

# AGENDA

MEETING OF THE  
**HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on

**25 May 2026**

**At 5.30pm**

In the

**Roberts Avenue Kindergarten**

**23 Roberts Avenue, HORSHAM**



**COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting  
of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 25 May 2026  
in the Roberts Avenue Kindergarten, 23 Roberts Avenue, Horsham at 5.30pm**

## **Order of Business**

### **PRESENT**

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

#### **1. PRAYER**

Almighty God, we pledge ourselves to work in harmony for, the social, cultural and economic well-being of our Rural City. Help us to be wise in our deliberations and fair in our actions, so that prosperity and happiness shall be the lot of our people. AMEN

#### **2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT**

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

#### **3. OPENING AND WELCOME**

Chairman, Cr Brian Klowss formally welcomed those in attendance to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the meeting will be recorded to maintain a video archive, which will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website as soon as practicable.

#### **4. APOLOGIES**

#### **5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS**

#### **6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

#### **Recommendation**

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Roberts Avenue Kindergarten, Horsham at 5.30pm on 27 April and 11 May 2026 be adopted.

## 7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### Declarations of Interest

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

### Members of Staff

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers or people engaged under contract to the Council providing a report or advice to Council must disclose any conflicts of interests in the matter, including the type of interest.

**8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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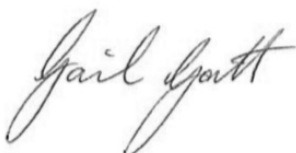
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*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) - Personal Information*

**CLOSE**



GAIL GATT  
Chief Executive Officer

## REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

### 9. OFFICERS REPORTS

#### 9.1 Q3 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2026

<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Directorate:</b>	Organisational Performance
<b>File Number:</b>	F18/A10/000001

##### **Officer Conflict of Interest**

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

##### **Status**

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

##### **Appendix**

Q3 Quarterly Performance Report to March 2026 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

##### **Purpose**

To present Council with the Q3 Quarterly Performance Report to 31 March 2026.

##### **Summary**

- The Quarterly Performance Report is a key component of our commitment to continuous improvement, transparency and accountability to Council and the community.
- The format of the report was expanded over the previous financial year as part of Council's continuous improvement.
- This report provides financial figures which include the adopted budget, anticipated forecast and year to date actuals that will build on a quarter-by-quarter basis.
- Indicators and Initiatives are also be reported on a progressive quarterly basis.
- It should be noted that this report has been prepared in alignment with the 2025-2029 Council Plan. 2025/26 Budget Figures for services delivered under the four themes (previously five themes) have been restated, however the quantum has not been altered.

##### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note the Q3 Quarterly Performance Report to 31 March 2026.

## REPORT

### Background

The Quarterly Performance Report encapsulates a quarterly budget report, progress against the 2025-2029 Council Plan, the tracking of any major initiatives, and key data relating to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.

The provision of relevant information on a regular basis is an important part of the internal control process and is necessary for the various levels of Council to carry out their responsibilities and obligations to the community in the management of Council business.

Council's approach to Performance Reporting (including financial performance) to the community is to include information which exceeds minimum requirements, increases readability and piques community interest. Information is presented in a clear and transparent manner, with each quarterly report building on the previous quarter's information to provide a "story" of progress rather than a "snapshot" at a point in time.

This report represents the third report for the financial year.

### Discussion

The quarterly report has been prepared with the following sections of information:

1. Chief Executive Officer's Overview
2. Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework
3. Initiatives
4. Performance Indicators
5. Financial Performance by Council Plan Theme
6. Reconciliation of Financial Performance by Council Plan Theme to Comprehensive Income Statement
7. Comprehensive Income Statement
8. Balance Sheet
9. Statement of Capital Works
10. Statement of Human Resources
11. Councillor Allowances and Expenses

The CEO's Overview is a high-level summary of activities since the last Quarterly report.

The Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework section provides the reader with an explanation of the high-level requirements of the Act and Regulations for reporting to the community.

Section 4 & 5 detail the initiatives and indicators for the year – as adopted in the budget. These are reported on in a cumulative way to provide the reader with a building story of the progress so far rather than the traditional "snapshot" view of the current status.

Section 5 demonstrates expenditure and revenue at the service provision level under each of the Council Plan themes. These figures include the adopted budget, the current forecast (projected year end figure) and year to date performance.

Section 6 provides an important translation between reporting to the community by the service groupings they are familiar with compared to how the information is presented in an accounting context.

Sections 7 to 10 are the financial statements (accounting presentation). Data includes the adopted budget, forecast (projected year end figure) and year to date by quarter. Detailed notes are also provided to add value for the reader of the report. The presentation of these statements complies with model budget presentation as required under legislation.

Section 11 satisfies legislative and policy requirements providing information on a quarterly basis around councillor allowances and expenses.

### **Options to Consider**

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures that councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector. The framework is made up of measures from a range of service areas, including roads, planning, animal management and waste.

The *Local Government Act 2020* (s97) also requires that the Chief Executive Officer ensures that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public. This quarterly budget report must include a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and an explanation of any material variations; and any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

Council can opt not to receive and note the quarterly report but should note the legislative and other requirements requiring the report to be presented.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable other than any reporting included in the report on Council's environmental and sustainability goals.

### **Community Engagement**

The Quarterly Performance report is prepared through cross-departmental consultation within Council. Following executive leadership team's endorsement, it progresses to a Council Briefing before formal endorsement at a Council Meeting. The report is then available to the public via Council's website.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Ongoing refinements are made to ensure the report provides clear and concise reporting on key strategic items.

### **Collaboration**

Not applicable.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications of the report itself however the Quarterly Report provides detailed information on the financial position of Council and performance against budgets and various targets.

### **Regional, State and National Plans and Policies**

Not applicable.

### **Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2025-2029 Council Plan – This report clearly outlines progress towards achieving the aspirations of the Council Plan.

**Risk Implications**

Provision of good quality, regular reporting of financial and non-financial information to the community mitigates against the risk of poor financial governance and possible financial mismanagement. The Municipal Association of Victoria's Good Governance Guide provides that *the Council is ultimately accountable for the financial management...it should not have a hands-on role... but it needs to ensure that it has sufficient information to be satisfied that finances are in order and that the budgetary and financial planning goals are being met.*

**Conclusion**

The Quarterly Performance Report provides a regular and succinct report for Council and the community to assess Council's performance against key measures. It also fulfils Council's legislative and other regulatory responsibilities.

## 9.2 FEES & CHARGES 2026-2027

<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Directorate:</b>	Organisational Performance
<b>File Number:</b>	F18/A14/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges 2026-2027 (**Appendix 9.2A**)

### Purpose

To present the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges 2026-2027 for adoption.

### Summary

- It is considered best practice and good governance to set user fees and charges as part of the budget process.
- The fees and charges that will be charged in respect to various goods and services during the 2026-2027 financial year are provided for adoption.
- The document presented includes both statutory and non-statutory fees and charges as well as GST applicability.
- The fees and charges provided are based on information available at the time of publishing and may vary during the financial year subject to any changes in legislation or Council policy.
- Council may update the Register by returning individual schedules to Council for revision throughout the year.
- The Register promotes openness and transparency to the community around the prices of services and the rationale behind increases.

### Recommendation

That Council adopt the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges for 2026-2027 (**Appendix 9.2A**).

## REPORT

### Background

The Local Government Victoria (LGV) Better Practice Guide Model Budget 2025-26 provides that ‘ *the disclosure of fees and charges to be levied for various goods and services provided during the budget year is optional and is not required by legislation. It is considered best practice and good governance for disclosure purposes to consider the setting of user fees and charges set by Council as part of the budget process*’.

LGV also provides a recommended format for the Fees and Charges in the Model Budget 2026-27 provided to the sector. The format is considered better practice by LGV, so the draft HRCC Fees and Charges Register has been prepared in accordance with that guidance.

The Register also includes fees and charges set by statute in accordance with legislative requirements. All fees and charges included in the document are based on information available at the time of publishing and may vary during the financial year subject to any changes in Council's policy or legislation. The Register is therefore presented as a document separate to the budget to make it easier to present any required changes for consideration by Council.

### Discussion

This is the third year Council has presented the Register of Fees and Charges as a separate document to enable the document to be updated with information and/or fee changes throughout the year. Prior to this process, fees and charges were a schedule included as part of the budget document and only updated once per year.

The document was presented to Council on 23 March 2026 as a draft document and released for a period of community engagement from 25 March to 16 April 2026. It became clear during the preparation of the document that the fees for the Horsham Livestock Exchange were not in alignment with the agreement currently in place. These have now been amended for the final document.

Since the release of the draft document, the revised amounts for the 2026-2027 financial year Fee & Penalty units were released. These units relate to the calculation of statutory infringements and fines and are updated annually by the State Government. They were published in the Government Gazette on Tuesday 5 May 2026.

In early May 2026, Council also received notification that the State imposed levy applicable for every animal registered within the municipality was set to increase. The levy increase was not known at the time of the publication of the draft register. The calculation of the applicable additional fees has now occurred. It is therefore recommended that animal registration fees increase to ensure that Council's overall financial position with regard to animal registrations remains the same and that only animal owners share the increase in cost rather than the costs being borne by the broader community.

The draft document presented for community feedback has therefore been amended to reflect these changes as follows:

- Horsham Livestock Exchange – amendment and correction to fees as per agreement
- Fee Units & Penalty Units have been released by the Victorian Government (5 May 2026) so are now included in the document
- Animal Registration Fees – Increased Fees due to increase in levy paid to State Government.

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The final Register of Fees and Charges for 2026-2027 is now presented for adoption.

### **Options to Consider**

Council has the option not to disclose fees and charges they intend to levy for various goods and services. Even though the information is not required by legislation, the provision of such information is considered best practice and good governance. It is therefore recommended that Council adopt the Register presented and disclose the fees and charges.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Rate capping continues to place restrictions on Council's ability to raise its own source income and creates an ever-increasing reliance on grants from other tiers of government, the availability of which can change over time. Council's share of the overall tax revenues across all tiers of government is also a factor as additional responsibilities and obligations are shifted to Council without adequate consideration of the implications.

There are statutory fees and other charges that Council must apply but does not have any input into the level of fee charged. Council also sets fees and charges that are non-statutory in nature and represent user fees. The fees and charges register identifies which fees are statutory and those which are non-statutory, together with GST applicability.

These issues mean that Council must be mindful of its own financial sustainability and therefore carefully consider the impact of user fee revenue, balancing recovering funds to contribute to the financial operations of council with customers capacity to pay.

Council sets out the rationale for the pricing of services in its adopted Revenue and Rating Plan which cites the following basis for the setting of fees and charges:

1. Market Price – where Council sets prices based on the benchmarked competitive prices of alternate suppliers. Market prices will be used when other providers exist in the given market and Council needs to meet its obligations under the government's Competitive Neutrality Policy.
2. Full Cost Recovery – where Council aims to recover all direct and indirect costs incurred by Council. This pricing is used where a service benefits individual customers specifically.
3. Subsidised Price – where Council may receive alternative revenue to offset the cost or service or provides the service to the customer with a reduced price to promote inclusiveness or some other intangible benefit.

### **Community Engagement**

The draft Register of Fees & Changes was made available on Council's *Have Your Say* website. The Register was accompanied by a survey to try and engage with the community and encourage feedback of a quantitative and qualitative nature. Only five responses were received on the Register within the feedback period with all feedback provided to Councillors to consider if any amendment is required to the Register.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The formatting of the Register enables Council to update the document outside the budget process, if necessary, such as where a legislative change impacts fee amounts. The provision of the draft Fees and Charges Register to the community in advance of any adoption of those Fees and Charges represents Council's commitment to continuous improvement, in this instance by improved transparency through engagement with the community.

### Collaboration

The draft Fees and Charges document is prepared in accordance with sector guidance provided by LGV and other key sector entities to ensure Council meets its legislative responsibilities. Whilst there is no specific model provided for Fees and Charges, there is a format recommendation presented in the Model Budget that is considered better practice by LGV, so HRCC have prepared their register in accordance with that guidance.

### Financial Implications

The fees and charges directly affect the 2026-2027 Budget as they represent both statutory and user fees. On that basis they represent a form of revenue within the budget. Council's methodology for fees and charges pricing is set out in the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The fees and charges have been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Better Practice Guide which accompanies the Local Government Model Budget provided by Local Government Victoria. Relevant statutory charges set by other levels of government and collected by Council have been included in the Register to assist the community in navigating this complex area.

### Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The fees and charges have been prepared with reference to previous years' charges and in line with key Council documentation such as Community Vision 2041, the 2025-2029 Council Plan, and Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

### Risk Implications

The *Local Government Act 2020* provides the following overarching governance principles and supporting principles at s9:

- (1) A Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.
- (2) The following are the overarching governance principles—
  - (g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured ((s9(2)(g)).
- (3) In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, a Council must take into account the following supporting principles—
  - (d) including the financial management principles.

The document has been prepared in accordance with these principles and therefore complies with the legislative requirements outlined above. It has also been prepared in accordance with the model guidance provided by LGV for the sector therefore further mitigating risks to Council.

### Conclusion

The 2026-2027 Register of Fees and Charges, both statutory and non-statutory, has been prepared as part of the budget development process. The Register is presented to Council for adoption in advance of the formal adoption of the Budget 2026-2027 noting the fees and charges outlined in the Register have been incorporated into the revenue calculations for the 2026-27 Budget.

### 9.3 AWARD OF CONTRACT 26-014 – PROVISION OF CONCRETE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY

Director:	John Martin
Directorate:	Infrastructure
File Number:	26-014

**Officer Conflict of Interest**

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

**Status**

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

**Appendix**

Nil

**Purpose**

To present the outcome of the tender evaluation for Contract 26-014 – Provision of Supply and Delivery of Concrete and seek council approval to award the contract to the recommended panel of preferred suppliers.

**Summary**

- Tenderers were invited to provide prices for supply and delivery, based upon a schedule of rates for a series of concrete products.
- Two submissions were received, both complying with the necessary requirements.
- The evaluation panel assessed the submissions against mandatory criteria, schedule of rates, capacity, capability, risk management, and local content.
- The two tenders received offered competitive and comparable pricing, with both companies operating from Horsham based depots.
- Both suppliers are recommended to be placed onto a panel supply contract.
- Commercially sensitive details, including tenderer names and schedule of rates, are contained within the confidential attachment, provided to Councillors.

**Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Award Contract 26-014 Provision of Supply and Delivery of Concrete for the tendered schedule of rates (excluding GST) for an initial period of 3 years with one optional extension of 3 years to the following tenderers:
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute contract documents on behalf of council.

*\*Note: The names of the successful tenderers will be redacted until the night of the meeting*

## REPORT

### Background

Council invited tenders for the provision of the supply and delivery of concrete to Horsham Rural City Council. The tender includes a schedule of concrete related products, which are commonly used by Council in its various construction and maintenance programs. These products include different concrete strengths, additives, delivery rates and wait time charges.

Historically concrete has been ordered on a per job basis. The amount of concrete used has triggered the need for a supply contract to meet the public advertising requirements of our procurement policy.

### Discussion

Two submissions were received and were assessed as meeting mandatory criteria, demonstrating appropriate machinery, qualifications, and competitive pricing. The evaluation panel used a weighted matrix scoring system considering price, capacity, capability, risk management, and local content.

### Options to Consider

1. Approve the recommended suppliers – Ensure council can acquire concrete during times of demand from the available supplier from the panel.
2. Re-Evaluate the tender submissions to choose one single supplier – During high demand periods this would likely cause delays to construction and maintenance program or required council staff to undertake overtime to accommodate concrete availability times.

The recommended approach aligns with section 9 (2) (b) of the Local Government Act 2020 “to achieve the best outcomes for the municipal community”.

### Sustainability Implications

Nil

### Community Engagement

Nil

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Nil

### Collaboration

Nil

### Financial Implications

The contract is within the operational budget of the Civil, Park and Gardens, and capital works programs, with an anticipated spend of approximately \$150,000, increasing to \$175,000 in years two and three.

Pricing submitted by both suppliers is competitive and provided value for money.

### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Nil

### Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

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The securing of a preferred suppliers for these services is in accordance with the provisions of Council's Procurement Policy.

**Risk Implications**

Not Applicable

**Conclusion**

The evaluation process confirms that two local concrete suppliers for concrete have provided competitive rates, with many years of experience supplying concrete to the local area. Approval to award the supply contract to both suppliers will ensure that Council has good availability of concrete for its ongoing maintenance and construction programs. With the ability to use the schedule of rates provided by both suppliers to receive good value for money from either supplier where they offer lower rates than the other.

## 9.4 AWARD OF CONTRACT 26-015 - PROVISION OF WEED SPRAYING SERVICES

<b>Director:</b>	John Martin
<b>Directorate:</b>	Infrastructure
<b>File Number:</b>	26-015

### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

### Appendix

Nil

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the tender evaluation for Contract 26-015 – Provision of Weed Spraying Services and seek Council approval to award the contract to the recommended panel of preferred suppliers.

### Summary

- Tenders were invited for professional weed spraying services across the municipality, including roadside reserves, fire break spraying, noxious weed spraying and industrial estate spraying.
- Three submissions were received, with all complying with the necessary requirements. However, two would require follow up on certain items if successful.
- The evaluation panel assessed submissions against mandatory criteria, schedule of rates, capacity, capability, risk management, and local content.
- The preferred tender demonstrated the necessary machinery, qualifications, experience, and competitive pricing to meet Council's requirements.
- Commercially sensitive details, including tenderer names and schedule of rates, are contained within the confidential attachment, provided to Councillors.

### Recommendation

That Council

1. Award Contract 26-015-Provision of Weed Spraying Services for the tendered schedule of rates (excluding GST) for an initial period of 3 years with option of two, one year extensions to the following tenderer:
  - [REDACTED]
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute contract documents on behalf of council.

*\*Note: The name of the successful tenderer will be redacted until the night of the meeting*

## REPORT

### Background

Council invited tenders for the provision of weed spraying services across the Horsham Rural City Council municipality. The contract encompasses a comprehensive range of works, including roadside reserves, fire breaks spraying, noxious weed spraying, maintenance of industrial estates, DEECA grant funded pest and weed program and other areas as identified by Council's Parks and Gardens and Civil departments.

This contract provides Council with access to a suitably qualified contractor to complete necessary works to manage pests and weeds in large areas of land that may exceed Council's capacity to complete the works using internal resources and equipment. Engaging external contractors under this arrangement ensures operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness, particularly for works required intermittently throughout the year, during periods of peak demand when exceeding our capacity to undertake this work internally.

### Discussion

Three submissions were received and were assessed as meeting mandatory criteria, demonstrating appropriate machinery, qualifications, and competitive pricing. The evaluation panel used a weighted matrix scoring system considering price, capacity, capability, risk management, and local content.

Two submissions initially lacked evidence of financial viability and compliance with OHS requirements, however post tender communication resulted in the suppliers providing sufficient evidence on these items. It was noted however that if these suppliers were successful, further follow-up on these items would be required.

Following evaluation, the panel made the recommendation to award this contract to one local supplier who submitted the most competitive rates. The remaining two suppliers' rates were significantly higher than the successful supplier and included the addition of travel and accommodation costs which impacted negatively on their final score.

The panel did consider a backup supplier; however it was not deemed necessary as the successful supplier has an established history of conducting work for Council and meeting Council's required timeframes and standard of work.

### Options to Consider

1. Approve the recommended supplier – ensures Council secures a capable supplier at competitive pricing.
2. Re-tender the contract – would delay service delivery and incur additional procurement costs.
3. Appoint additional suppliers to this contract – however it is unlikely that Council would engage another supplier due to higher rates

The recommended approach aligns with section 9 (2) (b) of the Local Government Act 2020 "to achieve the best outcomes for the municipal community".

### Sustainability Implications

The services provided will be delivered within established environmental management practices and relevant pest control and chemical safety legislation.

### Community Engagement

Not Applicable

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not Applicable

**Collaboration**

Not Applicable

**Financial Implications**

The contract is within the operational budgets of Parks & Gardens and Civil departments, with an anticipated annual spend of approximately \$150,000. Pricing submitted by the preferred supplier is competitive and provides value for money. Funding of \$85,000 per year from the Victorian Government contributes to the roadside weed component of this program.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies**

Not applicable

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

The securing of a preferred supplier for these services is in accordance with the provisions of Council's Procurement Policy.

**Risk Implications**

Not applicable

**Conclusion**

The evaluation process confirms that the recommended supplier can deliver weed spraying services that meet Council's requirements. Approval to award the contract will ensure ongoing maintenance of a variety of areas within the municipality, deliver DEECA Pest and Weed Grant Program and offer value for money.

## 9.5 HERITAGE STUDY – C85 AMENDMENT POST EXHIBITION

<b>Director:</b>	Justine Kingan
<b>Directorate:</b>	Community Liveability
<b>File Number:</b>	F24/A05/000018

### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes  No

**Reason:** Officer owns a house in the Bowden Street Residential Precinct.

### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

## Appendix

### Submission table (Confidential)

### Purpose

This report considers submissions to Planning Scheme Amendment C85hors – Horsham Heritage Study and recommends that Council resolves to refer unresolved submissions to an Independent Planning Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning.

### Summary

- The Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 was completed in 2014 to identify the key historical themes associated with Horsham's growth and development that tell the story of Horsham's history and identity. The *Heritage Study Review 2025* review was undertaken to ensure that the heritage citations and recommendations are still accurate and consistent with current guidelines and practices.
- Councils are responsible for local heritage and locally significant places and routinely undertake heritage studies to identify what is of heritage value and to protect places through the planning scheme and application of a Heritage Overlay. Planning Scheme Amendment C85hors – Horsham Heritage Study has been prepared to protect the most significant heritage places across the municipality and was approved and authorised for community consultation (exhibition) by Council and the Minister for Planning in 2025.
- The Amendment was publicly exhibited from 10 November 2025 to 22 December 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and included letters to over 800 property owners and occupiers, notices in newspapers, drop-in sessions and individual meetings.
- A total of 25 individual submissions were received during the public exhibition period, which include 2 late submissions. In addition, Council received 19 general enquiries and held seven one-on-one meetings with affected property owners.
- Following exhibition, discussions were held with landholders to resolve the submissions in consultation with our heritage advisor, resulting in a number of proposed changes to the Amendment and the withdrawal of 14 submissions.

- 
- The next step in the process is the consideration and referral of submissions to an independent planning panel to review and make recommendations to council prior to a final decision in accordance with Part 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

**Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Receives and considers all submissions to Amendment C85hors to the Horsham Planning Scheme.
2. Requests the Minister for Planning to appoint an Independent Planning Panel pursuant to section 23 and the provisions of Part 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to review all submissions to Amendment C85hors;
3. Refer all submissions and post-exhibition changes to the Independent Planning Panel including addendums to existing submissions whilst continuing to resolve or improve submitter issues up until the Panel Hearing.

## REPORT

### Background

In 2011, Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) was a successful recipient of a grant from DELWP to carry out a heritage study.

The grant was used to prepare a thematic environmental history and establish a list of places of potential heritage significance. This stage of the Study included extensive community consultation, including public workshops, a survey for members of the public to nominate places, and work with special interest groups including the Horsham Family History Group, Wimmera Association for Genealogy, Arapiles Historical Society, Horsham Historical Society, and neighbouring groups such as the Murtoa & District Historical Society and the Wimmera branch of the National Trust.

Stage 1 of the Heritage Study identified key historical themes across the municipality including:

1. Living as first Australians
2. Settling on the land
3. Governing and administering
4. Forming townships
5. Developing the Victorian wheat belt
6. Developing a vernacular building style
7. Doing business
8. Establishing transport and communications
9. Building rural communities
10. Appreciating and conserving the natural environment
11. Developing social and cultural life
12. Representing the region in art and literature
13. Making space for parks and gardens
14. Building water supply systems
15. Providing education
16. Attracting tourists and holiday makers
17. Celebrating and commemorating the past

The second stage of the Study was largely funded by Heritage Victoria and carried out in 2013-14. It involved the prioritisation of a shortlist of individual places and precincts to undergo full assessment, followed by documentation to support their inclusion in the Heritage Overlay. Based on place and precinct research carried out in this stage, the thematic environmental history was revised and expanded.

The Stage 2 work is presented in three volumes:

- *Volume 1. Introduction and Recommendations (including methodology)*
- *Volume 2. HO Places and Precincts (heritage citations, draft HO Schedule, mapping)*
- *Volume 3. Thematic Environmental History (as revised in Stage 2)*

Following the Stage 2 assessments, 31 individual places, one serial listing and four heritage precincts (three in Horsham, one in Natimuk) were recommended for the Heritage Overlay through a planning scheme amendment.

In 2022, the Heritage Study Review 2025 was undertaken to ensure that the Horsham Heritage Planning Scheme Amendment and recommendations from the Horsham Heritage Study (2014) had been prepared

in accordance with the appropriate methodologies and that they are still accurate and consistent with current guidelines and practices.

### Amendment Process

The Horsham Planning Scheme currently identifies only 27 individual places, with seven of these listed at State level on the Victorian Heritage Register. Protecting identified heritage places and precincts in the municipality through the application of the Heritage Overlay will raise the number of protected individual heritage places from 27 to 58. It will also introduce a new serial listing for six silos and 10 new heritage precincts (Horsham is the only Rural City in Victoria with no heritage precinct places protected by the Heritage Overlay).

The Amendment to the Horsham Planning Scheme was prepared by Council officers with assistance from Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd. It implements the findings and recommendations of the Horsham Heritage Study 2014, the Review of the Horsham Heritage Study and Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping 2025.

### Exhibition of the Amendment

The Amendment was publicly exhibited for 6 weeks from 10 November to 22 December 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* using the following statutory notifications.

- Direct notification (letters and an information poster) to all affected property owners and occupiers (approximately 800 letters), prescribed Ministers and authorities.
- Public notices in the *Weekly Advertiser* on 11 and 18 November 2025, and the *Government Gazette* on 13 November 2025.
- The Amendment documents were made available for viewing and download (website/officers and DTP website).
- A FAQs pamphlet was available on Council's website and hard copies made available at the Civic Centre.
- An interactive map showing the extent of the new overlays was also available on Council's website.
- Drop-in sessions were held in Horsham on Wednesday 3 December 2025, at the Council Civic Offices, Roberts Avenue, in Natimuk on Thursday 4 December 2025 at NC2, Main Street, Natimuk and in Horsham Wednesday, 10 December 2025 – Hamilton Lamb Hall, Kalkee Road, these sessions were attended by Council officers and a Heritage Consultant.

For the wider community, the Amendment was also advertised on Council's Have Your Say webpage advising that Council was taking submissions in relation to the Amendment. Council officers took over 19 public calls and met with approximately seven community members who visited Council Offices to discuss in more detail the content of the letters received.

A total of 25 submissions were received. Of these, 14 have been resolved (including submissions in support and frivolous submissions), and 11 submissions remain unresolved.

During pre-amendment consultation held between September and November 2023 all landowners and occupiers were notified, and heritage citations were reviewed and finalised.

Council received feedback from approximately 19 property owners, which comprised 9 written responses and 10 phone discussions. Council was able to resolve 10 of the 19 responses, with the remaining parties retaining the option to lodge a formal submission during the exhibition process.

**Discussion**

Key issues raised in submissions

Eleven common issues have been identified in relation to the 25 submissions received, the categorisation of which assisted in the review and analysis of the submissions. A summary of these issues and a general Council officer response is provided in the table below. Please note that many submissions raised more than one issue.

Summary of submissions

**Table 1**

Issue	Summary
Amendment methodology	Submitters raised concerns regarding the approach and criteria used to inform the amendment, including the consistency and transparency of the assessment process.
Application of the Heritage Overlay	Concerns were expressed about how and why the Heritage Overlay was applied to specific properties and whether its application was justified.
Routine Repairs and Maintenance	Submitters sought clarification on whether the Heritage Overlay would restrict or complicate routine maintenance and minor repair works.
Financial Implications and Property Values	Concerns were raised about the potential financial burden of heritage controls and their impact on property values and development potential.
Poorly defined precinct boundaries	Issues were identified with the accuracy and logic of precinct boundaries, including perceived inconsistencies in included and excluded properties.
Inappropriate inclusion of Non-Contributory and newly built structures	Submitters questioned the inclusion of newer or altered buildings that may not contribute to the heritage significance of the precinct.
Renovations and rental market	Concerns were raised about how heritage controls may affect the ability to undertake renovations and implications for rental returns.
Grading (Contributory/Non Contributory)	Submitters disputed the assigned grading of properties, particularly where the level of significance or integrity was considered inaccurate.

## Officers Reports

Amendment timing and sympathetic alterations	Concerns were raised about the timing of the amendment, particularly where recent or approved alterations may not have been adequately considered.
Controls – front fences, gates and paint controls	Clarification was sought regarding the extent of controls over external elements such as fences, gates and paint colours, and their practical implications.

Note: The table does not include all issues raised.

Review of submissions

A review of the submissions received to the Amendment has been undertaken by officers and our Heritage Consultant, Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd.

Seven individual meetings with submitters were also held between January and March 2026.

Council, together with Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd, undertook a further detailed technical review in response to matters raised by submitters. This review was necessary in circumstances where the application of the Heritage Overlay to individual properties and precincts was questioned, including where:

- Inconsistencies identified between the original citation assessments and current site conditions, including alterations, additions or demolition of buildings since the original study was undertaken.
- Availability of new information, which provided additional context for reassessment.
- Clarification of precinct boundaries where submitters identified anomalies or inconsistencies in how properties were included or excluded.
- Consideration of properties impacted by recent events (including fire damage and loss of heritage fabric), affecting their ability to contribute to the significance of the precinct.
- Further assessment of grading (Contributory and Non-Contributory) to ensure consistency with recognised heritage methodology and criteria.

Response to submissions

A summary of each submission received is presented in a Submissions Response Table. The Submissions Response Table offers a detailed response to the submission including a recommendation to retain, modify or remove the heritage controls (if appropriate).

Ten changes are recommended on the basis of further review of the submission, submitter meetings and heritage advice. These changes will form the basis of the Council submission to the Independent Planning Panel.

The recommended changes in response to submissions to the exhibited Amendment for properties located within the HO at this point in time include:

Submission no	Precinct	Recommended change
4	Natimuk Township Precinct	Removal of property from precinct boundary
5	Natimuk Township Precinct	Removal of property from precinct boundary

7	Railway Avenue Residential Precinct	Change in grading from Contributory to Non Contributory
13	Dooen Road Residential Precinct	Change in grading from Contributory to Non Contributory
12	Natimuk Township Precinct	Change in grading from Contributory to Non Contributory
21	Dooen Road Residential Precinct	Removal of property from precinct boundary

Additional changes following the Natimuk Fires

Following exhibition of the Amendment, a further review was undertaken by Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd in response to the loss of four buildings during the January Natimuk fires. This review confirmed that the dwellings in the Natimuk Township Precinct, which were previously identified as contributory, have been destroyed and therefore no longer retain the built fabric that formed the basis of their contributory status. These buildings have now been recommended to be regraded to non-contributory.

In addition to this, the review confirmed that the dwellings in the Natimuk Residential Precinct , which were located at the periphery of the Natimuk Residential Precinct, were also destroyed by the fire and no longer retain any of the built fabric that previously informed their assessment. In reassessing the precinct boundary, Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd advised that, in the absence of these buildings and given their edge location, the properties no longer contribute to, nor assist in demonstrating, the heritage significance or cohesion of the precinct.

These changes have been reviewed and endorsed by Heritage consultant Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd.

The full set of changes includes the removal of five properties from identified precinct boundaries and the reclassification of seven properties from Contributory to Non-Contributory. Some of these changes have arisen as a result of further discussions with landowners, the receipt of additional heritage advice, and building losses associated with the Natimuk fires, which have affected the integrity and heritage value of certain places.

Next Steps

The next step in the Amendment process is to seek an independent Planning Panel.

Making all requested changes to the Amendment as detailed in the submissions is not supported for the reasons set out in Appendix 9.5A. A number of changes, however, are recommended to be made to the Amendment where a clear and evidence-based rationale for removing or changing a heritage control can be demonstrated.

Council must forward submissions to an Independent Planning Panel if it does not agree to make Amendment changes in accordance with all submissions. Landowners will be provided with an updated response letter to their submission.

Council must make a formal request to the Minister for Planning to appoint a Panel, after which Planning Panels Victoria will advise of the hearing dates.

Following the Panel Hearing, the Panel will provide a report and recommendations to Council and to the Minister for Planning. On receipt of the Panel report, a Council Report will be prepared for Council to consider the Panel's recommended changes.

#### As the Planning Authority

As the Planning Authority for this Amendment, Council must consider all submissions made to the Amendment and may consider late submissions in accordance with Section 22 (14) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Furthermore, under Section 23 (15) (16) of the Act, following consideration of submissions, Council as the Planning Authority must:

- a. Change the Amendment in the manner requested; or
- b. Refer submissions to an Independent Planning Panel; or
- c. Abandon the Amendment or part of the Amendment.

#### **Options to Consider**

That Council:

##### Option 1

1. Receives and considers all submissions received to Amendment C85hors to the Horsham Planning Scheme and approves to request the Minister for Planning to appoint an Independent Planning Panel. **(Recommended)**

##### Option 2

2. Having considered all submissions to Amendment C85hors, resolves to abandon the amendment. **(Not recommended)**

Option 1 is recommended as it allows for ongoing consideration of submissions and independent assessment prior to a final decision on the amendment by Council.

#### **Sustainability Implications**

The Horsham Heritage Study and its subsequent review support positive sustainability outcomes by recognising, protecting and conserving places of cultural heritage significance across the municipality.

#### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement has been a key component of the preparation and implementation of the Horsham Heritage Study and Planning Scheme Amendment C85hors. Engagement has occurred across multiple stages over several years, providing a range of opportunities for community members, landowners and stakeholders to contribute to the identification, review and statutory implementation of heritage places.

#### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Considering heritage early supports more informed decision making, reduces uncertainty for applicants and the broader community, and strengthens the municipality's sense of place and identity. The Amendment is reflective of continuous improvement in Council's planning framework and aligns with best practice.

#### **Collaboration**

Collaboration was undertaken with professional heritage experts, external agencies and the business team throughout the public engagement process.

### **Financial Implications**

An allocation within the 2022-23 Council budget has been used to commence preparation of and for Exhibition of a Planning Scheme Amendment and a further 2024-25 budget allocation will contribute to the Independent Planning Panel as well as the costs associated with the preparation of expert witness statements.

### **Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

Heritage protection has been frequently raised as a high priority for the community during public consultation on a variety of plans and strategies.

#### *Council Plan 2025-2029*

- *Sustainability*

*A region that grows sustainably and protects what matters.*

### **Risk Implications**

#### Financial risk

Council has a responsibility to protect heritage places and, in doing so, reduce the risk and cost of legal representation and Council's resources.

#### Risks to the public

When public and Council managed heritage assets are neglected and become derelict as a result of inadequate protection, management or maintenance, there may be a direct risk to the safety of the public.

#### Reputational risk

Communities expect Council to protect significant heritage places and assets and make good decisions about changes to heritage places. Councils must also look after their own heritage assets, including buildings, parks, monuments, and gardens. Council could experience criticism in the press and negative social media attention if a heritage place is demolished, inappropriately developed, or if Council heritage assets are not maintained.

### **Conclusion**

The Amendment proposes to introduce the application of heritage controls across the municipality. In total, 25 submissions were received, and each submission has undergone a rigorous and thorough assessment, supported by Council officers and heritage consultant Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd.

It is recommended that the Amendment (together with the suggested changes as set out in the Table of Submissions (Appendix 9.5A)) be progressed to the next step in the planning scheme amendment process and that the submissions be referred to an Independent Planning Panel for further consideration.

## 10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Cr Brian Klowss (Mayor)

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
27/04/26	Aboriginal Community Round Table
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
28/04/26	Horsham Bypass Planning CRG meeting #2
29/04/26	Natimuk Economic & Social Plan PAC meetings
01/05/26	Horsham College Debutante Ball
04/05/26	Shine the Light on Family Violence candlelight walk and vigil
14/05/26	WSMCA Mayor & CEO Meeting
20/05/26	Citizenship Ceremony

### Cr Cam McDonald

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
01/04/26	Attended the Yarning Circle at Goolum Goolum
13/04/26	Council Briefing
20/04/26	Council Briefing
27/04/26	Council Meeting

### Cr Dean O'Loughlin

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
27/03/26	Council Meeting
04/05/26	Shine the Light on Family Violence - candlelight walk and vigil
05/05/26	Effective Council Meeting Procedure Training
06/05/26	Council Briefing
11/05/26	Special Council Meeting
12/05/26	Council Briefing
14/05/26	CEO ERC meeting
18/05/26	Council Briefing

**11. URGENT BUSINESS**

## 12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

## **13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

### **13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS**

- Council Briefing Meetings held on 6, 11 and 18 May 2026.

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

### **13.2 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange Board Meeting held on 19 February 2026.

Refer to **Appendix 13.2A**

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note agenda items:

- 13.1 Informal Meetings of Councillors – Record of Meetings
- 13.2 Council Committee Minutes.

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION**