a Bushfire hazard area as shown on the Bushfire hazard overlay maps.*

The subject site is partially mapped within the Bushfire hazard overlay. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO1 *The physical characteristics of the land are suitable for industrial use.*

The existing shed is located outside of the potential impact buffer. Given the small scale nature of the use, there is likely adequate response time for users to evacuate the site during a bushfire event. The site is also flat, free from flooding and provides adequate area for required services.

AO2 *In partial fulfilment of the PO – (a) Access to the site is via a fully constructed sealed road.*

Note: In the Rural zone, access via a gravel constructed road may be acceptable for small scale industries with low traffic volumes.

PO2 *The site is accessed via a road that is of a standard to adequately cater for the traffic generated by the use without causing traffic hazards, damage to the road or dust nuisance to persons or property not connected with the use.*

The site will be accessed via an approved vehicle crossover. The use is small scale with a traffic generation, which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. To ensure vehicle movements are limited to the site a condition has been imposed which excludes any customers attending the site. It is not expected that the use will lead to excessive dust emissions due to the nature of the use and limited traffic generation associated with the use. Therefore, the existing road conditions are of a standard to adequately cater for the traffic generated by the use without causing traffic hazards, damage to the road or dust nuisance to persons or property not connected with the use.

Carparking and loading code

AO1.1 *The number of parking and loading spaces is not less than the minimum number specified in Table 9.4.2.4. Where the calculation of applicable parking rates results in a fraction, the number required will be the next highest whole number. Council may accept an alternative to providing the required spaces on the development site in accordance with Planning Scheme Policy – Off Street Carparking.*

AO1.2 *Car parks are kept and used exclusively for parking and maintained in a suitable condition for parking.*

The proposal includes three (3) carparking spaces in lieu of four (4) spaces, as required in Table 9.4.2.4. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO1 *Sufficient carparking is provided to accommodate the number and type of vehicles likely to be generated by the development having regard to the following:*

- (a) the nature and operation of the use;*
- (b) the likely number of users including residents and employees;*
- (c) the hours of operation and the peak parking demand periods;*
- (d) the availability of alternative parking in the vicinity including on street car parking;*
- (e) in the case of residential development, the proximity to the Principal centre zone and the facilities contained within that zone;*
- (f) the feasibility of physically providing parking on site including access restrictions and size of the site; and*

(g) The provisions of Planning Scheme Policy – Off Street Carparking.

The proposed carparking provision is sufficient as there will be a maximum of two (2) staff members, which will use the tandem carport. The proposal is not open to the public therefore additional car parking will not be required. The site will be accessed predominantly by utility vehicles and occasionally by small light trucks with sufficient room onsite for vehicles to manoeuvre. The proposal therefore complies with the Performance outcome.

Landscaping code

PO9 *Where a buffer is required to separate agricultural and residential land uses, or buffer any use in the Rural zone the buffer is to: (a) Contain random plantings of a variety of native, preferably, endemic tree and shrub species of differing growth habits, at spacings of 4-5 m for a minimum width of 20 m (unless a lesser width is permitted by a use code or an approval); (b) Provide foliage from the base to the crown; (c) Include species which are fast growing and hardy; (d) Have a mature tree height at least 3 m; and (e) Include an area at least 10 m clear of vegetation or other flammable material to either side of the vegetated area.*

To ensure the proposal incorporates appropriate buffers to residential land uses the proposal includes landscaped setback areas of six (6) metres along the street frontage and two (2) metres along the side and rear boundaries. A Landscaping Plan will be conditioned to ensure appropriate plantings are carried out. With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Landscaping code.

Outdoor lighting code

The standard conditions will be imposed to ensure any proposed outdoor lighting does not cause nuisance to nearby residents. With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Outdoor lighting code.

Physical infrastructure code

AO4

- (a) All Caretaker's accommodation, Dwelling houses and Dual occupancies in the Rural zone, are erected on lots that have access via a constructed road.*
- (b) A Dwelling house in the Rural residential zone or Township zone is erected on a lot that has access via a constructed road.*
- (c) For all development other than that described in (a) and (b), the road providing access to the development is constructed in accordance Table 9.4.7.4.*

The site is accessed via an unsealed road which does not comply with Table 9.4.7.4. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO4 *Constructed road access that links with the constructed road network is provided to the development. The site is accessed via a road that is of a standard to adequately cater for the traffic generated by the use without causing traffic hazards, damage to the road or traffic or dust nuisance to persons or property not connected with the use.*

The site will be accessed via an approved vehicle crossover. The use is small scale with a traffic generation, which is expected to be commensurate to that of a residential dwelling i.e. 4 – 7 vehicle trips a day. To ensure vehicle movements are limited to the site a condition has been imposed which excludes any customers attending the site. It is not expected that the use will lead to excessive dust emissions due to the nature of the use and limited traffic generation associated with the use. Therefore, the existing road conditions are of a standard to adequately cater for the traffic generated by the use without causing traffic hazards, damage to the road or dust nuisance to persons or property not connected with the use.

Infrastructure Charges

Charges Resolution (No. 4.2) 2023 commenced 13 December 2023.

A Low impact industry attracts a charge of 18% of \$38.50 per square metres of gross floor area (GFA) and \$8.00 per impervious square metres attributed to the stormwater network charge. As

there is no stormwater infrastructure in this location, the \$8.00 per impervious square metres will not apply.

The Low impact industry has a GFA of 96.5 square metres. As the credit exceeds the attributed charge, no infrastructure charges are payable as a result of this development. It is noted that the credits applying the lot are now fully exhausted.

Development Type	Networks	Charge Rate	Proposed	Credit	Charge
Low impact industry	All	18% of \$38.50 per m ² of GFA = \$6.93/m ²	96.5 m ² = \$668.75	1 lot 18% x \$21,500 = \$3,870.00	\$0.00
TOTAL:					\$0.00

Office use only			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	6%	nil	RC243
Transport	12%	nil	RC241
Water supply	28%	nil	RC244
Sewerage	49%	nil	RC245
Stormwater	5%	nil	RC242

In accordance with Section 122 of the *Planning Act 2016*, the infrastructure charge is payable when the change of use happens.

Recommendation

THAT the application for Material Change of Use - Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office) on land at 19 O'Connell Street, Ellinthorp, described as Lot 93 RP15888, be approved subject to the following conditions:

Schedule 1 - Southern Downs Regional Council Conditions

Approved Plans

- The development of the site is to be generally in accordance with the following proposal plans submitted with the application, and subject to the final development being amended in accordance with the conditions of this approval.

Plan Name	Plan No.	Date
Site Plan, prepared by NSPIRE Planning & Design	102SP, DA02	20 May 2025
Floor Plan, prepared by NSPIRE Planning & Design	110FP, DA02	20 May 2025
Site Layout Plan, prepared by NSPIRE Planning & Design	101SP, DA01	20 May 2025

- Where there is any conflict between the conditions of this approval and the details shown on the approved plans and documents, the conditions of approval prevail.

Land Use and Planning Controls

- This approval allows for the use of the site for the following uses only:
 - Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office)
- The development shall generally operate only between the hours of 7:00am to 6.00pm, Mondays to Saturdays, and not at all on Sundays and public holidays.
- The maximum number of workers accommodated at any one time must not exceed two (2) persons.
- No customers associated with the Low impact industry are permitted to attend the site.
- The areas identified on the Floor Plan are only to be used for Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office). At no point is the Low impact industry able to be occupied by

people in accordance with the definition of a 'household' or rented out for residential purposes on a short or long term basis without the necessary approvals/permits.

Amenity and Environmental Controls

8. During the construction phase of the development, all wastes must be separated into recyclables (where possible) and landfill wastes and disposed of at an approved Waste Management Facility.
9. Noise levels emitted from the premises must not exceed 5dB(A) above the background noise levels in the locality when measured at the boundary of an affected residential dwelling and must not exceed 10dB(A) above the background noise levels in the locality when measured at the boundary of a commercial premises. This may include the need to use noise attenuating materials in the building.
10. The loading and/or unloading of delivery and other service vehicles (excluding general waste collection vehicles) is limited between the hours of 7.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Saturday, and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. No heavy vehicles must enter the development site outside these times to wait for unloading/loading.
11. A sufficient number of suitable waste receptacles must be provided on site at all times. Waste receptacles must be regularly serviced to prevent unsightly accumulations of waste or environmental harm being caused.
12. All wastes are to be suitably collected and disposed of so as not to adversely impact on the environment.
13. No materials or goods associated with the development are to be displayed or stored within the car park or landscaped areas, or outside the boundaries of the site.
14. The cleaning of plant equipment and vehicles must be carried out in an area where wastewater can be suitably managed so as not to cause contaminants to release into waterways or overland flow paths.
15. Advertising Devices relating to the Low impact industry (Plumbing goods storage and office) may **only** be erected on the subject land, i.e. Lot 93 RP15888. The location, size, type and content of any advertising sign or device located on the land is to be compatible with the Rural character of the surrounding area. No advertising signs or devices are to be located on any other land, unless all applicable approvals are obtained under the Planning Scheme and the relevant local laws. No advertising signs or devices are to be located within the road reserve.
16. All equipment, goods and materials must be located in a building or screened from view from all roads, other public places and adjoining land by fencing and/or dense landscaping.
17. Any external lighting must be installed so that light shines down and away from adjacent properties and roads, and does not exceed 8 lux at the property boundary.

Fencing, Landscaping and Buffers

18. A screen fence 1.8 metres high shall be erected along the side and rear boundaries to provide visual screening. This screen fencing is to be provided at the developer's cost. This fencing shall reduce in height to be no more than 1.2 metres high within 6.0 metres of the road boundary.
19. **Details of the proposed fencing are to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the issue of a Development Permit for Building Work.** Fencing is to be provided and maintained in accordance with the approved details.
20. The setbacks are landscaped in accordance with the Site Plan DA02 prepared by NSPIRE Planning and Design, dated 20 May 2025, where the site is landscaped for at least six (6) metres from the primary street frontage and two (2) metres from side and rear boundaries.

Note: Fire retardant species must be used within the area impacted by the Bushfire hazard overlay.

21. **A Landscaping Plan is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the commencement of the use.** The Landscaping Plan is to be prepared by an appropriately qualified person, and must include details of the location and species of plants, the irrigation system and the height and material of fencing. Plants are to be generally frost resistant and drought hardy, and must not include weed species. Root barriers are to be installed around trees that are located within 3 metres of any underground infrastructure. The site is to be landscaped and maintained in accordance with the approved Landscaping Plan.

Car Parking and Vehicle Access

22. The proposed development is to be accessed via an approved vehicle crossover.
- Note: approval for Minor Works – Works in a Road Reserve is required for any new access, or existing access that has not been previously approved.*
23. A 3.0 metre wide all-weather driveway is to be constructed from O'Connell Street to the Low impact industry. The driveway may remain gravel, provided they are appropriately maintained and do not cause a dust nuisance. If complaints are received (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistaken belief) or the vehicle entrance and driveway become eroded with material becoming deposited outside of the site or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the driveway shall be sealed to Council's standards.
24. At least three (3) car parking spaces are to be provided on site.
25. All car parking, driveway and loading areas shall be constructed in gravel, drained, laid out and regularly maintained.
- The carpark may remain gravel, provided it is appropriately maintained and does not cause a dust nuisance. If complaints are received (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistaken belief) or the vehicle entrance and driveway become eroded with material becoming deposited outside of the site or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the carpark shall be sealed to Council's standards.
26. All loading and unloading of goods related to the development must be carried out within the confines of the allotment's boundary. Under no circumstances will the loading or unloading of goods on the public roadway system or footpath be permitted. A vehicle loading area with associated driveway and access to accommodate a semi-trailer/B-Double must be provided on site in accordance with AS2890.2 – 2002 (Off-street parking - Commercial vehicle facilities).

Roadworks

27. If the annual average trip rate associated with the use exceeds eight (8) light vehicles per day, and one (1) heavy vehicle per week, road access to the site is to be improved to a sealed standard. If upgrades to O'Connell Street are required to satisfy this condition, the works are to include the full frontage of the subject lot, connecting the site to Dalrymple Creek Road, and include all necessary re-work required to ensure the performance of the new work.

Note: an operational works application would be required to undertake the works.

Stormwater Drainage

28. The proposed development must have a lawful point of discharge determined in accordance with the *Queensland Urban Drainage Manual* (QUDM). A stormwater management plan, including plans for any proposed stormwater infrastructure, may be required to demonstrate compliance with QUDM. Any required stormwater management plan must be prepared by a suitably qualified RPEQ and submitted for endorsement by Council prior to the commencement of the use.

For any proposed use where it cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated that storm-water associated with the use can be directed to the frontage kerb or alternative lawful point of discharge, an inter-allotment drainage system must be designed and constructed in accordance with QUDM.

Inter-allotment drainage systems and overland flow paths, including those affecting adjacent properties, must be wholly contained within easements. Easements are to have a minimum width of three (3) metres, and be provided to Council at no cost to Council.

Water Supply and Waste water

29. The proposed development is to be provided with on-site water storage sufficient to serve the needs of the proposed development.
30. All sewage generated from this property must be disposed of by means of an on-site sewage facility (OSSF) in accordance with the AS/NZS 1547:2012 - *On-site Domestic Wastewater Management, Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code* and the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003*.
31. **An on-site waste water disposal report is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the commencement of the use.** The report is to be prepared by an appropriately qualified person, and the site is to be managed in accordance with the approved report.

Electricity, Street Lighting and Telecommunications

32. Reticulated electricity connections must be provided to the proposed development to the standards of the relevant authorities.
33. In accordance with the Federal Government's National Broadband Network (NBN) initiatives, the Developer (at the Developer's expense) is to install telecommunications infrastructure, such as lead-in conduits (LIC) or a fibre ready pit and pipe network (including trenching and ducting, design and third party certification), to NBN Co's specifications, to allow for the installation of Fibre-to-the-Premises (FTTP) broadband services. Any fibre provider may be used, provided they meet NBN specifications and open access requirements. Ownership of the infrastructure is to be transferred to Telstra in exchange for the provision of fibre within that infrastructure network. Prior to commencement of the use, written advice is to be provided from Telstra that the telecommunications infrastructure network has been installed in accordance with NBN Co's specifications.

Advisory Notes

- (i) Unless otherwise stated, all conditions of this approval are to be complied with to the satisfaction of the Director Planning and Environmental Services, prior to the use commencing, and then compliance maintained at all times while the use continues.
- (ii) Any proposal to increase the scale or intensity of the use on the subject land, that is assessable development under the Planning Scheme, would be subject to a separate application for assessment in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016* and would have to comply with the requirements of the Planning Scheme.
- (iii) It is encouraged that you arrange for a compliance inspection to be carried out prior to the use commencing. This will involve a physical inspection of the premises along with an internal audit of Council's records. Written advice will be provided for your records advising if compliance with the conditions has been achieved.
- (iv) The General Environmental Duty under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* prohibits unlawful environmental nuisance caused by noise, aerosols, particles dust, ash, fumes, light, odour or smoke, beyond the boundaries of the property during all stages of the development including earthworks, construction and operation.
- (v) **Plumbing and Drainage Approval is to be obtained** in accordance with the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018* for the proposed plumbing and drainage works. The application for

Plumbing and Drainage approval must be submitted to Council with the appropriate **forms, plans and fees** associated with this application. A **Certificate of Compliance must be issued** for the works prior to the use commencing.

- (vi) **Building Approval is to be obtained** for a Class 7b in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016* for the shed. The building application must be submitted to a Building Certifier with the appropriate **forms, plans and fees** associated with this application. The building plans are to accord with the plans approved in this approval. The building is to be constructed in accordance with the Building Approval prior to the commencement of the use. A **Form 11 (Certificate of Classification) must be issued for the building works prior to the use commencing.**
- (vii) The applicant is to permit Council officers access to the site in accordance with the powers of entry provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009*, subject to 48 hours notice and reasonable security and health restrictions on access, so as to ensure the use is being conducted in accordance with the conditions of the approval.
- (viii) Council will not be sealing O'Connell Street as a result of any dust complaints received.
- (ix) Prior to constructing or upgrading an access, an application must be submitted and approved by Council for a permit under Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011 and Subordinate Local Law No. 1.15 (Carrying Out Works on a Road or Interfering with a Road or its Operation) 2011.
- (x) Site works must be constructed such that they do not, at any time, in any way restrict, impair or change the natural flow of runoff water, or cause a nuisance or worsening to adjoining properties or infrastructure.
- (xi) A Development Permit for Operational works and Plumbing and Drainage Works should be obtained prior to the issue of a Development Permit for Building Works where required.
- (xii) All engineering drawings/specifications, design and construction works must be in accordance with the requirements of the relevant *Australian Standards* and must be approved, supervised and certified by a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland.

Telecommunications in New Developments

- (xiii) For information for developers and owner builders, on important Commonwealth telecommunication rules that need to be complied with, visit www.infrastructure.gov.au/tind

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

- (xiv) All reasonable and practicable measures must be taken to ensure that no harm is caused to Aboriginal cultural heritage (the "cultural heritage duty of care"). The cultural heritage duty of care is met if the development is conducted in accordance with gazetted cultural heritage duty of care guidelines. Further information on cultural heritage, together with a copy of the duty of care guidelines and cultural heritage search forms, may be obtained from www.datsip.qld.gov.au

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

15.5 Consideration of Change Representations: Eastlorden Pty Ltd C/- Alpha Planning Applications – Cunningham Highway & Rabbitt Road, Leslie

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Planning Officer	ECM Function No/s: RC\02067

APPLICANT:	Eastlorden Pty Ltd C/- Alpha Planning Applications
OWNER:	Eastlorden Pty Ltd
ADDRESS:	Cunningham Highway & Rabbitt Road, Leslie
RPD:	Lots 1 & 2 ML1753 and Lots 4 & 253 ML1754
ASSESSMENT AGAINST:	Southern Downs Planning Scheme (v.5)
ZONE:	Rural (Alluvial Plains and Sandstone Rises and Traprock Hills precincts)
PROPOSAL:	Realignment of boundaries (Four (4) lots into three (3) lots)
LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT:	Impact
SUBMITTERS:	Two (2) properly-made submissions
REFERRALS:	Nil
CIS DATE:	29 October 2025
FILE NUMBER:	RC\02067

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

THAT Council agree in part with the change representations made in relation to the application for Realignment of boundaries (Four (4) lots into three (3) lots) land at the Cunningham Highway and Rabbitt Road, Leslie, described as Lots 1 & 2 ML1753 and Lots 4 & 253 ML1754.

REPORT

On 23 July 2025, Council issued a Development Permit for the purpose of Realignment of boundaries (Four (4) lots into three (3) lots), on land at the Cunningham Highway and Rabbitt Road, Leslie, described as Lots 1 & 2 ML1753 and Lots 4 & 253 ML1754, subject to conditions.



Figure 1: Aerial of subject land

The subject premises is comprised of four (4) lots which are situated within the locality of Leslie. The land has a combined area of 140.6 hectares. The Cunningham Highway traverses the subject lots, with each lot containing a portion of land to the north and south of the Cunningham Highway connected by vinculum. All lots abut Sandy Creek to the north and adjoin Rabbitt Road to the south. The Cunningham Highway is a State-controlled, bitumen sealed road without kerb and channel. Rabbitt Road is both a bitumen sealed road and a gravel constructed road without kerb and channel along the frontage of the site. The bitumen sealed segment of Rabbitt Road extends from the intersection with the Cunningham Highway to the intersection with Pink Gum Lane to the west.

The land to the north of the Cunningham Highway contains cultivated fields and paddocks used for agricultural purposes. The land to the south of the Cunningham Highway contains scattered vegetation. There are no buildings or structures contained within the four (4) lots.

The land is near an Extractive industry to the south, being Hutchinson Quarries. The Extractive industry has an approval to allow the extraction and processing of up to 750,000 tonnes of material per year. The Extractive industry involves the use of explosives, blasting and screening.

The development proposes a realignment of boundaries to consolidate the cultivated fields and paddocks into one lot. Lot 2 ML1753 (eastern-most lot) is wholly impacted by flooding, and as such, the lot cannot be considered as a usable lot. The Flood hazard overlay extends over most of Lot 1 ML1753.

Table 1 shows the proposed lot sizes and existing infrastructure contained within.

Table 1: Proposed lot details

Proposed Lot	Area (m ²)	Buildings & Structures	Frontage/Access
Lot 4	107.1983	Nil	Cunningham Highway

Lot 5	16.661	Nil	Cunningham Highway and Rabbitt Road (sealed)
Lot 6	16.775	Nil	Cunningham Highway and Rabbitt Road (sealed and gravel constructed)

The proposal plan for the boundary realignment is as follows:

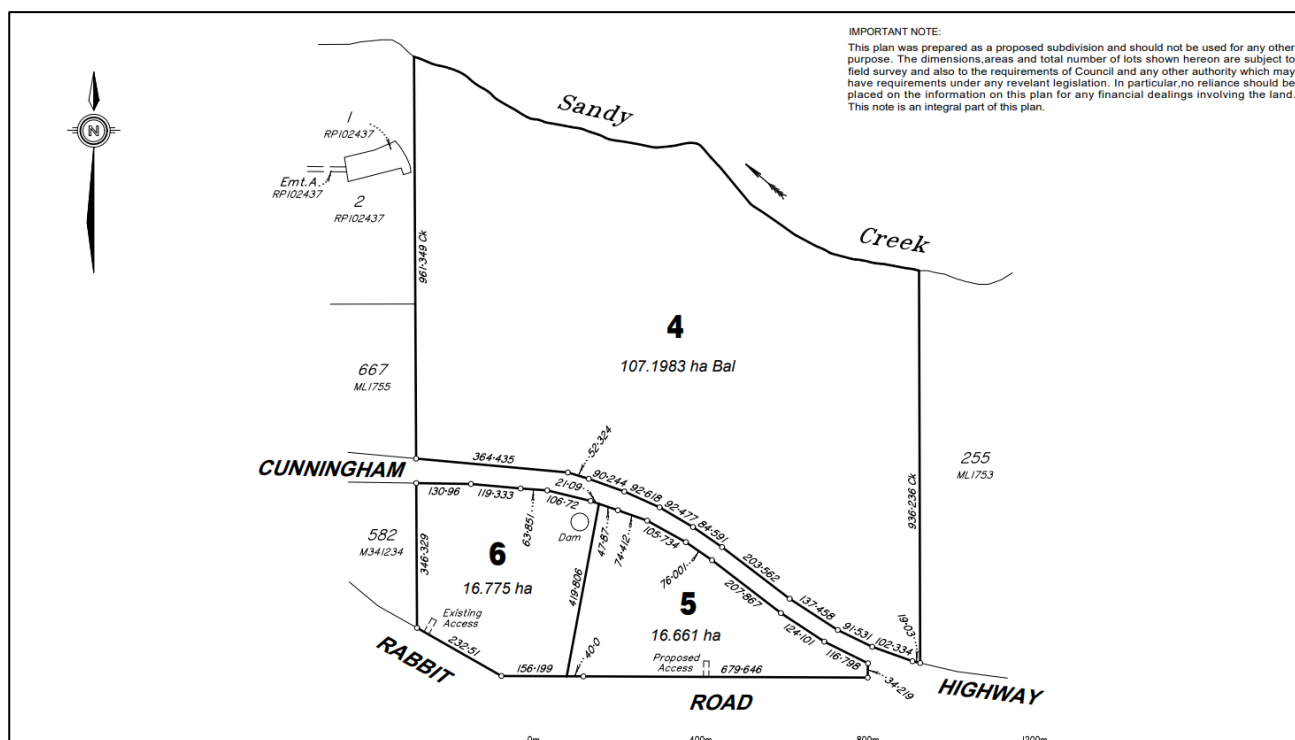


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

Representations

The applicant has made change representations and has requested the deletion of Conditions 2, 3 and 4. Conditions 2, 3 and 4 relate to the requirement for landscaping and landscaping buffers, and are as follows:

Table 2: Condition analysis

Condition Imposed		Applicant's Proposed Changes
Representations and Covenants		
2.	A statutory covenant for the continued maintenance of the treed buffers (as referred to in Condition 3) is to be provided over proposed Lots 5 and 6 along the southern boundary. The covenant documentation is to be submitted to Council for approval prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision.	Deleted.
Landscaping, Landscaping and Buffers		
3.	Buffer areas of 20.0 metres in width are to be provided along the southern boundary of proposed Lots 5 and 6, except within the location of the vehicle access to each proposed lots. Within these buffer areas, existing native vegetation is to be retained and allowed to naturally regenerate. Within the 20 metres of these buffer areas, random plantings of a variety of native trees and shrubs of differing growth habits are to be provided at spacings of 4-5 metres. The trees and shrubs must be of species that are fast growing, frost resistant, drought hardy and fire retardant and/or mesic. The buffer	Deleted.

	<i>is to have a mature tree height of at least 3.0 metres. The trees and shrubs are to be planted prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision. The vegetated buffers are to be maintained so they form an effective buffer.</i>	
4.	A Landscaping Plan is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the planting of the treed buffers. The Landscaping Plan is to be prepared by an appropriately qualified person, and must include details of the location and species of plants, the irrigation system and the height and material of fencing. Plants are to be generally frost resistant and drought hardy, and must not include weed species. Root barriers are to be installed around trees that are located within 3 metres of any underground infrastructure. The site is to be landscaped and maintained in accordance with the approved Landscaping Plan.	Deleted.
2-4.	<u>Applicant's Justification</u> <i>The three conditions requiring design approval and the establishment of a 20m landscape buffer along the southern boundary of proposed Lots 5 and 6, secured by a Vegetation Protection Covenant, are considered in this instance to be unnecessary and inconsistent with sound planning principles for the reasons outlined below.</i> 1. Duplication of an Existing Buffer <i>A substantial treed buffer, secured by covenant, already exists between the development site and extractive operations at Hutchison Quarry. This buffer and covenant are located on quarry land and are conditions of the quarry's current development approval (MCU\01996.02), approved on 29 August 2023.</i> <i>If the intent of the conditions is to provide 'extra protection' for future dwellings, a 20m strip is tokenistic and ineffective, representing less than a 10% increase in separation when accounting for Rabbit Road, the railway corridor, and the intervening lots. This marginal addition does not materially improve amenity or environmental outcomes and fails to achieve any meaningful planning purpose. An additional 20m buffer on Lots 5 and 6 offers no measurable benefit. It duplicates an existing, much larger covenanted buffer that already mitigates visual, environmental, and amenity impacts.</i> 2. Findings from the Reverse Amenity Assessment <i>The Reverse Amenity Statement prepared by Yarramine Environmental reviewed air quality, noise, vibration, and blasting impacts associated with Hutchison Quarry. This included analysis of the air quality and noise/vibration assessments prepared by Assured Environmental and Groundwork Plus for the 2023 quarry approval, as well as a sensitive receptor analysis.</i> <i>The statement concludes that the proposed development will not create reverse amenity issues or restrict quarry operations, confirming that additional buffers are unnecessary.</i> 3. Quarry Approval Confirms Adequacy of Existing Buffers <i>The quarry's most recent approval confirms that the existing covenanted buffer fully achieves the intended purpose of mitigating visual, environmental, and amenity impacts. Importantly, no changes were required by SDRC or State agencies during the [latest] quarry expansion approval process in relation to managing potential amenity impacts, even with production increasing to 750,000 tonnes per annum.</i> <i>While it is acknowledged that a future dwelling on proposed Lots 5 or 6 could be closer to the quarry than some of the receptors assessed in the quarry's approval (as noted above), this does not justify imposing an additional 20m buffer. The Reverse Amenity Statement and reviewed technical assessments confirm that even at this closer distance, predicted air quality, noise, and vibration levels remain well within regulatory limits.</i>	

Therefore, the existing buffer - ranging from 105 to 210m and legally protected by covenant, together with additional separation afforded by Rabbit Road, the railway lines and intervening lots - remains adequate to manage amenity impacts, and the proposed 20m strip would not materially improve outcomes.

4. Increased Compliance Burden Without Benefit

The requirement for a Vegetation Protection Covenant introduces unnecessary administrative and financial obligations for both the landowner and SRDC without delivering any measurable environmental or amenity benefit.

5. Inconsistent with Planning Principles

The Planning Act 2016 requires conditions to be reasonable and relevant. The adequacy of separation should be guided by technical evidence rather than by applying additional fixed-width buffers without demonstrated need. In this case:

- The quarry's own approved modelling and the Reverse Amenity Statement confirm that even at the closest point (271 m), predicted air quality, noise, and vibration levels across proposed Lots 5 and 6 remain well within regulatory limits.
- SDRC and State agencies accepted the existing buffer strategy as adequate during the 2023 quarry expansion approval, despite acknowledging the potential for future dwellings in the surrounding area.
- Imposing an extra 20m does not materially improve amenity or environmental outcomes and therefore fails the reasonableness test under the Act.

Overall, the requirement for the 20m buffer is unnecessary, disproportionate, and unsupported by technical evidence. Existing covenanted buffers, combined with compliance confirmed through detailed modelling, already achieve the intended planning outcomes. The additional requirement offers no measurable benefit, imposes avoidable costs, and does not meet the Act's requirement for reasonable and relevant conditions.

Council's response

Conditions 2, 3 and 4 have been imposed based on the following provision within the Planning Scheme:

AO37

... (f) Unless the rearrangement is a minor change to a boundary to overcome an encroachment of a building, building envelopes of at least 20m x 20m can be provided on all new lots. The building envelope:

- (i) excludes land which is located within 50 m of a watercourse; and
- (ii) complies with the setbacks required for a dwelling house in accordance with the Assessment criteria in this planning scheme

The development will result in the creation of proposed Lots 5 and 6 which cannot achieve a building envelope of 20.0 metres x 20.0 metres outside of the required setback of 1,000 metres from an existing Extractive industry that involves screening, crushing and blasting activities, as per AO5 of the Residential uses code. Therefore, the development must comply with the Performance outcome.

PO37 Rearrangement of the boundaries of existing lots:

- (a) results in new lots that are generally the same size as the existing lots, or the rearrangement results in a more sustainable rural land resource;
- (b) involves only lots that are adjoining lots, or lots adjacent to each other (i.e. on the opposite side of a road);
- (c) does not lead to increased fragmentation of rural land;

- (d) does not increase the potential for conflict between rural and non-rural land uses;*
- (e) allows for coordinated land management (e.g. ensuring water resources and the land to be irrigated are on the same lot);*
- (f) avoids hazards (such as bushfire prone areas); and*
- (g) results in improved environmental outcomes.*

The applicant's representations to remove landscaping conditions will not impact the proposed development's compliance with PO37 (a)-(c) and (e)-(g), which remains as previously assessed. An assessment against PO37 (d) is as follows:

Proposed Lots 5 and 6 will be wholly located within 1,000 metres of an Extractive industry to the south, and will increase the number of lots within this setback. The applicant has provided a Reverse Amenity Statement prepared by Yarramine Environmental which included a review of the nearby quarry's air, noise and vibration assessment approved as part of the Extractive industry's development approval. The Reverse Amenity Statement provided the following conclusion:

Given Assured Environmental's [the Air Quality and Noise & Vibration Assessments approved as part of the development approval given for the Extractive industry] recent assessments supporting the quarry expansion, which indicate minimal impact on surrounding sensitive receptors and by extension the proposal site, it is unlikely that approving the proposed boundary realignment will result in adverse noise, dust, or vibration effects on future residences. The establishment of these residences is not expected to significantly interfere with the quarry's currently approved extractive activities. Therefore, there are no reverse amenity or land use conflict concerns that would justify amending or refusing the proposal.

The Extractive industry to the south, being Lot 8 SP315342, contains a covenant along the southern boundary which has a minimum width of 105 metres. The covenant is for the continued maintenance of a vegetation buffer along the boundary, with its purpose being to screen the development and mitigate potential impacts to adjoining land, shown in the image as follows:

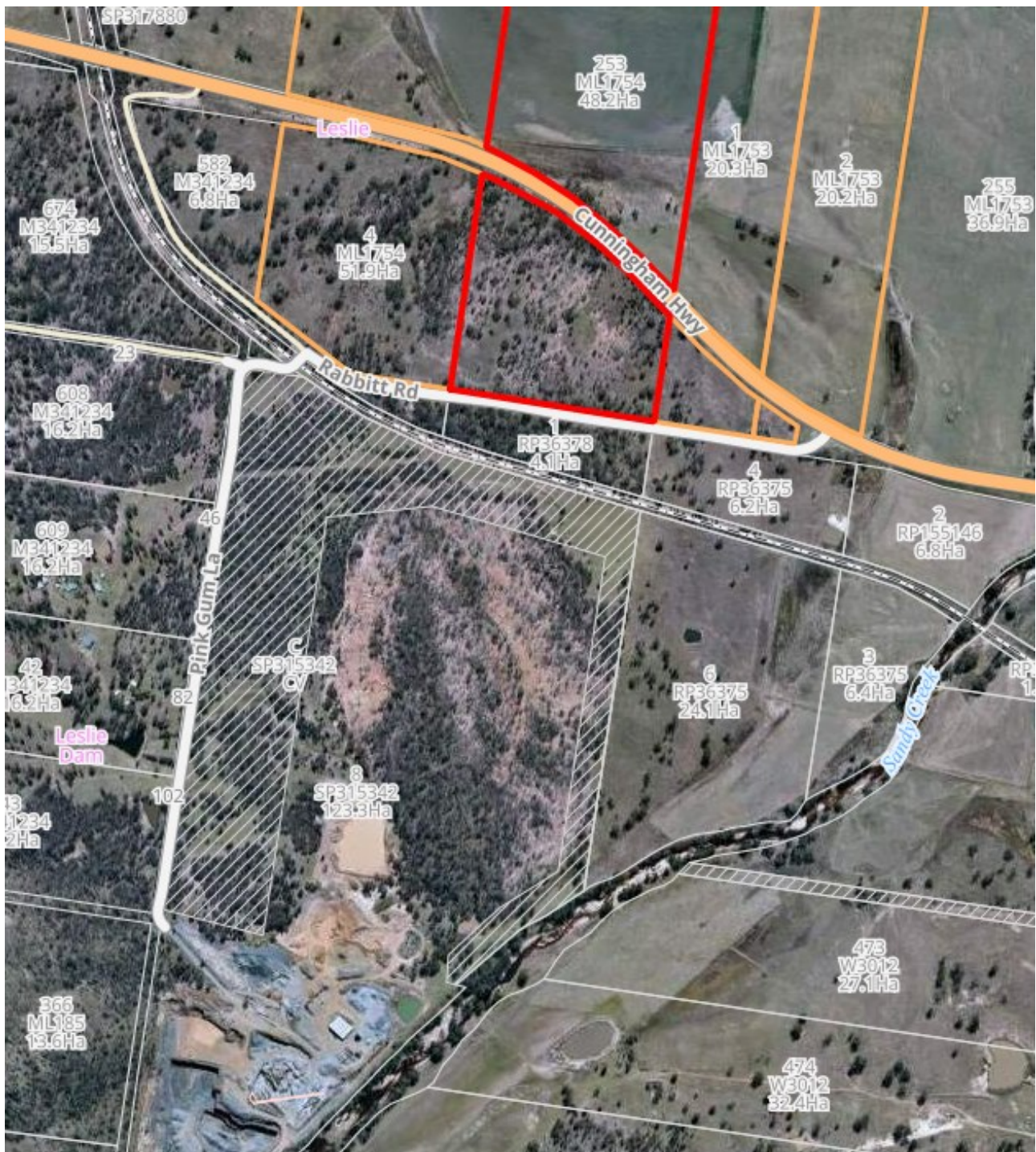


Figure 3: Aerial image of the subject premises and the covenants for the nearby Extractive industry

It is relevant to note that Rabbitt Road, from the intersection with Pink Gum Lane to the intersection with the Cunningham Highway, is a haulage route for the Extractive industry.

The Planning Scheme provides guidance on specific requirements for vegetative buffers in the Rural zone. The guidance is located within PO9 of the Landscaping code, and requires the buffers with a width of 20.0 metres. The Planning Scheme does not present an Acceptable outcome for buffers, emphasising the importance of the criteria0 outlined in the Performance outcome. The purpose of vegetative buffers is to separate uses that may cause conflict with a residential activity in the Rural zone.

An Extractive industry is not a rural activity, as defined by the *Planning Regulation 2017*. The applicant has outlined the imposition of a vegetative buffer along the Rabbitt Road frontage of the site is not required to reduce conflict between rural and non-rural land uses considering the

existing vegetative buffer and covenant area within the premises to the south containing the Extractive industry.

It is recognised that there is a vegetative buffer to the south of the site, however, proposed Lots 5 and 6 will be located wholly within a 1,000 metre radius of the approved Extractive industry and will maintain frontage to Rabbitt Road which is a haulage route for the Extractive industry. To ensure the development does not increase the potential for conflict between rural and non-rural land uses, it is recommended that the condition is modified to ensure that vegetation within 20.0 metres of the Rabbitt Road boundary of the site is to be retained and maintained, as per the width of the vegetative buffers outlined in PO9 of the Landscaping code. In addition, no residential buildings are to be constructed within 20.0 metres of the boundary with Rabbitt Road.

Through the imposition of conditions and with consideration given to the above, the development can comply with the Performance outcome.

As a result of the above assessment of the representations, the Conditions of Approval are recommended to be amended as follows:

Table 3: Recommended changes to conditions

	Condition Imposed	Recommended Change to condition	Result of change to condition
ements and Covenants			
2.	A statutory covenant for the continued maintenance of the treed buffers (as referred to in Condition 3) is to be provided over proposed Lots 5 and 6 along the southern boundary. The covenant documentation is to be submitted to Council for approval prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision.	A statutory covenant for the continued maintenance of the treed—buffers existing vegetation (as referred to in Condition 3) is to be provided over proposed Lots 5 and 6 along the southern boundary. The covenant documentation must ensure buildings and structures are not permitted within the setback and that the vegetation is maintained. The covenant documentation is to be submitted to Council for approval prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision.	A statutory covenant for the continued maintenance of the existing vegetation (as referred to in Condition 3) is to be provided over proposed Lots 5 and 6 along the southern boundary. The covenant documentation must ensure buildings and structures are not permitted within the setback and that the vegetation is maintained. The covenant documentation is to be submitted to Council for approval prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision.
ing, Landscaping and Buffers			
3.	Buffer areas of 20.0 metres in width are to be provided along the southern boundary of proposed Lots 5 and 6, except within the location of the vehicle access to each proposed lots. Within these buffer areas, existing native vegetation is to be retained and allowed to naturally regenerate. Within the 20 metres of these buffer areas, random plantings of a variety of native trees and shrubs of differing growth habits are to be provided at spacings of 4-	All trees within an Buffer areas of 20.0 metres in width are to be provided retained and maintained along the southern boundary of proposed Lots 5 and 6; except within the location of the vehicle access to each proposed lots. Within these buffer areas; The existing native vegetation is to be retained and allowed to naturally regenerate. Within the 20 metres of these buffer areas, random plantings of a variety of native trees and	All trees within an area of 20.0 metres in width are to be retained and maintained along the southern boundary of proposed Lots 5 and 6. The existing native vegetation is to be retained and allowed to naturally regenerate. <i>Note: No trees are to be removed for the establishment of vehicular access. Any access and internal driveway must be located such that unobstructed access at least</i>

	5 metres. The trees and shrubs must be of species that are fast growing, frost resistant, drought hardy and fire retardant and/or mesic. The buffer is to have a mature tree height of at least 3.0 metres. The trees and shrubs are to be planted prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision. The vegetated buffers are to be maintained so they form an effective buffer.	shrubs of differing growth habits are to be provided at spacings of 4-5 metres. The trees and shrubs must be of species that are fast growing, frost resistant, drought hardy and fire retardant and/or mesic. The buffer is to have a mature tree height of at least 3.0 metres. The trees and shrubs are to be planted prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision. The vegetated buffers are to be maintained so they form an effective buffer. <i>Note: No trees are to be removed for the establishment of vehicular access. Any access and internal driveway must be located such that unobstructed access at least 3.0 metres wide and with a clearance height of 3.0 metres can be achieved without any clearing of existing vegetation within the 20.0 metre wide area.</i>	3.0 metres wide and with a clearance height of 3.0 metres can be achieved without any clearing of existing vegetation within the 20.0 metre wide area.
4.	A Landscaping Plan is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the planting of the treed buffers. The Landscaping Plan is to be prepared by an appropriately qualified person, and must include details of the location and species of plants, the irrigation system and the height and material of fencing. Plants are to be generally frost resistant and drought hardy, and must not include weed species. Root barriers are to be installed around trees that are located within 3 metres of any underground infrastructure. The site is to be landscaped and maintained in accordance with the approved Landscaping Plan.	Deleted.	Deleted.

Submissions

There were two (2) properly made submissions raised with the original application. The submissions related to the proximity of the proposed lots to the existing extractive industry to the south. The applicant's representations and Council's subsequent assessment may potentially impact the matters raised in the submissions and as such, have been considered as follows and amended in red:

Matters raised in submissions	Response
Proximity to quarry operations "We are currently in the process of establishing a Key Resource Area around the quarry.... Notably, on the north side of this boundary (Quarry Pit C), the distance to the highway is approximately 917.32 to 464.75 metres, which raises significant concerns about safety and environmental impact, especially in relation to our blasting operations." "Hutchinson Quarry is a key industry for our region. It involves blasting, crushing and screening. Quarry has had approval for many years to move towards Rabbitt Road. The Extractive industry licence boundary is close to Rabbitts [sic] Road. There is a deposit of blue metal that runs close to Rabbitts [sic] Road."	Council response: The applicant has provided a Reverse Amenity Statement which reviewed the documentation provided with the development approval given for the Extractive industry. The report concludes that the establishment of residences on proposed Lots 5 and 6 <i>"is not expected to significantly interfere with the quarry's currently approved extractive activities"</i>. An assessment regarding the conflict between rural and non-rural land uses, with regard given to the lot design and siting in proximity to the quarrying activities, has been undertaken in the Assessment against the Planning Scheme section of the report. The retention of all trees along the boundary of the proposed lots will be required. Landscaping Conditions can be imposed in accordance with the landscaping buffer requirements within the Planning Scheme.

Recommendation

THAT Council agree in part with the change representations made in relation to the application for a Realignment of boundaries (Four (4) lots into three (3) lots), on land at the Cunningham Highway and Rabbitt Road, Leslie, described as Lots 1 & 2 ML1753 and Lots 4 & 253 ML1754, and Conditions 2 and 3 of approval be amended as follows and Condition 4 is deleted:

Easements and Covenants

2. A statutory covenant for the continued maintenance of the ~~treed buffers~~ **existing vegetation** (as referred to in Condition 3) is to be provided over proposed Lots 5 and 6 along the southern boundary. **The covenant documentation must ensure buildings and structures are not permitted within the setback and that the vegetation is maintained.** The covenant documentation is to be submitted to Council for approval prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision.

Fencing, Landscaping and Buffers

3. **All trees within an Buffer areas** of 20.0 metres in width are to be **provided retained and maintained** along the southern boundary of proposed Lots 5 and 6, ~~except within the location of the vehicle access to each proposed lots. Within these buffer areas,~~ The existing native vegetation is to be retained and allowed to naturally regenerate. ~~Within the 20 metres of these buffer areas, random plantings of a variety of native trees and shrubs of differing growth habits are to be provided at spacings of 4-5 metres. The trees and shrubs must be of species that are fast growing, frost resistant, drought hardy and fire retardant and/or mesic. The buffer is to have a mature tree height of at least 3.0 metres. The trees and shrubs are to be planted prior to the signing of the Plan of Subdivision. The vegetated buffers are to be maintained so they form an effective buffer.~~

Note: No trees are to be removed for the establishment of vehicular access. Any access and internal driveway must be located such that unobstructed access at least 3.0 metres wide and with a clearance height of 3.0 metres can be achieved without any clearing of existing vegetation within the 20.0 metre wide area.

4. Deleted. ~~**A Landscaping Plan is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department prior to the planting of the treed buffers.**~~ The Landscaping Plan is to be prepared by an appropriately qualified person, and must include details of the location and species of plants, the irrigation system and the height and material of fencing. Plants are to be generally frost resistant and drought hardy, and must not include weed species. Root barriers are to be installed around trees that are located within 3 metres of any underground infrastructure. The site is to be landscaped and maintained in accordance with the approved Landscaping Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

15.6 Other Change to Material Change of Use – Meteora Vineyard Pty Ltd C/- Urbis Ltd: 87 Rees Road, Ballandean

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Manager Planning and Development	ECM Function No/s: MCU\02556.01

APPLICANT:	Meteora Vineyard Pty Ltd C/- Urbis Ltd
OWNER:	Meteora Vineyard Pty Ltd
ADDRESS:	87 Rees Road, Ballandean
RPD:	Lot 3 RP55067, Lot 10 RP63306 and Lot 1 RP63307
ASSESSMENT AGAINST:	Southern Downs Planning Scheme, v5
ZONE:	Rural (Granite Hills precinct)
PROPOSAL:	Other Change - Food and Drink outlet, Winery (Cellar Door) and Short-term accommodation (Three (3) cabins)
LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT:	Impact
SUBMITTERS:	One (1) properly made submission
REFERRALS:	Not Applicable
CIS DATE:	29 October 2025
FILE NUMBER:	MCU\02556.01

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

THAT the Other Change application to include a Food and drink outlet for Material Change of Use for Winery (Cellar door) and Short-term accommodation (Three (3) cabins) on land at 87 Rees Road, Ballandean, described as Lot 1 RP63307, be approved and the conditions be amended.

REPORT

Background

On 20 May 2024, Council issued a Development Permit for a Material Change of Use for a Winery (Cellar door) and Short-term accommodation (Three (3) cabins) on land at 87 Rees Road, Ballandean, formally described as Lot 1 RP63307, Lot 3 RP55067 and Lot 10 RP63306 (MCU\02556).

The approved site plan is provided in Figure 1:



Figure 2: Subject site

The subject site consists of three (3) lots located within the township of Ballandean:

1. Lot 3 RP55067 has an area of 6.417 hectares and includes a Winery (cellar door) and wine store/production shed. It is noted that access from this lot to Rees Road is via Lot 10 RP63306.
2. Lot 10 RP63306 has an area of 12.776 hectares and includes an existing shed, two (2) dams and two (2) Short-term accommodation cabins.
3. Lot 1 on RP63307 has an area of 6.074 hectares and includes an existing Dwelling house, dam and one (1) Short-term accommodation cabin. It is noted that access from this lot to Rees Road is via Lot 3 RP55067 and Lot 10 RP63306.

All three (3) lots include internal access roads and are predominantly used for the existing vineyard.

The applicant seeks an Other Change to MCU\02556, to include a Food and drink outlet and extend the hours of operation. The Food and drink outlet will utilise 607 square metres of the existing Winery and apply to area shown in Figure 3.

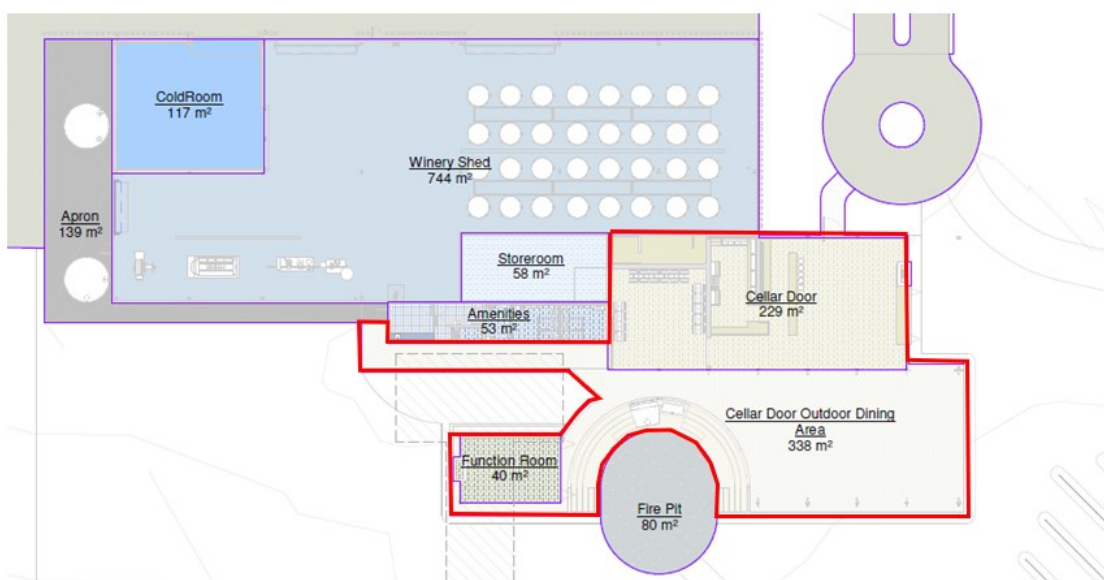


Figure 3: Food and drink outlet applicable area

The proposed hours of operation are detailed below:

- 11.00am to 10.00pm, Monday to Sunday, including public holidays

It is noted that no building works or changes to the approved plans are proposed.

The applicant has provided the following justification:

It seeks to formalise a Food and Drink Outlet land use at the site to allow for the sale of charcuterie boards for Winery patrons to consume on-site.

Fundamentally, this additional land use allows the Applicant to offer wider service provision to the patrons of Cellar Door and guests of the Vineyard. Whilst at the outset, this land use will allow for the sale of charcuterie boards, or similar, this land use will also allow the Applicant to operate a restaurant on-site if the market dictates a requirement for this to occur.

The current approval imposes general hours of operation for the Winery to be between 11.00am and 7.00pm on Thursday through Sunday. This change application proposes new hours of operation, applicable to the existing Winery and the proposed Food and Drink Outlet, as between 11.00am and 10.00pm daily – i.e. 7 days per week, including public holidays.

Properly Made Submissions

Public notification for this development was undertaken for 15 business days from 5 September 2025 to 26 September 2025. The following actions were undertaken:

- A notice was published in the Stanthorpe Today newspaper on 4 September 2025.
- Notices were placed on the land on 4 September 2025.
- A notice was given to the owners of all land adjoining the land on 4 September 2025.

Compliance with the notification process has been achieved. One (1) properly made submission was received during the public notification period. The relevant matters raised are provided below.

Matters raised in submissions	Response
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Matters raised in submissions	Response
Traffic increase on Rees Road The proposed development will generate a significant traffic increase on Rees Road, which exceeds the road capacity.	The proposal is not expected to result in a significant increase in traffic on Rees Road. The applicant provided an Acoustic Assessment Letter prepared by ATP Consulting dated 20 August 2025 that advises the site currently has approximately 50 daily visitors and the proposed development is expected to generate an additional 15 daily vehicle movements. Rees Road is a sealed road without kerb and channel with a minimum width of approximately 4 metres. Rees Road services limited lots. A review of Rees Road by an RPEQ should be conditioned to be undertaken to ensure compliance with the Lower Order Road Design Guideline.
Speed limit and concealed driveways Concealed driveways along Rees Road creates a safety issue for oncoming traffic. A speed limit of 40 or 50 kilometres per hour may reduce risk to safety. Signs including 'Slow. Concealed driveways' and 'Look out for wildlife' are requested.	Rees Road currently has five (5) driveways, excluding the subject site and is not subject to significant volume of traffic. A review of Rees Road by an RPEQ should be conditioned to be undertaken to ensure compliance with the Lower Order Road Design Guideline.

Matters raised in submissions	Response
Amenity and impacts to wildlife Increased traffic will reduce amenity of surrounding properties (e.g. noise) and threaten more wildlife. Signage can be provided to prevent roadkill.	The proposal is not expected to result in a significant increase in traffic on Rees Road as the change is expected to result in an additional 15 daily vehicle movements. An Acoustic Assessment Letter was prepared by ATP Consulting, dated 20 August 2025, to assess the noise emissions from the proposed development and recommend noise mitigation measures. The proposal is estimated to generate 65 daily vehicle movements and increase patron and vehicle noise emissions by a decibel. The proposal was recommended to adhere to the following noise mitigation measures: • All operations associated with the cellar door, winery and food and drink outlet must cease by 10:00 pm. • All visitors, excluding patrons from the short-term accommodation, must have vacated the site premises by 10:30 pm. • No amplified music shall be played or operated in any outdoor areas of the premises from 7:00pm to 10:00pm. • Any indoor entertainment amplified noise (music and PA systems) must be controlled by management only. • All amplified music (speakers) must be limited to the default amplified noise limits for licensed venues under the Liquor Act 1992 of no louder than a sound pressure level of 70dB(A) LAeq,adj,15min and 75dB(C) LCeq,adj,15min measured at a distance of 3 metres from the speaker. • The above noise limits can be amended based on licensed venue specific acoustic assessment carried out at the liquor licensing stage. The acoustic assessment must be carried out in accordance with Guideline 51 by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR). The recommendations of the Acoustic Assessment Letter will be conditioned to mitigate adverse noise impacts. A review of Rees Road by an RPEQ should also be undertaken to ensure compliance with the Lower Order Road Design Guideline.
Oversupply of tourist accommodation Recent approvals of tourist attractions and accommodation businesses do not align with the intended character of the area.	Rees Road currently provides access to the subject site, which includes a Winery (Cellar door) and Short-term accommodation (Three (3) cabins), as well as one (1) other Short-term accommodation use on Lot 2 SP112546. As per Section 3.3.2.2(4) of the Strategic framework, Ballandean is strategically located for additional tourist and residential development because of the proximity of commercial vineyards, wineries and existing tourist accommodation. The addition of a Food and drink outlet and increase in hours of operation will complement the existing development on the site as well as the intended character of the area. Conditions will be imposed to protect the character of the area.

Assessment against the Planning Scheme

Benchmarks applying to the development

The following codes of the Southern Downs Planning Scheme are benchmarks applying to the development:

- Strategic framework
- 6.2.10 Rural zone code
- 8.2.2 Biodiversity areas overlay code
- 8.2.3 Bushfire hazard overlay code
- 9.3.8 Retail and commercial uses code
- 9.4.2 Carparking and loading code
- 9.4.4 Landscaping code
- 9.4.5 Outdoor lighting code
- 9.4.6 Physical infrastructure code

The proposed development complies with all Acceptable outcomes of the relevant codes, except those addressed below.

Strategic Framework

3.3.2.2 Land use strategies

(4) *Glen Aplin and Ballandean south of Stanthorpe are strategically located for additional tourist and residential development because of the proximity of commercial vineyards and wineries and existing tourist accommodation. Both villages are connected to Stanthorpe by an on road bicycle way.*

The addition of a Food and drink outlet and increase in hours of operation will contribute to the tourist offerings at the site and will advance the land use strategies of the Strategic framework.

Rural zone code

PO1 The rural or natural environment character of the land is retained. Uses established in the Rural zone do not conflict with rural land uses or the natural, scenic and community values of the area. No development is to proceed within the area defined as the proposed Emu Swamp Dam.

PO2 Rural activity on land is protected from conflict with other uses that are not rural uses.

The development is not within the area defined as the proposed Emu Swamp Dam.

The proposed change involves the addition of a Food and drink outlet which will complement the existing Winery and Short-term accommodation uses on the site. The existing uses and the addition of the Food and drink outlet will not conflict with the existing agricultural use of the land, instead it will complement the existing vineyards.

The Food and drink outlet will be located within an existing building which is located centrally onsite and therefore the rural character of the land will be maintained.

A review of the acoustic information has been undertaken, with the following commentary provided:

Liquor licensing noise management is at the source as indicated in the [acoustic letter]. It does not necessarily equate to noise mitigation from an environmental noise nuisance perspective.

..., the closure of the food and drink outlet by 10.00 p.m. and all visitors to vacate by 10.30 p.m. are supported. This is in line with the default noise standard for an entertainment venue.

The limitation of all amplified music to the indoors is also a positive.

However, there may be ongoing patron noise from those using the short-term accommodation and additional traffic noise from 7.00 until 10.30 p.m. from visitors leaving the site. This may be an issue for the nearest sensitive receiver with passing traffic.

Should [Council] receive noise nuisance complaints we also have the authority under the EPA [Environmental Protection Act] to enforce the default noise standards.

A condition should be imposed in relation to dealing with any noise complaints and associated monitoring.

The additional hours of operation will be managed through conditions of approval to ensure the rural character of the land is maintained.

The addition of a Food and drink outlet and is not out of character within the existing site and the locality of Ballandean. Therefore, it is considered the development complies with the Performance outcome.

AO4.2 *Uses other than Dual occupancy, a Home based business or Short-term accommodation (not exceeding 12 guests) have access to the Region's road network via fully constructed sealed roads from the property boundary.*

The proposed Food and drink outlet is accessed via gravel internal roads and requires access to Rees Road via Lot 10 RP63306. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO4 *The safe and efficient operation of roads and access is maintained having regard to the nature of vehicles using the road, the location of uses that may be adversely affected by noise or dust generated by the use of the road and the location and design of access.*

The proposed Food and drink outlet and hours of operation may not adversely impact on the operation of roads and access. The proposal does not include an increase in the approved gross floor area or carparking spaces and will use the existing internal access roads. The conditioned gravel driveways are appropriate for the proposed and existing land uses.

It is considered appropriate that a review of Rees Road be undertaken by a Registered Professional Engineer in Queensland (RPEQ) to ensure compliance with the Lower Order Road Design Guidelines. This review will include shoulders, sight distances and signage, etc., are appropriate.

With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

Retail and commercial uses code

The change introduces a commercial use, therefore assessment against the Retail and commercial uses code is required.

PO1 *Uses are centrally and conveniently located to service a particular catchment. Uses with a regional focus or which would be more appropriately located in the Principal centre, District centre, Specialised centre, Mixed use or Township zone are not established outside these zones.*

The Food and drink outlet will be located within an existing building and will complement the existing use of the site. The Food and drink outlet is associated with an existing use and is not of a scale that would require it to be located within a Centre, Mixed use or Township zone. The proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

PO2 *The use does not contribute to ribbon development along major roads and highways or contribute to unplanned or piecemeal development of centres*

The Food and drink outlet will be located within an existing building which is centrally located on the site and not visible from any major roads or highways, therefore not contributing to unplanned or piecemeal development of centres. The proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

AO3.2 *The land is not in an area identified as bush fire hazard on the Bushfire hazard overlay maps.*

The internal access roads to the proposed Food and drink outlet are mapped within the Bushfire hazard overlay. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO3 The physical characteristics of the land are suitable for the use.

The original approval imposed a condition for all internal driveways to be constructed to at least a gravel standard to ensure safe evacuation of people from the Winery and Short-term accommodation cabins. As the proposed Food and drink outlet is applicable to the Winery use area, the land is suitable for the proposed use. With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

AO4 In partial fulfilment of the PO –

(a) Access to the site is via a fully constructed sealed road.

(b) In all urban zones, except the Township zone, the frontage of the site is kerbed and channelled.

The site has access to a sealed road (Rees Road) however, the internal access roads within Lot 3 RP55067 are of gravel construction. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO4 The site is accessed via a road that is of a standard to adequately cater for the traffic generated by the use without causing traffic hazards, damage to the road or dust nuisance to persons or property not connected with the use.

The proposed Food and drink outlet and hours of operation may not significantly increase traffic generation to the Winery. The conditioned gravel driveways are appropriate for the proposed and existing land uses.

It is considered appropriate that a review of Rees Road be undertaken by a Registered Professional Engineer in Queensland (RPEQ) to ensure compliance with the Lower Order Road Design Guidelines.

With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

AO5.1 (b) Where the site adjoins land in the Rural residential or Rural zone a landscaped setback at least 20 m wide is provided along the primary street frontage of the site (apart from vehicle access points) and 10 m wide along any secondary street frontage, to allow for landscaping in accordance with the Landscaping code.

The site adjoins land in the Rural zone and does not incorporate a landscape setback of 20 metres along the primary frontage of the site. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO5 Retail and commercial buildings and other structures are designed and constructed in a manner that complements the existing built form in the immediate area.

The Food and drink outlet will be located in an existing building that is centrally located on the site. The building is located amongst vineyards and has a substantial setback to Rees Road. The development involves low scale buildings that sit neatly amongst the natural setting and complement the existing built form in the immediate area. The proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

PO8 Stormwater is controlled to minimise the environmental impacts of runoff from the use and its associated carpark, on the water quality of surface and ground water.

The Food and drink outlet will be located within an existing building, and the Food and drink outlet will utilise existing car parking areas therefore there is no change to the stormwater regime onsite. The proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

PO9 Waste water is controlled to minimise the impacts from the retail and commercial use on water quality of surface and ground water.

A condition of approval has been included that requires all sewage generated from this property must be disposed of by means of an on-site sewage facility. With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

AO10 The use is connected to all urban services including reticulated water, sewerage, stormwater, electricity and communications services available in the locality.

PO10 The use is serviced with appropriate infrastructure.

Bushfire hazard overlay code

Figure 4: Bushfire hazard overlay mapping

Carparking and loading code

In the Principal centre zone and the District centre zone:

(b) where an existing non-residential building is extended, additional parking spaces are provided at the rate shown in Table 9.4.2.4 for the extension only.

The proposal does not meet the minimum number of carparking spaces as specified in Table 9.4.2.4. Therefore, compliance with the Performance outcome must be achieved.

PO1 Sufficient carparking is provided to accommodate the number and type of vehicles likely to be generated by the development having regard to the following:

- (a) the nature and operation of the use;
- (b) the likely number of users including residents and employees;
- (c) the hours of operation and the peak parking demand periods;
- (d) the availability of alternative parking in the vicinity including on street car parking;
- (e) in the case of residential development, the proximity to the Principal centre zone and the facilities contained within that zone;
- (f) the feasibility of physically providing parking on site including access restrictions and size of the site; and
- (g) The provisions of Planning Scheme Policy – Off Street Carparking.

The proposal will use the existing 35 carparking spaces and apply to the approved Winery use area, which has a gross floor area of 1,416 square metres. As per Table 9.4.2.4, approximately 95 spaces are required for the proposed Food and drink outlet, given a minimum requirement of one (1) space per 15 square metres of gross floor area. However, as the Winery and Food and drink outlet uses are co-located and linked, the proposed use and hours of operation are not likely to adversely impact on peak parking demands or the anticipated number of users. With conditions imposed, the proposal is considered to comply with the Performance outcome.

Infrastructure Charges

Charges Resolution (No. 4.2) 2023 commenced 13 December 2023.

Development Type	Network	Charge Rate	Proposed	Credit	Charge
Accommodation - Short term accommodation Charge Parks and Transport	Parks and Transport	18% of \$10,750/cabin	3 cabins	2 lots	-\$1,935.00
High impact rural - Winery	Stormwater	Nil	-	-	NA
	Transport	30% of \$15.50/m ² GFA	809m ²	-	\$3,761.85
Commercial (retail) – Food and drink outlet	Stormwater	\$8/m ²	607m ²	-	NA
	Transport	30% of \$138/m ²	607m ²	-	\$25,129.80
TOTAL:					\$26,956.65

For Short-term accommodation only

Office use only			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	6%	\$0.00	RC243
Transport	12%	\$0.00	RC241
Water supply	28%	NA	RC244
Sewerage	49%	NA	RC245
Stormwater	5%	NA	RC242

For Winery and Food and drink outlet

Office use only			
Network	Proportion of Charge	Charge/ Network	Receipt Code
Public Parks and land for community facilities	6%	\$0.00	RC243
Transport	12%	\$26,956.65	RC241
Water supply	28%	NA	RC244
Sewerage	49%	NA	RC245
Stormwater	5%	NA	RC242

In accordance with Section 122 of the *Planning Act 2016*, the infrastructure charge is payable when the change of use happens.

Recommendation

THAT the Other Change application to include a Food and drink outlet for Material Change of Use for Winery (Cellar door) and Short-term accommodation (Three (3) cabins) on land at 87 Rees Road, Ballandean, described as Lot 1 RP63307, be approved and the conditions be amended as follows:

Schedule 1 - Southern Downs Regional Council Conditions

Approved Plans

- The development of the site is to be generally in accordance with the following proposal plans submitted with the application, and subject to the final development being amended in accordance with the conditions of this approval.

Plan Name	Plan No.	Date
Cover Page – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-000 Revision 16	9 April 2024
Proposed Site Plan – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-001 Revision 14	26 March 2024
Storage Wine Cellar Floor Plan – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-002 Revision 1	1 February 2024
Ground Floor Plan – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-003 Revision 12	1 February 2024
Elevations – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-004 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Elevations – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-005 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Sections – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-006 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Sections – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-007 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Sections – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-008 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Sections – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-009 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Area Plan – Storage Wine Cellar – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-011 Revision 2	1 February 2024
Area Plan – Ground Level – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-012 Revision 2	1 February 2024
3D Perspectives – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-013 Revision 5	1 February 2024
3D Perspectives – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-014 Revision 5	1 February 2024

3D Perspectives – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-015 Revision 5	1 February 2024
3D Perspectives – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-016 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 1 – Cover Sheet – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-020 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 1 – Floor Plan + Elevations – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-021 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 1 – Sections – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-022 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 1 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-023 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 1 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-024 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 1 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-025 Revision 5	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Cover Sheet – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-030 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Floor Plan + Elevations – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-031 Revision 2	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Sections – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-032 Revision 3	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-033 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-034 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-035 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Cabin Type 2 – Renders – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-036 Revision 7	1 February 2024
Landscape Details – prepared by yemarchitects (Amended by Council 8 May 2024)	CD-301 Revision 1	3 April 2024
Landscape Details – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-302 Revision 1	3 April 2024
Landscape Details – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-303 Revision 1	3 April 2024
Landscape Details – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-304 Revision 1	3 April 2024
Stage 2 - Ground Floor Plan – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-211 Revision 6	17 December 2024
Stair Details – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-215 Revision 2	29 October 2024
Cabin Type 1 PWD - Floor Plans – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-111 Revision 5	18 March 2025
Cabin Type 1 - Floor Plans – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-111 Revision 3	17 October 2024
Cabin Type 2 - Floor Plans – prepared by yemarchitects	CD-111 Revision 6	13 December 2024
Acoustic Assessment Letter – prepared by ATP Consulting	ATP250722-L-02	20 August 2025

2. Where there is any conflict between the conditions of this approval and the details shown on the approved plans and documents, the conditions of approval prevail.

Reconfiguring a Lot

3. The existing allotments, being on Lot 3 RP55067, Lot 10 RP63306 and Lot 1 RP63307, must be amalgamated into one allotment and a new Certificate of Title issued to cover the newly created allotment prior to the use of the site commencing.

ALTERNATIVELY,

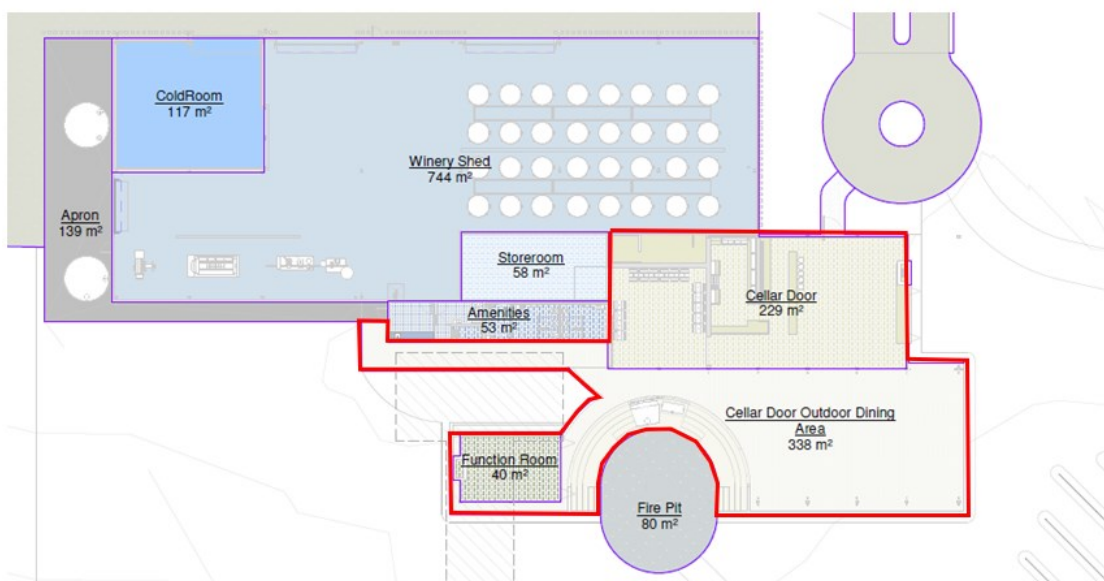
A statutory covenant is to be provided over Lot 3 RP55067, Lot 10 RP63306 and Lot 1 RP63307 to retain these lots in the same ownership until such time as the use of the land for a **Food and drink outlet**, Winery (Cellar door) and Short-term accommodation ceases. The covenant documentation is to be submitted to Council for approval. The covenant may only be released when the use ceases and all lots have legal access.

Land Use and Planning Controls

4. This approval allows for the use of the site for the following uses only:

- (a) Winery (Cellar door)
- (b) Short-term accommodation (Three (3) cabins)
- (c) **Food and drink outlet.**

- 4A. **The Food and drink outlet is limited to a gross floor area of 607 square metres as shown outlined in red in the image below:**



5. The Winery and **Food and drink outlet** shall generally operate only between the hours of 11.00am to ~~7.00pm, Thursday to Sunday~~ 10.00pm, Monday to Sunday, including public holidays.
- 5A. **Carry out the development in accordance with the Section 7. Discussion and Recommendations of the Acoustic Assessment Letter with Recommendations for Noise Mitigation Measures prepared by ATP Consulting Engineers, with reference ATP250722-L-02 and dated 20 August 2025. In particular:**
- i. **All operations associated with the cellar door, winery and food and drink outlet must cease by 10:00 pm;**
 - ii. **All visitors, excluding patrons from the short-term accommodation, must have vacated the site premises by 10:30 pm;**
 - iii. **No amplified music shall be played or operated in any outdoor areas of the premises from 7:00pm to 10:00pm;**

- iv. Any indoor entertainment amplified noise (music and PA systems) must be controlled by management only; and
- v. All amplified music (speakers) must be limited to the default amplified noise limits for licensed venues under the Liquor Act 1992 of no louder than a sound pressure level of 70dB(A) LAeq,adj,15min and 75dB(C) LCeq,adj,15min measured at a distance of 3m from the speaker.

5B. In the event that Council receives a bonafide noise complaint regarding noise emissions from the site, the operator is required to organise noise monitoring to be conducted by a suitably qualified consultant/engineer. The monitoring must be done in accordance with the Noise Measurement Manual prepared by the Department of Environment and Science, March 2020 (as amended from time to time).

Any recommendations of the noise monitoring must be implemented by a date agreed to by Council.

- 6. The maximum number of guests accommodated in Cabin 1 and Cabin 3 must not exceed two (2) persons each, and the maximum of guests accommodated in Cabin 2 must not exceed four (4) persons. The maximum number of guests to the site at any one time must not exceed eight (8) persons.
- 7. No person is to reside in any building identified for Short-term accommodation for more than 45 days consecutively, or more than 90 days in any 12 month period. The approved accommodation must not be occupied by persons for the purpose of permanent accommodation, excluding those persons in a manager's residence for the premises.

Building and Site Design

- 8. A copy of the Certificate of Compliance for Plumbing and Drainage Works is to be provided to Council. (See advisory note below.)
- 9. A copy of the Form 11 (Certificate of Classification) issued for the building works is to be provided to Council prior to the use commencing. (See advisory note below.)

Amenity and Environmental Controls

- 10. During the construction phase of the development, all wastes must be separated into recyclables (where possible) and landfill wastes, and disposed of at an approved waste management facility.
- 11. The loading and/or unloading of delivery and other service vehicles (excluding general waste collection vehicles) is limited between the hours of 7.00am and 7.00pm, Monday to Saturday, and between the hours of 8.00am and 3.00pm on Sundays. No heavy vehicles must enter the development site outside these times to wait for unloading/loading.
- 12. A sufficient number of suitable waste receptacles must be provided on site at all times. Waste receptacles must be regularly serviced to prevent unsightly accumulations of waste or environmental harm being caused. A waste collection contractor must be engaged to supply suitable waste and recycling receptacles and service waste and recycling receptacles.
- 13. All wastes are to be suitably collected and disposed of so as not to adversely impact on the environment.
- 14. No materials or goods associated with the development are to be displayed or stored within the car park or landscaped areas, or outside the boundaries of the site.
- 15. The cleaning of plant equipment and vehicles must be carried out in an area where wastewater can be suitably managed so as not to cause contaminants to release into waterways or overland flow paths.
- 16. Advertising Devices relating to the **Food and drink outlet**, Winery and Short-term accommodation may **only** be erected on the subject land, i.e. Lot 3 RP55067, Lot 10 RP63306 and Lot 1 RP63307. The location, size, type and content of any advertising sign or device located on the land is to be compatible with the Rural character of the surrounding area. No advertising signs or devices are to be located on any other land, unless all

applicable approvals are obtained under the Planning Scheme and the relevant local laws. No advertising signs or devices are to be located within the road reserve.

17. All equipment, goods and materials associate with the Winery (Cellar door) **and Food and drink outlet** must be located in a building or screened from view from all roads, other public places and adjoining land by fencing and/or dense landscaping.
18. Any external lighting must be installed so that light shines down and away from adjacent properties and roads, and does not exceed 8 lux at the property boundary.
19. All cleared or lopped timber and vegetation must be processed on site by wood chipping, mulching or similar method. Any processing of trees or vegetation must be carried out in a safe manner and without any adverse environmental impacts from noise or dust emissions, and in accordance with any requirements under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

Fencing, Landscaping and Buffers

20. All earthworks, including batters must be fully contained within the site.
21. Landscaped areas are to be provided on the site in accordance with *Landscape Details (Amended by Council 8 May 2024), CD-301 Revision 1, dated 3 April 2024*, prepared by *yemarchitects*; *Landscape Details, CD-302 Revision 1, dated 3 April 2024*, prepared by *yemarchitects*; *Landscape Details, CD-303 Revision 1, dated 3 April 2024*, prepared by *yemarchitects*; and *Landscape Details, CD-304 Revision 1, dated 3 April 2024*, prepared by *yemarchitects*.
22. One advanced tree with a minimum canopy at maturity of 3.0 metres in diameter is provided for every 10 carparking spaces (or part thereof). At least half of the required number of trees is to be located within the carpark area (not around the periphery).

Car Parking and Vehicle Access

23. Vehicle access is to be maintained to the site in accordance with Council's standard. (Council's Development Engineer can provide details regarding Council's standard.)
24. The internal driveways are to be designed and constructed to allow an 8.8 metre service vehicle to enter and leave the site in forward gear.
25. The internal driveway to the Short-term accommodation cabin 1 must be able to provide road access with a minimum clearances of 3.0 metres wide and 3.0 metres high for safe passage of emergency vehicles.
26. A 3.0 metre wide gravel driveway is to be constructed and maintained from Rees Road to the **Food and drink outlet**, Winery and each Short-term accommodation cabin. The driveway is to be constructed a location in accordance with *Proposed Site Plan, CD-001 Revision 14, dated 26 March 2024*, prepared by *yemarchitects*.
27. At least thirty-five (35) car parking spaces are to be provided on site for the Winery **and Food and drink outlet**. Provision is to be made for disabled parking.
At least four (4) car parking spaces are to be provided for the Short-term accommodation.
28. The car park area is to be defined by a low physical barrier along the edge of the car parking area and driveways.
29. Car parking shall be provided on site in accordance *Ground Floor Plan, CD-003 Revision 12, dated 1 February 2024*, prepared by *yemarchitects*. All car parking, driveway and loading areas shall be constructed in gravel or similar materials, drained, laid out and regularly maintained.

The carpark may remain gravel, provided it is appropriately maintained and does not cause a dust nuisance. If complaints are received (which in the opinion of an authorised person is not frivolous, vexatious nor based on mistaken belief) or the vehicle entrance and driveway become eroded with material becoming deposited outside of the site or potholes form that would increase noise associated with vehicle movements, the carpark shall be sealed to Council's standards.

30. All vehicle operations associated with the development must be directed by suitable directional, informative, regulatory or warning signs in accordance with *Australian Standard AS1742.1 "Manual of uniform traffic control devices"* and *Australian Standard AS2890.1 "Parking facilities – Off-street car parking"*.
31. Adequate sight distances must be provided for all ingress and egress movements at the access driveways in accordance with *Australian Standard AS2890.2 "Parking facilities - Off street commercial vehicle facilities"*.
32. All loading and unloading of goods related to the development must be carried out within the confines of the allotment's boundary. Under no circumstances will the loading or unloading of goods on the public roadway system or footpath be permitted. A vehicle loading area with associated driveway and access to accommodate a semi-trailer/B-Double must be provided on site in accordance with AS2890.2 – 2002 (Off-street parking - Commercial vehicle facilities).
- 32A. Rees Road is to be assessed against the Lower Order Road Design Guidelines (prepared by the Queensland Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia) by a suitably qualified Register Professional Engineer in Queensland (RPEQ), in consultation with Council. Any works identified to achieve compliance as part of this review are to be completed.

Any works identified must be implemented by a date agreed to by Council.

Water Supply and Waste water

33. The proposed new Short-term accommodation are to be provided with on-site water storage as follows:
 - (a) Cabin 1: 10,000 litres
 - (b) Cabin 2: 15,000 litres
 - (c) Cabin 3: 10,000 litres

The onsite water storage for the Short-term accommodation cabins must be within water storage tanks attached to each cabin.
34. The Winery and Food and drink outlet building is to be provided with on-site water storage of at least 50,000 litres.
On-site water storage may include the provision of a bore, dams, water storage tanks or a combination of these.
35. All sewage generated from this property must be disposed of by means of an on-site sewage facility (OSSF) in accordance with the AS/NZS 1547:2012 - *On-site Domestic Wastewater Management, Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code* and the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003*. The on-site sewerage facility must be at least to an Advanced Secondary standard with nutrient removal
36. Prior to the commencement of the use, a report demonstrating that adequate provision has been made for the supply of water for the Winery and Food and drink outlet, including a drinking water supply, is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Planning Department. If water is to be supplied for the development from a spring/bore/dam on the site, written advice must be supplied from the Department of Resources that water may be lawfully supplied from that source. A water supply is to be provided in accordance with the approved report.
37. Cabin 1 must be provided with a water storage reservoir having a minimum of 10,000 litres of water for emergency fire fighting purposes. Such storage must be provided in addition to the water supply capacity required for the use and must be provided in the form of either an accessible dam, swimming pool or rainwater tank. If storage is to be provided in a rainwater tank, water storage for fire fighting purposes must be provided either in a separate rainwater tank or a reserve section in the main water supply tank on which:
 - (a) the domestic take off from the tank is at or above the 5000 litre point; and
 - (b) standard rural fire brigade fittings are fitted to the tank outlet for access by rural fire services vehicles.

All fire fighting connections are to be carried out in accordance with the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018*.

Electricity, Street Lighting and Telecommunications

38. Reticulated electricity connections must be provided to the proposed development to the standards of the relevant authorities.

Operational Works

39. All operational works are to be accepted on-maintenance prior to the use of the land commencing. (See advisory note below).

Infrastructure Charges Notice

40. Payment is to be made to Council in accordance with the Infrastructure Charges Notice attached to the decision notice. If payment is made more than two years after the date of the Infrastructure Charges Notice, the charge will increase in line with the Road and Bridge Construction Index for Queensland.

Advisory Notes

- (i) Unless otherwise stated, all conditions of this approval are to be complied with to the satisfaction of the Director Planning and Environmental Services, prior to the use commencing, and then compliance maintained at all times while the use continues.
- (ii) Any proposal to increase the scale or intensity of the use on the subject land, that is assessable development under the Planning Scheme, would be subject to a separate application for assessment in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016* and would have to comply with the requirements of the Planning Scheme.
- (iii) It is your responsibility to notify Council when a development, or part of, is nearing completion and ready for commencement of the use. The commencement of use is when the Infrastructure Charges associated with your development are to be paid, unless paid earlier.
- (iv) It is encouraged that you arrange for a free compliance inspection to be carried out prior to the use commencing. This will involve a physical inspection of the premises along with an internal audit of Council's records. Written advice will be provided for your records advising if compliance with the conditions has been achieved.
- (v) Any demolition and/or removal works involving asbestos materials must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the *Workplace Health and Safety* legislation and *Public Health Act 2005*.
- (vi) The General Environmental Duty under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* prohibits unlawful environmental nuisance caused by noise, aerosols, particles dust, ash, fumes, light, odour or smoke, beyond the boundaries of the property during all stages of the development including earthworks, construction and operation.
- (vii) Any storage of flammable and/or combustible liquids must comply with the minor storage provision of Australian Standard AS1940 *The Storage and Handling of Flammable and Combustible Liquids*.
- (viii) Applications for licence under the *Food Act 2006* are to be submitted to Council prior to the commencement of the **Food and drink outlet and** Winery (Cellar door). Applications for Design Approval and Approval to Operate (including applications for licence under the *Food Act 2006*) are to be submitted to and approved by Council for the food premise, prior to the issue of a Development Permit for Building Work.
- (ix) An application must be submitted and approved by Council for a permit under Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011 and Subordinate Local Law No. 1.19 (Rental Accommodation Other Than Excluded Accommodation) 2011.
- (x) **Plumbing and Drainage Approval is to be obtained** in accordance with the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018* for the proposed plumbing and drainage works. The application for

Plumbing and Drainage approval must be submitted to Council with the appropriate **forms, plans and fees** associated with this application. A **Certificate of Compliance must be issued** for the works prior to the use commencing.

- (xi) **Building Approval is to be obtained** for a Class 1b, Class 6 and Class 8 in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016* for the proposed building work. The building application must be submitted to a Building Certifier with the appropriate **forms, plans and fees** associated with this application. The building plans are to accord with the plans approved in this approval. The building is to be constructed in accordance with the Building Approval prior to the commencement of the use. A **Form 11 (Certificate of Classification) must be issued for the building works prior to the use commencing.**
- (xii) The applicant is to permit Council officers access to the site in accordance with the powers of entry provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009*, subject to 48 hours notice and reasonable security and health restrictions on access, so as to ensure the use is being conducted in accordance with the conditions of the approval.
- (xiii) The supply of water for human consumption, food preparation, food utensil washing or personal hygiene, including the supply of water for drinking water, showers, baths, hand basin and kitchen sinks, must be connected to a drinking water supply, in accordance with the *Plumbing Code of Australia* and the *Australian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines* produced by the *National Health and Medical Research*.
- (xiv) No clearing of remnant vegetation or regulated regrowth vegetation is to occur under this approval. A Development Permit for Operational Works must be obtained from the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning for the clearing of any remnant vegetation, unless exempt under Schedule 21 of the *Planning Regulation 2017*.
- (xv) A Development Permit for Operational Works associated with the development must be obtained in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016*. This application must be submitted with the following:
 - DA Form 1;
 - The relevant fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of General Fees and Charges;
 - Detailed design drawings, schedules and specifications for all Operational Works, certified by a Registered Professional Engineer in Queensland (RPEQ);
 - A car parking plan showing the location and dimension of all parking areas, details of the proposed pavement treatment, and full engineering specifications of layout, construction, sealing, drainage and line marking;
 - A plan showing ingress and egress wheel and swept turning paths;
 - A Stormwater Management Plan;
 - If the development involves new roads, the proposed names for new roads;
 - An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan;

Operational Works shall be subject to a 12 months Defect Liability Period commencing from the day the works are accepted on-maintenance. A bond will be held by Council as security, and refunded following a defect-free inspection at the end of the Defect Liability Period.

- (xvi) An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP) must be submitted for approval with the application for Operational Works. The ESCP must demonstrate that release of sediment-laden stormwater is avoided for the nominated design storm, and minimised when the nominated design storm is exceeded, by addressing the objectives in Table A (Construction phase - stormwater management design objectives) in Appendix 2 of the State Planning Policy for drainage control, erosion control, sediment control and water quality outcomes.
- (xvii) Site works must be constructed such that they do not, at any time, in any way restrict, impair or change the natural flow of runoff water, or cause a nuisance or worsening to adjoining properties or infrastructure.
- (xviii) All Development Permits for Operational Works and Plumbing and Drainage Works should be obtained prior to the issue of a Development Permit for Building Works.

- (xix) All engineering drawings/specifications, design and construction works must be in accordance with the requirements of the relevant *Australian Standards* and must be approved, supervised and certified by a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland.
- (xx) This approval for Short-term Accommodation may potentially affect your rates and charges levied on your property. The potential impact may include, but is not limited to:
- General Rates may change to a commercial category
 - State Emergency Management Levy may change classes
 - Sewerage Access Charges may change to a different category
 - Domestic Waste Collection may be removed and require a separate waste collection direct from a waste collection provider

For further information, please contact Council's Revenue section on 1300 697 372.

(xxi) **Licensing of Beverage Manufacturers Under the *Food Act 2006***

- The *Food Act 2006* (The 'Act') requires operators of all 'licensable food businesses' within Queensland to hold a 'food business licence' with the relevant local government.
- Activities such as crushing, pressing, fermenting, maturing, blending or bottling conducted at a beverage manufacturer meets the definition of manufacture in section 16(1) of The Act.
- Section 48(1)a of the Act states that a food business that involves the manufacture of food is a *licensable food business*.

For information on how to obtain a food licence under the *Food Act 2006*, please contact Council on 1300 697 372 and ask to speak to an Environmental Health Officer or via email mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

All reasonable and practicable measures must be taken to ensure that no harm is caused to Aboriginal cultural heritage (the "cultural heritage duty of care"). The cultural heritage duty of care is met if the development is conducted in accordance with gazetted cultural heritage duty of care guidelines. Further information on cultural heritage, together with a copy of the duty of care guidelines and cultural heritage search forms, may be obtained from www.datsip.qld.gov.au

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

15.7 Pest Management Advisory Committee Meeting

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Manager Environmental Services	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council receive the Minutes of the Pest Management Advisory Committee meeting held in Warwick on Thursday, 30 October 2025 and endorse the motions moved during the meeting.

REPORT

Background

The Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC) met in Warwick on Thursday 30 October 2025.

Report

The minutes of Council's Pest Management Advisory Committee are submitted for Council's information and consideration of any recommendation/s following each meeting. The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2025 are attached (Attachment 1). The Southern Downs Regional Council pest management report (Attachment 2) and the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board report (Attachment 3) presented at the meeting are also provided.

At this meeting, there was a presentation from John Scriven, the Darling Downs- South West Queensland Feral Pig Coordinator. John provided some very interesting and informative data regarding wild pigs, to help guide management programs in the region.

Conclusion/Summary

That Council receive the Minutes from the Pest Management Advisory Committee meeting and endorse the motions moved at the meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Council has legislative obligations under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, and there is a risk of non-compliance if Council does not fulfil its responsibilities.

Opportunity

The Pest Management Advisory Committee is a community consultative committee and allows Council to receive contributions from the community on its pest management activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Nil

External Consultation

The Pest Management Advisory Committee is a community consultative committee.

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Biosecurity Act 2014

Corporate Plan

Goal 2 Our Places

Outcome: 2.3 Our natural and agricultural environments are healthy, resilient and sustainable.

Objective: 2.3.3 Develop policies and implement measures to enhance our agricultural sector and protect priority agricultural land from invasive pest animals and pest plants and non-rural development incursion.

Policy / Strategy

Southern Downs Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2031

Southern Downs Invasive Pests Strategic Plan 2021-2024

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes of Pest Management Advisory Committee - 30 October 2025 [↓](#)
2. SDRC Officers Report [↓](#)
3. Darling Downs Moretone Rabbit Board - October Report [↓](#)



**MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL
COUNCIL MEETING OF THE PEST MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

THURSDAY 30 OCTOBER 2025 AT 1:30PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 64 FITZROY STREET, WARWICK



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1 PRESENT

Cr Carla Pidgeon (Chair), Nicole Collett (SDRC Manager Environmental Services), Joss Kresina (SDRC Acting Local Laws Coordinator), Clive Smith (Southern Downs Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee), John Scriven (South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils), Nicki Lewis (Dept Primary Industries), Mat Warren (Darling Downs Moreton Rabbit Board), Ken McCray (Transport & Main Roads), Liz Bourne (Community member), Paul Maher (Community member), Poul Tvermoes (SDRC General Manager Communities, Planning & Environmental Services), Jenny Watt (SDRC, Minute Secretary); Donna Jeffries (SDRC, Observer)

Via Teams: Carol Booth (Invasive Species Council)

Kathleen McDonald (Granite Border Landcare)

Cr Pidgeon opened the meeting at 1:30pm, introduced herself and welcomed all those attending. Around the table introduction was performed for the benefit of newcomers and a welcome to Poul Tvermoes, General Manager, Communities, Planning and Environmental Services

2 APOLOGIES

Ray Lambert (SDRC), Bryan Potter (SDRC), Andrew Greenwood (QPWS), Rachel Chapman (QPWS), Greg Keith (QPWS)

3 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Minutes of Last Meeting

Item 15.1 of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday, 13 February 2025.

Resolution

Moved Cr C McDonald Seconded Cr C Pidgeon Carried Unanimously

That Council receive the Minutes of the Pest Management Advisory Committee meeting held in Warwick on Thursday, 13 February 2025 and endorse the motions moved during the meeting.

b) Review of Previous Actions

Action: Council to conduct some promotion of equipment available for hire, after budget process completed. – **COMPLETED**, an increase in hire activity has occurred since the promotion occurred. This included both social media, and the development of fact sheets.

Action: Angus to request information/statistics from Granite Belt Growers on the impact of pigs and deer in the region. – **ANGUS UNAVAILABLE – FOLLOW UP NEXT MEETING**

Action: Ray Lambert to contact Greg Mifsud to see if he is available to attend a PMAC meeting. – **COMPLETED**, Greg is able to attend a future meeting.

4 SDRC PEST MANAGEMENT OFFICERS ACTIVITY REPORT – NICOLE COLLETT

Report was presented by Nicole Collett with copies emailed to members.

Action: Nicole to follow-up on how Weed Program is prioritised in relation to Privet with Liz advising it is currently at Mt Marley and Sentimental Rock.

5 PRESENTATION FROM JOHN SCRIVEN, DARLING DOWNS SOUTH WEST QUEENSLAND FERAL PIG PROGRAM COORDINATOR.

John provided a power point presentation and answered questions from the group.



6 UPDATE BY MEMBERS GROUPS

Each of the attending members provided an update from the group they represent.

7 GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Pidgeon talked of a Youth Council Group calling themselves the “Pest Avengers” who have planned a competition to run in school – most downloads on feral pests in their area using “Feral Scan” including a video to educate students to use the App and what the competition involves.

8 NEXT MEETING & CLOSURE

Next meeting: 10:30am Thursday 18 December 2025 at Stanthorpe Council Chambers

Following meeting: Tentative: Thursday 12 March 2026 @ 10:30am at Warwick Council Chambers

Meeting Closed at 3pm



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL PEST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING – 30 OCTOBER 2025

PEST MANAGEMENT REPORT

Roadside Treatment and Private Property Inspections

The roadside weed treatment focus for the winter months has been on stem injection of Tree Pear and treating Mother of Millions. The has included areas of Greymare primarily for Tree Pear, but other areas have also been treated as the need arose in regards to customer requests. The team has also been focusing on Mother of Millions in known sites within the region. In addition, the team also continued to monitor and treat Harrisia Cactus in the Leyburn and Karara areas. Riverina Pear was also treated Longs Bridge Rd, Bentleys Rd.

Chilean Needle Grass Signs are out and early patrols are occurring. Treatment of early plants has occurred on the Leyburn-Cunningham Rd, Sandy Ck Rd, Warwick-Killarney Rd and O’Leary Rd.

Invasive plant property inspections on private lands continue across the region. Inspections focused on general pest weed advice and equipment hire from Council, including issue of Pest Advisory Notices to landholders with significant invasive weed populations.

The team have been in discussions working on a 12-month plan looking ahead regarding roadside pest plant treatment and private property inspections.

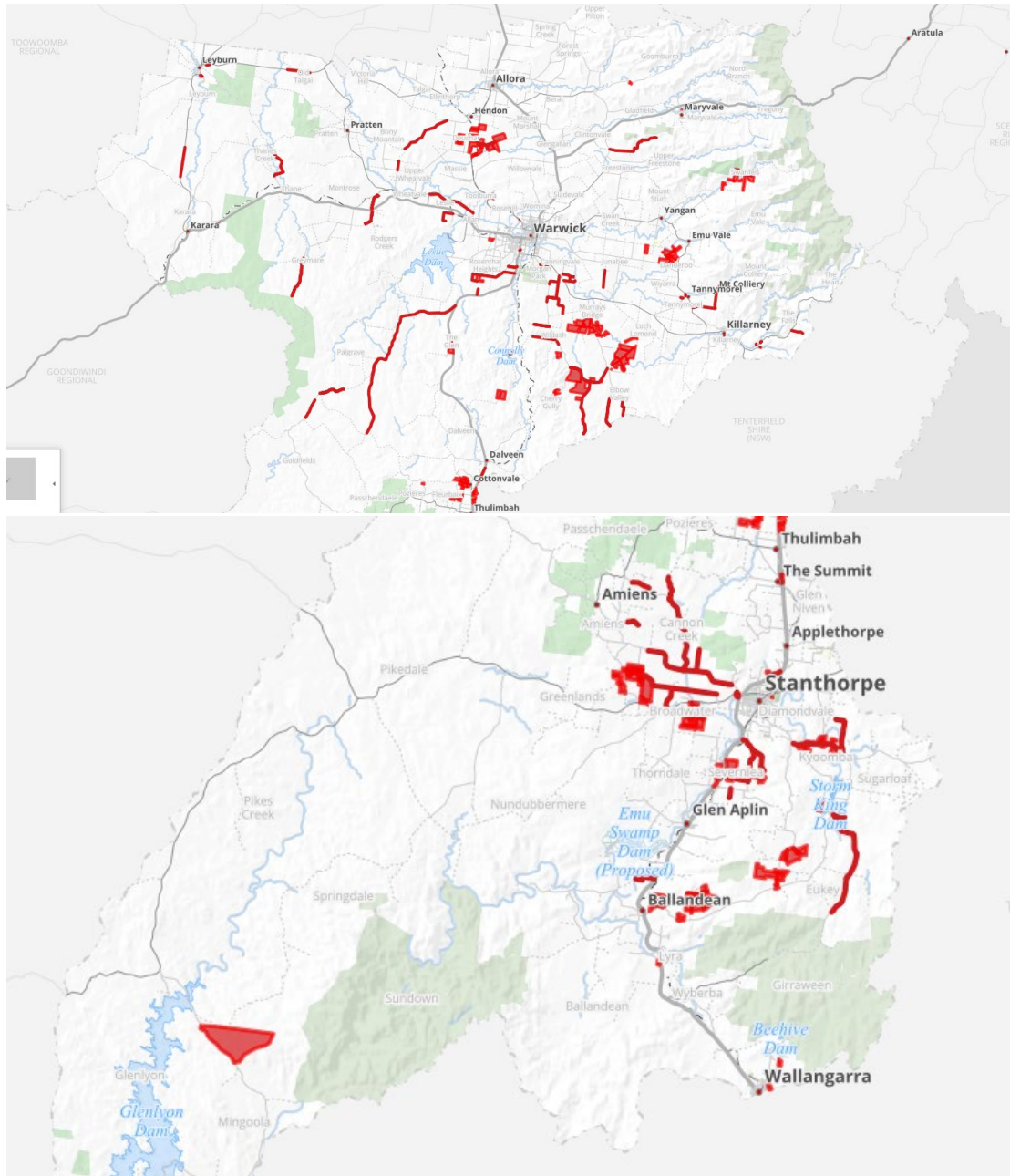
The plan for the next 3 months is to concentrate on below areas.

1 st October 31 st December 2025	<u>Control areas Northern</u> • Swanfels Northern/Central • Mt Sturt Northern • EmuVale Central • Passchendaele Southern • Known Locations	African Boxthorn, Honey locust, Blackberry, grasses, Groundsel, MOM, Tree pear, Fireweed, Lantana 1 October – 31 December 2025
	<u>Control areas Southern</u> • Wallangarra • Ballandean • Glenaplin • Severnlea	Chilean Needle Grass inspections continued Blackberry, annual ragweed, tree pear, fireweed, firethorn, St John’s wort, bridal creeper, green cestrum, groundsel, Lantana rabbits

The team have also done a great job promoting our Spray Units, Cactus Injectors and Boxthorn pullers and we are now starting to get a great response with a strong demand. Public feedback has been very positive.



The on-line mapping is continuing. The maps below show a high-level overview of roads treated and private property inspections completed year to date in 2025.



Community Education

The Farming for the Future Expo was held at Warwick State High School on 29 August 2025. Two officers from the Local Laws team attended and answered questions relating to pest weed and animal queries from students and members of the public. Garden fest was held in Stanthorpe on the 10 and 11 of October with SDRC staff in attendance from water, waste and pest management. A staff member also recently attended a wild dog trapping workshop at Greymare Hall. The day was well attended by

approximately 20 producers, Council staff were available to answer questions relating to 1080 wild dog baiting procedures.

Invasive Animal Control Programs and Activities

- Wild dog bounties payments September 2025- \$1800
- 2025 / 2026 financial year to date - \$10850

1080 coordinated ground baiting occurred at the 16 stations across the region on 26 to 28 August. 1080 concentrate was supplied to a total of 42 local landholders, consisting of 3,060 wild dog baits and 70 pig meat baits. In addition to the coordinated ground baiting, some adhoc feral pig grain baiting has also been conducted at the Council's pounds. In total, baits from July 2025 to September 2025 (outside of 26 to 28 August) were supplied to 32 local landowners, 2,232 being wild dog baits and 1,225 pig baits.

A participant provided confirmation of a wild dog bitch and pups that had been poisoned by baits from the program, showing the effectiveness of the program.

The wild dog aerial baiting program was delivered on 25-26 June 2025 by Rotowing. Approximately 380 kilometers of bait lines were flown, achieving 40.2 baits per kilometer or 15,300 baits in total. To mitigate risk, SRDC staff did not participate in the bait distribution from the helicopter this year.

Rabbit burrow ripping was recently conducted on SDRC roads around Killarney. This work was contracted out to the DDMRB. Several large burrows with multiple entries were collapsed and several rabbits euthanized in the process. Photos below of area treated and adult and juvenile rabbits.





Council was involved in the RSPCA Operation Wanted Desexing program this year, both to promote responsible pet ownership and to address unwanted litters, to help reduce impact of feral cats. Initial information is that there were 234 registrations, with 319 animals desexed. This included 41% cats and 59% dogs, and 25% of the female animals had previously had a litter. This was a 154% increase in registrations from the previous year in the region.

In addition, officers continue to trap feral cats at our waste facilities when a need is identified.

Fencing Programs

Stanthorpe Wild Dog Spur Fence completed works for 2024/2025 included Moss Lane, site map and photos below.





Planning has commenced for Stanthorpe Wild dog spur fence replacement sections for 2025/26 year including two new replacement sections, spraying of woody vegetation and proposed electrification in the 2026/27 year.

Killarney wild dog spur fence

Completed Works for 2024/25, site map and photos below.





Killarney wild dog spur fence electric replacement section is partially constructed, and should be complete in the coming weeks, weather dependent. Grid cleaning on Homans road is complete and forms part on the maintenance program for 2025/26.



DDMRB Report for SDRC PMAC

Reporting Period: 17th June 2025 to 28th October 2025

Compliance Activities

- **149 properties** inspected for rabbit activity in the SDRC LGA (**Map 1**).
- **55 new inspections** identified **22 breeding sites**.
- **94 follow-up inspections** conducted.
- **81 breeding sites** removed during the period.
- Significant progress in the Falls area, with three landholders actively removing breeding sites.
- DDMRB undertook breeding site removal along Winterflood and Mount Leslie Roads on behalf of SDRC.

Rabbit Barrier Fence

- Fire damage assessed in the Cullendore area; fence remains rabbit-proof but will require permanent repairs.
- Monitoring cameras to be installed at two gates through the barrier fence in the Dalveen area to evaluate rabbit activity and the effectiveness of future grid installations.
- **13km of fence** replaced with dog-proof fencing between Baking Board and Rywung.
- **2km realignment** near Palen Creek nearing completion to improve maintenance access and patrolman safety.

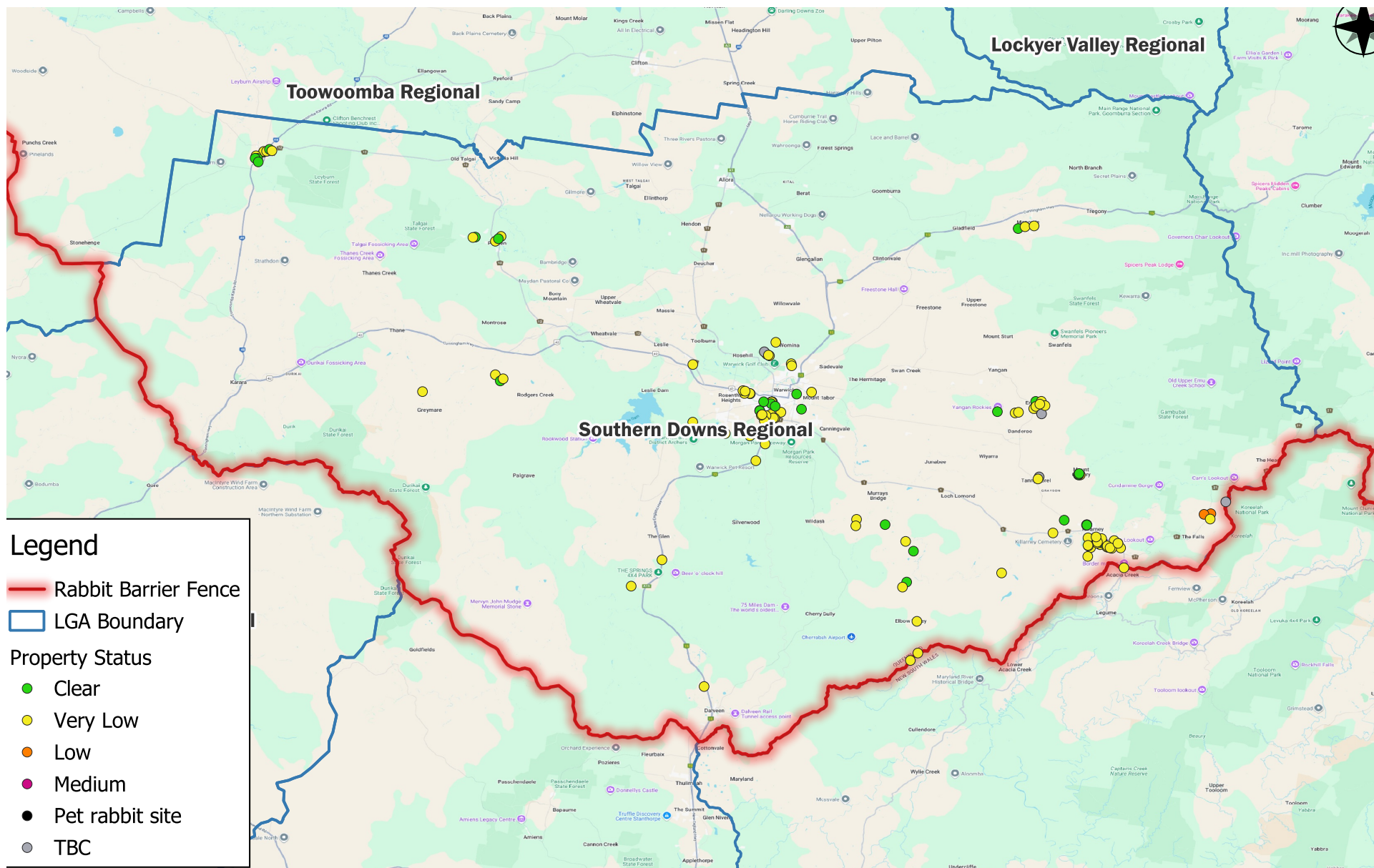
Board Activities & Governance

- DDMRB exhibited at the 2025 Brisbane Exhibition and LGAQ Conference, engaging with over 15,000 attendees and Councillors statewide.
- A mural titled "*Thrive Again*" by Fuzeillear was completed at the McEvoy Street office, highlighting the impact of rabbits on native species.
- October board meeting held in the Scenic Rim, including meetings with Scenic Rim Councillors and a fence tour with National Rabbit Management Coordinator Heidi Kleinert.



DDMRB Report for SDRC PMAC

-
- Support expressed for Southern Downs Youth Council's proposed school challenge using FeraScan to log species over 72 hours.
 - Draft 2026 monitoring and surveillance programs distributed to stakeholders for feedback.



15.8 Wild Dog Bounty Policy Update

Document Information

	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 November 2025
	Manager Environmental Services	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt the updated Wild Dog Bounty Payment Policy PL-PE066 as included in **Attachment 1** to this report.

REPORT

Background

Wild dogs are classified as a restricted invasive animal under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*.

Council provides assistance to landholders to meet their biosecurity obligations for wild dogs, including a 1080 baiting service, regionally coordinated baiting programs, and an incentive payment, or bounty, for wild dogs shot or trapped in the Southern Downs.

Integrated pest management, combining several different control methods, is the most effective approach.

Report

A review of the Wild Dog Bounty Payment Policy PL-PE066 has been undertaken, and the following changes proposed:

- Removal of historic or incorrect information that does not add any value to the current document, for example bounty payment amounts prior to amalgamation and the allocated budget amount for control activities which changes annually.
- Claimants will be required to enter the details of the wild dog destruction into the FeralScan app. This is a free app, managed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Centre for Invasive Species Solutions, from which data is provided to Council of pest management activities in the region. The information obtained through this process will assist Council in assessing locations of wild dog activity, make informed decisions on future pest management programs, and assist when grant funding opportunities become available.
- Community members who are authorised to approve claims are an important part of the policy and their willingness to participate ensures the outcomes of the policy are achieved. To support these community members in complying with the policy, they will be requested to confirm their acceptance of the policy requirements annually. In particular, as part of the authorisation process, a whole dog must be sighted and marked once verified, and confirmation provided by the claimant that they have entered the details into FeralScan.

- Updates to the claim form, in particular to require details on the number of dogs claimed. This is to remove any opportunity for additional dogs to be added to the form that have not been verified by the authorised person.

An updated copy of the Wild Dog Bounty Payment Policy PL-PE066 is found in Attachment 1.

Conclusion/Summary

Overall, the proposed improvements to the Wild Dog Bounty Payment Policy PL-PE066 are intended to ensure the policy remains current, the bounty authorisation process is transparent and compliant, and improved data is captured to assist with future pest management planning.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is \$35 000 allocated in the 2025/26 operational budget for wild dog county payments.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

If proper processes are not in place, bounty claims that are not in accordance with the policy may be authorised, resulting in the incorrect use of Council funding.

The changes to the policy are intended to help reduce this risk.

Opportunity

It is important to ensure Council's policies remain current, and there are accountable processes in place for those authorising payment of bounties, on Council's behalf.

Improved data collection on pest activity in the region will result in better focused pest management programs, and grant funding opportunities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Governance and Local Laws teams
Council Information Session 1 October 2025

External Consultation

The inclusion of the requirement to report bounty payments in FeralScan was discussed at the Pest Management Advisory Committee meeting on the 30 October 2025

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Biosecurity Act 2014

Corporate Plan

Goal 2 Our Places

Outcome: 2.3 Our natural and agricultural environments are healthy, resilient and sustainable.

Objective: 2.3.3 Develop policies and implement measures to enhance our agricultural sector and protect priority agricultural land from invasive pest animals and pest plants and non-rural development incursion.

Policy / Strategy

Southern Downs Invasive Pests Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Legal

There appears to be no legal issues associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A Human Rights assessment has been undertaken.

ATTACHMENTS

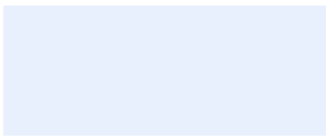
1. Wild Dog Bounty Payment Policy PL-PE066

WILD DOG BOUNTY PAYMENT POLICY

PL-PE066



WILD DOG BOUNTY PAYMENT POLICY

POLICY NUMBER	PL-PE066
DIRECTORATE:	Planning and Environment
SECTION:	Environmental Services
RESPONSIBLE MANAGER:	Manager Environment Services
DATE ADOPTED:	28 February 2011
DATE TO BE REVIEWED:	19 November 2027
DATE REVIEWED:	19 November 2025
APPROVED BY:	

REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
11 Aug 14	1	New format and updated
24 Aug 2016	2	Minor amendments and new form attached
20 Jul 2018	3	Minor amendments
24 Jul 2019	4	Minor amendments
27 Aug 2020	5	Minor amendments
25 Jun 2021	6	Minor amendments – Addition of person authorised to verify claims & payments
15 Aug 2023	7	Reviewed, minor amendments
12 Dec 2023	8	Reviewed, minor amendments
9 Aug 2024	9	Reviewed names in Appendix 2
19 Nov 2025	10	Review of claim form, addition of information for authorise officers, other minor amendments

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1 POLICY BACKGROUND

The Policy relates to incentive (bounty) payments made by Council for the destruction of wild dogs in the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

Wild dogs are restricted pest animals under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (the Act). Under sections 23 and 42 of the Act, landholders have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to keep land under their control free from restricted pests.

In order to meet these responsibilities, Council provides landholders with a 1080 baiting service and organises regionally coordinated baiting programs. In recognition that not all areas can be baited due to regulatory restrictions and to encourage the use of all available control methods, as a further assistance Council provides an incentive payment, or bounty for wild dogs shot or trapped in the Southern Downs Regional Council area. There is no legal obligation for Council to provide this payment.

Besides baiting, trapping and shooting, other control options available to landholders include the use of wild dog proof fencing and livestock guardian animals.

Council further contributes to wild dog management through the maintenance of declared pest animal fences. Currently this includes funding maintenance of the Killarney and Stanthorpe wild dog check fences and extends to funding top netting on strategic sections of the Darling Downs Moreton Rabbit Board for the purpose of wild dog control.

Council also contributes funding to State based wild dog research through local government precept payments to Biosecurity Queensland.

Wild dogs disperse over large distances but tend to have restricted home ranges. Home ranges may encompass large numbers of both small and large properties. The bounty reflects this by offering individuals undertaking control a cash contribution to the labour and resource intensive activity of trapping and shooting. Bounties also provide an incentive for opportunistic control.

As proof of an animal's destruction, the whole animal must be sighted and claim forms approved by a person authorised under this policy to do so. Bounty payments are only made for wild dogs to prevent domestic dogs from being targeted or being misrepresented as wild dogs. As bounty payments are funded by and intended to benefit the Southern Downs Region community, payment is restricted to animals identified as being destroyed in the Council area. This information, in conjunction with baiting data is also used to monitor compliance with control obligations and enables better planning of control programs.

The Queensland Government does not support the use of bounties so does not provide any funding.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to guide Council's wild dog incentive payments in a consistent and effective manner.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to the payment of a bounty by Council upon presentation of the whole wild dog shot or trapped in the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

4 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The *Biosecurity Act 2014* sets out provisions for restricting pest animals and landholders' obligations to control them.

There is no legislative obligation for local governments to make bounty payments for the destruction of wild dogs.

5 POLICY DETAILS

5.1 PAYMENT LEVEL

The bounty is \$100 for each approved whole wild dog and \$50 for each approved pup (as determined by the authorised person).

5.2 APPROVAL

A number of persons are authorised to approve claim forms to enable efficiency of processing (see 5.3.1). Authorised persons cannot approve their own claim forms. Claims will not be authorised unless a whole dog is presented.

The claimant is responsible for disposing of each wild dog after it has been marked by an authorised person. The property from which the animal was taken must be identified on the claim form by property description (i.e. lot/plan number). The details of the wild dog must be also reported in the FeralScan app, to help with Council's data gathering, to help ensure pest management planning is evidence-based.

Claims will only be approved for animals identified as being destroyed within the Southern Downs Regional Council area. Authorised persons will only sight the whole wild dog and sign claim forms at a pre-arranged time and place of their convenience.

Claims will only be paid if authorised and received by Council within 60 days of the wild dog being trapped or shot. Dogs will not be accepted at Council offices.

5.3 PROCESSING

Approved claim forms will be stamped with the date received by Council and forwarded internally to Council's Communities, Planning and Environmental Services Directorate for processing. Council staff will record details of the identified property and animals in a database.

Once a claim form has been checked the Manager Environmental Services (or authorised delegate) will advise Council's Finance Department to endorse payment. Claimants may be asked to justify payments if excessive dogs are presented. Claims may not be approved if the claim form has not been completed correctly.

Claimants must lodge electronic funds transfer details with Council. Claims will be made by electronic funds transfer only. EFT forms only need to be completed once or when details change.

5.3.1 PERSONS AUTHORISED TO VERIFY CLAIMS

Please refer to Council's website to obtain the list of authorised persons.

On an annual basis, those authorised to verify claims on behalf of Council will be provided with a copy of this policy, and asked to confirm their acceptance of the requirements of the policy. This will in particular include:

- That the whole wild dog must be sighted (photos are not acceptable)
- Evidence of the FeralScan notification was made available to them
- A wild dog presented will be marked, ie with suitable paint, once verified

If Council becomes aware of non-compliance with these requirements, Council may remove the right for the person to act as an authorised person on behalf of Council.

6 APPENDIX 1 – WILD DOG BOUNTY CLAIM FORM

		Southern Downs <i>A great place to live, work, play and stay.</i> PO Box 26 Warwick QLD 4370 64 Fitzroy Street Warwick QLD 4370 61 Marsh Street Stanthorpe QLD 4380		 sdrc.qld.gov.au  mail@sdrc.qld.gov.au  1300 MT SDRC (1300 697 372)			
Environmental Services							
CLAIM FOR WILD DOG BOUNTY							
If you have any specific enquiries regarding how to complete this form, please contact: Council's Local Laws Department . Please complete this application in BLOCK LETTERS. Enter "N/A" if the question does not apply. Complete all sections unless otherwise stated.							
Applicant/s Details	Full Name(s) of Applicant:						
	Postal Address:						
	Phone:						
Details of Wild Dog/s Destroyed <i>(ROWS NOT COMPLETED MUST BE CROSSED OUT BY AUTHORISED PERSON AS SHOWN IN THE BOTTOM ROW AS AN EXAMPLE)</i>	Date of Destruction	Sex	Age	Shot or Trapped	Address	Property Description <i>Lot & Plan Number</i>	Entered Into <i>FeralScan</i>
<i>Please note: If you have not claimed a Wild Dog bounty from Council within the last two years, you must attach a completed SDRCElectronic Transfer Form as well as an ABS Statement by Supplier Form (where an ABN number is not provided)</i>							
I understand that bounties can only be claimed for animals destroyed within Southern Downs Regional Council and that an Authorised Person must receive or have rendered unsuitable for future use whole wild dog in order to complete a valid claim.							
Signature of Claimant: _____ Date: _____							
Authorised Person I was presented with the whole wild dog that corresponds to the information provided and marked or rendered the wild dog unsuitable for future claim. Name of Authorised Person : _____ Position: _____ Number of dogs witnessed: _____ Signature of Authorised Person : _____ Date: _____							
- Bounties will only be paid on presentation of a whole dog (not scalps) AND the details have been entered into FeralScan. - Claims will only be paid if authorized and received by Council within 60 days of the wild dog being trapped and/or shot. - Payment rates are: \$50 per pup (up to 14 weeks of age); \$100 per wild dog (over 14 weeks of age) - Council provide bounty payments as an incentive to encourage integration of trapping/shooting with other controls including coordinated baiting, guardian animals and pest barrier fences. - Claims are signed by authorized person at times convenient to them. - Bounty payments are a privilege not a legal right. - Under S23 & 45 of the Biosecurity Act 2014, Landholders have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to keep land under their control free from invasive pests.							
Privacy Notice	The information on this form is collected for purposes related to deciding this application and monitoring compliance under the Information Privacy Act ("the Act"). This information may be stored in Council's records database and may also be used for statistical research, information provision and evaluation of services. Your personal information may be provided to the financial institution which handles Council's financial transactions and may be disclosed to other Local Government agencies, State government and third parties for purposes related to this application and/or monitoring compliance with the Act. Except in these circumstances, personal information will only be disclosed to third parties with your consent unless otherwise required or authorised by law.						

16. REPORTS OF DEPUTATION OR CONFERENCE & REPORTS FROM DELEGATES APPOINTED BY COUNCIL TO OTHER BODIES

Nil

17. CONSIDERATION OF CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS ITEMS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 254J(3) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, a local government may resolve to close a meeting to the public and move 'into Committee' to discuss confidential items, such that its Councillors or members consider it necessary to close the meeting.

Recommendation

THAT the meeting be closed to the public and move into committee to discuss the following items, which are considered confidential in accordance with Section 254J(3) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, which permits the meeting to be closed to the public for business relating to the following, as indicated:

17.1 Draft Planning Scheme Submission Consideration

Reason for Confidentiality

This item is considered confidential in accordance with section 254J(3)(g) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, as it contains information relating to negotiations relating to a commercial matter involving the local government for which a public discussion would be likely to prejudice the interests of the local government.

17.2 Kuhl & Anor V Southern Downs Regional Council & ORS - Planning & Environment Court Appeal No. 1435 of 2025 - 214 Kerrick Road, Dalveen - Lot 7 SP274061

Reason for Confidentiality

This item is considered confidential in accordance with section 254J(3)(e) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, as it contains information relating to legal advice obtained by the local government or legal proceedings involving the local government including, for example, legal proceedings that may be taken by or against the local government.

18. GENERAL BUSINESS