



AGENDA & BUSINESS PAPERS

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provision of the *Local Government Act 1993* that a meeting of Uralla Shire Council will be held in the Council Chambers, 32 Salisbury Street, Uralla.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

28 April 2026

Commencing at 4:00 PM

or at the conclusion of a Public Forum



Statement of Ethical Obligations

The Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Oath/ Affirmation of Office made at the start of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of Uralla Shire and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the *Local Government Act* or any other Act, to the best of their skill and judgement.

It is also a requirement that the Mayor and Councillors disclose conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice.

Toni Averay

General Manager

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- 1 **OPENING & WELCOME**
- 2 **PRAYER**
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- 4 **WEBCAST INFORMATION**
- 5 **APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS**
- 6 **DISCLOSURE & DECLARATION OF INTEREST/S**

7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

7.1 Confirmation of Minutes Ordinary Meeting held 24 March 2026

Department: Group Corporate Services
Prepared By: Group Support Officer Corporate Services
Authorised By: General Manager
Reference: UINT/26/6941
Attachments: 1. MINUTES Ordinary Meeting held 24 March 2026 [⇒](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 24 March 2026 as a true and correct record.

8 URGENT, SUPPLEMENTARY, AND LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS (INCLUDING PETITIONS)

9 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

9.1 Mayor's Activity Report for March 2026

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Support Officer Corporate Services
Authorised By:	Mayor

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Mayor's Activity Report for March 2026.

REPORT

DATE	COMMITTEE/MEETING/EVENT	LOCATION
02 March	Regional Energy Accord – New England Community Leaders Roundtable	Armidale
02 March	Mayor & GM Catch Up	Uralla
03 March	Energy Charter Sessions – Mayor Leadership Meeting	Armidale
04 March	Review of Joint Organisations in NSW	Zoom
08 March	Matron Hilda Hope McMaugh Exhibition Opening	Uralla
09 March	Mayor & GM Catch UP	Uralla
10 March	Seniors Week – Educator, Writer and Local Powerhouse Kent Mayo OAM	Uralla
10 March	Councillor Information Session - Budget 2026/27 - Operational Plan 2026/27	Uralla
11 March	Seniors Week – Author, Volunteer and 2025 Citizen of the Year – Cheryl Nolan	Uralla
11 March	Mayor's 2AD Radio 1134 weekly interviews	Uralla
13 March	Seniors Week – Steve Dobson	Uralla
16 March	NBN Interview – Renewable Energy Rollout	Uralla
16 March	GM & Mayor Catch UP	Uralla
16 March	Information session for candidates.	Uralla
17 March	Waterfall Way Workshop	Armidale
19 March	DPHI/Uralla Council Renewable Energy Zone	Teams
23 March	Resident Meeting	Uralla
23 March	Mayor & GM Catch Up	Uralla
24 March	Meet with Resident – Mr Garry Brown	Uralla
24 March	Ordinary Council Meeting	Uralla
25 March	Mayors 2AD Radio	Uralla
25 March	Kentucky & Rocky River Council Visit	Uralla
25 March	NEV2030 Update Forum – New England Vision	Armidale

26 March	NEREZ Mayors and Doug Parris – New England Renewable Energy Zone.	Sydney
26 March	CoREM	Sydney
27 March	CMA March Meeting	Sydney
27 March	Meeting with Dr Amanda Cohn	Sydney
30 March	ABC Interview	Uralla
30 March	New England Northwest Future Energy Forum 2026	Armidale
30 March	Mayor & GM Catch Up	Uralla

CONCLUSION

The Mayor's activity report for March 2026 is presented for the information of Councillors and community.

9.2 Delegate Report: EnergyCo North Community Reference Group meetings 25 September 2025 to 20 March 2026

Department: General Manager's Office

Prepared By: Councillor

Authorised By: Mayor

Reference: UINT/26/8805

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal: 4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community

Strategy: 4.1. Informed and collaborative leadership in our community

SUMMARY

This delegate report presents the meeting notes from recent EnergyCo Community Reference Group (CRG) meetings, and notes key EnergyCo documents and community information available on line.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the delegate report from Cr Burrows on the EnergyCo North Community Reference Group (CRG) meetings held from 24 September 2025 to 20 March 2026.

REPORT

These meetings are productive but quite repetitive, it is a diverse group with varying outcome desires. Main points are always around water, resources, worker accommodation, legacy outcomes, cumulative impacts, ecological problems and outcomes, long term costs and benefits, landowner issues, what has been learned from Central West Orana, roads, Community Benefit Programs, why only 20 year lease payments, funding to Councils, project updates, health professionals or lack of them, engagement with community including Aboriginal community, waste, telecommunications, Stages of projects (1 2.4 GW & 2 – 3.6GW for a total of 6GW transfer capacity 2032 but might be staged out over years, stage 3 subject to need circa 2039), truck movements and OSOM, First Nation engagement, Port to REZ program, land acquisition.

CRG recent meeting notes and presentations

Please see below links to recent meeting notes and presentations:

24 September 2025 [Meeting notes 2025](#)

24 September 2025 [Meeting presentation](#)

4 December 2025 [Meeting notes](#)

4 December 2025 [Meeting presentation](#)

25 February 2026 Online meeting – discussion of the below studies

20 March 2026 [Meeting presentation](#)

20 March 2026 [Meeting notes](#)

EnergyCo Regional Major Infrastructure Studies

The studies were published late Dec 25 based on point-in-time data as at Nov 2024. Following are links to the studies:

[Local Supply Chain Study](#)
[Training and Skills Study](#)
[Waste Management and Circular Economy Study](#)
[Water and Wastewater Security Study](#)
[Workforce Accommodation Study](#)

Traffic and transport study to be released later in 2026.

EnergyCo online information

[Working with the community](#)
[New England REZ community reference group](#) members of North and South CRG, presentations and meeting notes
[New England REZ Project Documents](#)
Project updates, Reports, Fact sheets, FAQ, Support for landowners, Maps, Regional Infrastructure Studies, Contacts
[Interactive Map](#)
[Feedback Report for the NEREZ](#) summarises the feedback received during the recent consultation period on the revised transmission corridor and outlines how this feedback is being considered, along with next steps for the project.

[Social Impact Assessment Community Survey](#)

Have your say on the New England REZ project

EnergyCo has reopened the Social Impact Assessment community survey following refinements to the transmission corridor in October last year. Community submissions are invited on the EnergyCo website:

If you'd like to share your feedback, you can complete the survey [here](#).

The survey closes on 1 May.

If you've already completed the survey and your feedback hasn't changed, there's no need to complete it again.

Your input will help inform the ongoing planning and assessment of the project.

CONCLUSION

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for 15 June 2026.

10 MAYORAL MINUTE

Nil

11 NOTICE OF MOTION/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

12 REPORT OF COMMITTEES**12.1 Bundarra Community Committee - Draft Minutes of Meeting held 15 April 2026**

Department:	Infrastructure and Development
Prepared By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/8824

Attachments:	1. Draft Minutes - Bundarra Community Committee Meeting - 15 April 2026 📄
	2. Bundarra Works Report as at 15 April 2026 and Uralla Entrance Sign Plans 📄

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	1. We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community
	2. A sustainable economy that supports prosperity
	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	1.1. A growing, community-minded shire
	1.4. Access to and equity of services
	2.3. Well serviced communities
	3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders

SUMMARY

The Bundarra Community Committee meeting was held on 15 April 2026. This report presents the draft minutes of that meeting for the information of Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Draft Minutes of the Bundarra Community Committee Meeting held on 15 April 2026.

REPORT

The Bundarra Community Committee meeting was held on 15 April 2026. The meeting was attended by Committee members, members of the community, appointed Councillors and Council staff. The Draft Minutes of that Committee meeting are attached to this report for Council's consideration.

The Committee continues to provide significant benefits to both the local Bundarra community and Council's operations.

CONCLUSION

The Bundarra Community Committee meeting took place at the Bundarra School of Arts Hall on 15 April 2026. The draft minutes of that meeting are attached to this report for the information of Council.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Community will be informed of Council's decision and future intentions via the Bundarra Community Committee Email Distribution List.

Policy and Regulation

Bundarra Community Committee Terms of Reference 2025
Local Government Act 1993; section 355

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

N/A

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

N/A

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

N/A

Legal and Risk Management

N/A

Performance Measures

High attendance benchmarks at the monthly Committee meetings by both appointed community members and Council representatives continues.

Project Management

Infrastructure & Development Directorate

12.2 Hill Street Affordable Housing - Project Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes 7 April 2026

Department: Infrastructure and Development**Prepared By:** Senior Strategic Planning Officer**Authorised By:** General Manager**Reference:** UINT/26/8940

Attachments: 1. Hill Street Project Advisory Committee Minutes 7 April [↗](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK**Goal:** 3. An Independent shire and well-governed community**Strategy:** 3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

3.3. An efficient and effective independent local government

SUMMARY

This report presents the minutes of the inaugural Hill Street Project Advisory Committee held on the 7 April 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the minutes of the Hill Street Project Advisory Committee meeting on the 7 April 2026.

REPORT

As this was the inaugural meeting, a substantial portion of the session was devoted to introductions to the project and committee members. The committee received an overview of resolutions and actions to date, together with an update from the Technical Working Group on the status of preliminary planning activities and the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) Expression of Interest, including discussion of the site concept design.

The committee resolved to defer the appointment of a Chair to provide members with additional time to become acquainted. As the meeting exceeded the allotted time, this item was not revisited and will be included as a commencing item in the business paper for the next meeting. Further consideration of community engagement was also deferred.

The committee further agreed to defer broader community engagement with the community until the outcome of the HAFF Expression of Interest is known.

13 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

13.1 DA-9-2026 for alterations and additions to an existing residential care facility at 39 King Street, Uralla

Department:	Infrastructure and Development
Prepared By:	Acting Manager Development & Planning
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/26/7515

Attachments: 1. Draft NoD for alterations and additions to 39 King St [⇒](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal: 4. Good custodianship of our natural and built environment

Strategy: 4.2. Development that respects and enriches our environment

NOTE TO COUNCILLORS

In accordance with the provisions of section 375A of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, a division is to be called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put to the meeting, for the purpose of recording voting on planning matters.

Development applications require a decision of Council which MUST be either:

- Approval with conditions (to be prepared by the Manager Development and Planning); or
- Refusal with reasons.

SUMMARY

The following report provides an assessment of a development application submitted for alterations and additions (including internal / wall demolition) to a residential care facility located upon land described as Lot 4 DP544099, Lot 1 DP 512959, Lot 3 DP 1148576, Lot 4 DP 1148576 and Lot 202 DP 1148577 being 39 King Street, Uralla, and known as McMaugh Gardens. The proposal seeks to change the use of an existing laundry room into an additional residential care unit.

The application is referred to council for determination as the land is owned by Uralla Shire Council, who also operated an aged care facility upon the site. It is recommended that the application be approved under council's authority, subject to the attached conditions of consent.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the Development Application (ref: DA-9-2026) for alterations and additions to an existing residential care facility located upon land described as Lot 4 DP 544099, Lot 1 DP 512959, Lot 3 DP 1148576, Lot 4 DP 1148576 and Lot 202 DP 1148577, and known at 39 King Street, Uralla, subject to the conditions of consent in the attached Notice of Determination.

REPORT

The following report provides an assessment of a development application submitted for alterations and additions (including internal / wall demolition) to a residential care facility upon land described as Lot 4 DP544099, Lot 1 DP 512959, Lot 3 DP 1148576, Lot 4 DP 1148576 and Lot 202 DP 1148577 being 39 King Street, Uralla, and known as McMaugh Gardens.

The application is referred to council for determination as the land is owned by Uralla Shire Council, who also operated an aged care facility upon the site. It is recommended that the application be approved under Council's authority, subject to the attached conditions of consent.

Applicant: Simon Vivers
Owner: Uralla Shire Council
Proposal: Alterations and additions (including internal / wall demolition) to a residential care facility known as McMaugh Gardens
Location: Lot 4 DP544099, Lot 1 DP 512959, Lot 3 DP 1148576, Lot 4 DP 1148576 and Lot 202 DP 1148577, being 39 King Street, Uralla.
Zone: R1 General Residential

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

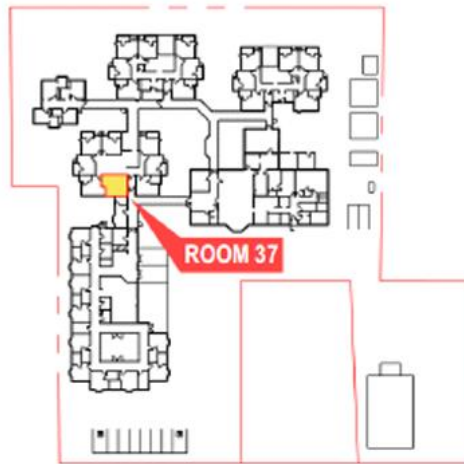
Council's consent is sought for minor (internal) demolition, alteration works, and change of use to facilitate the formation of one (1) additional accommodation unit. The proposal would increase the capacity of McMaugh Gardens facility from 36 to 37 residential care rooms.

The existing use of the subject area includes a small laundry (including single washer, dryer and sink), kitchenette and bathroom. The proposed development would create one (1) additional accommodation unit, consisting of a single bed space and ensuite bathroom. The work includes:

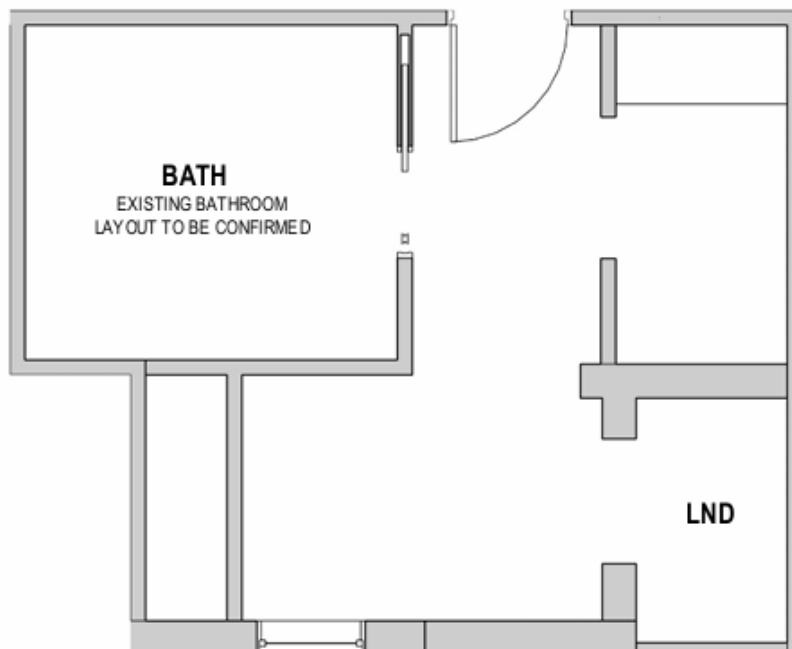
- Demolition of existing bathroom internal walls (where connecting with proposed room), kitchenette, laundry and associated partitions and cupboards.
- Construction of a two-room (ensuite and bedroom) layout, with a slight reduction in bathroom/ensuite footprint.
- Installation of external facing sliding doors.

The proposal supports a modest and logical internal intensification, without any material impact on the existing land use. The provision of one additional accommodation care unit would facilitate an increase in use which is capable of being absorbed by the existing on-site infrastructure. It is noted that the loss of the existing laundry would not be of impact and managed through two existing laundries located within the facility.

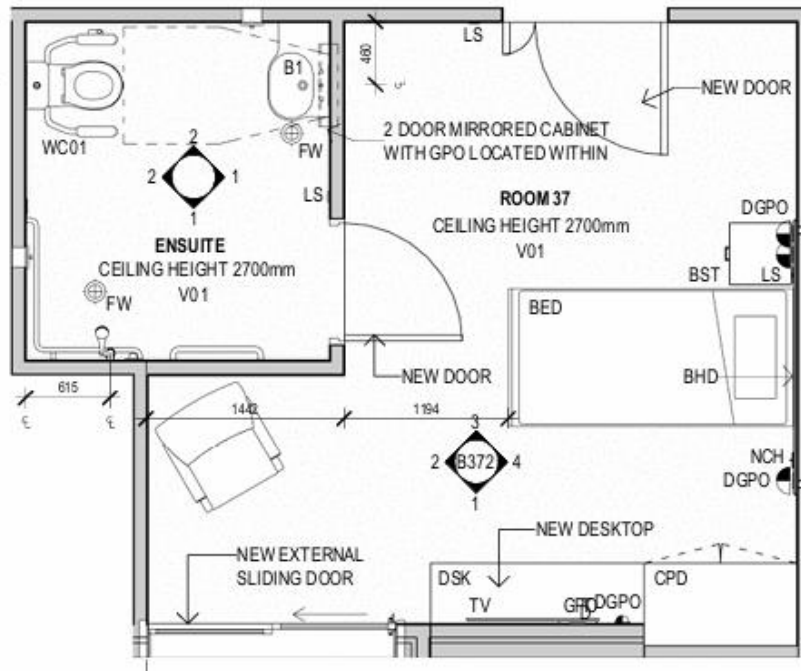
Location plan



Site plan – 39 King Street, including 35 King Street



Existing floor plan



Proposed floor plan

SITE

The subject site is located on the northern side of King Street, Uralla, and consists of five (5) allotments that support the existing McMaugh Gardens residential care facility. Access to the subject land is from King Street. The residential care facilities established upon the site was constructed c1990 and currently provides 36 accommodation rooms. Adjacent land known as 35 King Street, Uralla, is also owned by Uralla Shire Council and a formed driveway and informal parking area located on this land serves as an extension of the McMaugh Gardens development.

AERIAL IMAGE



PREVIOUS APPROVALS

- DA-10-2016 – pergola
- DA-68-2014 –storage shed
- DA-25-2014 – fire sprinkler upgrade
- DA-3178-2000 – additions
- DA-3730-2006 - addition and covered walkway
- DA 3256 – brick fence
- DA-3250-2001 - additions
- DA-3178-2000 - alts and adds
- BA-1989-97 - aged care hostel
- DA-1807-88 – 21 bed hostel
- DA-1805-88 - subdivision

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**Section 1.7 - Application of Part 7 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and Part 7A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994***

Section 1.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) identifies that Part 7 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) and Part 7A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* have effect in connection with terrestrial and aquatic environments. The proposal does not involve an aquatic environment. As such, only the BC Act requires consideration.

There are four triggers known to insert a development into the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (i.e. the need for a BDAR to be submitted with a DA):

- Trigger 1: development occurs in land mapped on the Biodiversity Values Map (OEH) (clause 7.1 of *Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017* (BC Regulation 2017)),
- Trigger 2: development involves clearing/disturbance of native vegetation above a certain area threshold (clauses 7.1 and 7.2 of BC Regulation 2017),
- Trigger 3: development is otherwise likely to significantly affect threatened species (clauses 7.2 and 7.3 of BC Act), and
- Trigger 4: development proposed to occur in an Area of Outstanding Biodiversity Value (clause 7.2 of BC Act). No areas are known to occur in the Uralla LGA.

Comment:

The land does not occur on the NSW Biodiversity Map. [Trigger 1]

The proposal does not involve clearing of native vegetation. [Trigger 2]

The proposal is not likely to significantly affect threatened species because there is no clearing. [Trigger 3]

Overall, the development does not trigger the need for a BDAR under the BC Act.

Section 4.14 Bushfire

The land is not mapped as being 'bushfire prone land' as per the *Uralla Shire Council Bush Fire Prone Land Map*, certified by NSW Rural Fire Service Commissioner on 27 January 2009.

Section 4.15

Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act requires council to consider various matters, of which those pertaining to the application are listed below.

PROVISIONS OF ANY ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENT s4.15(1)(a)(i) EP&A ACT***Uralla Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP)*****Part 1 - Preliminary****Clause 1.2 - Aims of Plan**

The broad aims of the LEP are set out under subclause 2.

(2) The particular aims of this Plan are as follows—

- (aa) to protect and promote the use and development of land for arts and cultural activity, including music and other performance arts,
- (a) to encourage the orderly management, development and conservation of resources by protecting, enhancing and conserving—
 - (i) land of significance for agricultural production, and
 - (ii) timber, minerals, soils, water and other natural resources, and
 - (iii) areas of high scenic or recreational value, and
 - (iv) native plants and animals including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats, and
 - (v) places and buildings of heritage significance,
- (b) to provide a choice of living opportunities and types of settlements,
- (c) to facilitate development for a range of business enterprise and employment opportunities,
- (d) to ensure that development is sensitive to both the economic and social needs of the community, including the provision of community facilities and land for public purposes,
- (e) to ensure that development has regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development and has regard to areas subject to environmental hazards and development constraints,
- (f) to provide for flexibility in applying certain development standards, where compliance with such standards may be unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances of a particular development, and there is sufficient justification for varying the standards on environmental planning grounds.

The application is considered to be consistent with the aims of the LEP as discussed in the body of this report.

Clause 1.6 - Consent Authority

This clause establishes that, subject to the EP&A Act, council is the consent authority for applications made under the LEP.

Clause 1.7 - Mapping

The subject site is identified on the LEP maps in the following manner:

Land zoning map	Land zoned R1 General Residential
Lot size map	560m ²
Heritage map	Not an individual heritage item and is within the Commercial Precinct heritage conservation area.
Flood planning map	Not within a flood zone
Drinking water catchment map	Not within a drinking water catchment area

Land reservation acquisition map	Not applicable
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Those matters that are of relevance are addressed in detail in the body of this report.

Clause 1.9A - Suspension of Covenants, Agreements and Instruments

This clause provides that covenants, agreements and other instruments which seek to restrict the carrying out of development do not apply with the following exceptions.

- covenants imposed or required by Council,
- prescribed instruments under Section 183A of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*,
- any conservation agreement under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*,
- any trust agreement under the *Nature Conservation Trust Act 2001*,
- any property vegetation plan under the *Native Vegetation Act 2003*,
- any biobanking agreement under Part 7A of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (now the BC Act),
- any planning agreement under Division 6 of Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

Comment: Council is not aware of any restrictions as mentioned above, affecting the subject land.

Part 2 - Permitted or Prohibited Development

Clause 2.1 - Land Use Zones and Land Use Table

The subject site is located within the R1 General Residential zone. The proposed development is defined as a residential care facility under the LEP as follows:

residential care facility means accommodation for seniors or people with a disability that includes—

- (a) meals and cleaning services, and
- (b) personal care or nursing care, or both, and
- (c) appropriate staffing, furniture, furnishings and equipment for the provision of that accommodation and care,

but does not include a dwelling, hostel, hospital or psychiatric facility.

Note.

Residential care facilities are a type of **seniors housing**.

Seniors housing is defined as follows:

seniors housing means a building or place that is—

- (a) a residential care facility, or
- (b) a hostel within the meaning of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021, Chapter 3, Part 5*, or
- (c) a group of independent living units, or
- (d) a combination of any of the buildings or places referred to in paragraphs (a)–(c),
and that is, or is intended to be, used permanently for—
- (e) seniors or people who have a disability, or
- (f) people who live in the same household with seniors or people who have a disability, or
- (g) staff employed to assist in the administration of the building or place or in the provision of services to persons living in the building or place,

but does not include a hospital.

The proposed development is permitted with consent in this zone, and this application is seeking consent.

Clause 2.3 - Zone Objectives

The objectives for land zoned R1 General Residential and assessment of consistency are as follows:

R1 General Residential zone objectives	Comments
<i>To provide for the housing needs of the community.</i>	One additional residential care unit will be provided within the existing facility.
<i>To provide for a variety of housing types and densities.</i>	The provision of an additional residential care unit contributes to the availability of residential care supply within the shire.
<i>To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.</i>	The development does not restrict future use of the land for other permitted opportunities.

Part 3 - Exempt and Complying Development

The application is not exempt or complying development.

Part 4 - Principal Development Standards

No principal development standards are applicable to the proposed development.

Part 5 – Miscellaneous provisions

Part 6 - Additional Local Provisions

6.1 - Earthworks

This clause applies to all land in the Uralla Shire LGA and requires that council be satisfied that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land with consideration given to the following matters:

- (a) *the likely disruption of, or any detrimental effect on, existing drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality,*
- (b) *the effect of the proposed development on the likely future use or redevelopment of the land,*
- (c) *the quality of the fill or the soil to be excavated, or both,*
- (d) *the effect of the proposed development on the existing and likely amenity of adjoining properties,*
- (e) *the source of any fill material and the destination of any excavated material,*
- (f) *the likelihood of disturbing relics,*
- (g) *the proximity to and potential for adverse impacts on any watercourse, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area,*
- (h) *any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.*

Comment: The proposed development does not require earth works as the alterations and additions are within the existing building.

Clause 6.4 - Essential Services

Clause 6.4 applies and states:

Development consent must not be granted to development unless the consent authority is satisfied that any of the following services that are essential for the proposed development are available or that adequate arrangements have been made to make them available when required:

- (a) *the supply of water,*
- (b) *the supply of electricity,*
- (c) *the disposal and management of sewage,*
- (d) *storm water drainage or on-site conservation,*
- (e) *suitable road access.*

In consideration of this clause, all utility services are available to the land and adequate for the proposal.

The Council's reticulated water supply system is connected to the site. The site is to be serviced by Council's sewer main. There will be no increase in stormwater from the site. Electricity and telecommunications are available to the development. The subject and fronts King Street and existing access is adequate.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICIES

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

Chapter 4 - Remediation of Land

Pursuant to Clause 4.6 *Contamination and remediation to be considered in determining development application:*

- (1) *A consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of any development on land unless:*
 - (a) *it has considered whether the land is contaminated, and*
 - (b) *if the land is contaminated, it is satisfied that the land is suitable in its contaminated state (or will be suitable, after remediation) for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out, and*
 - (c) *if the land requires remediation to be made suitable for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out, it is satisfied that the land will be remediated before the land is used for that purpose.*

The subject site is not known to have been used for any potentially contaminating land uses as listed under Table 1 of the contaminated land planning guidelines. Therefore, council considers that the subject site is suitable for the proposed development without the need for further investigations or remediation.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 (BC SEPP)

Chapters 3 and 4 Koala Habitat Protection 2020 and 2021

Council is identified within the SEPP Koala Habitat Protection schedule as having koala habitat.

Chapter 3 does not apply to this site because the land is zoned R1 General Residential, which is not a nominated zone.

Chapter 4 applies to the site as the land is zoned R1 General Residential, a nominated zone. However, the site has an area which is less than the minimum threshold of 1 ha, and no further assessment is required.

In this regard, the proposal is considered to satisfy the requirements of the BC SEPP and a Koala Plan of Management is not required in this instance.

PROVISIONS OF ANY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENT THAT HAS BEEN PLACED ON EXHIBITION 4.15(1)(a)(ii) EP&A ACT

No draft plans apply.

DESIGNATED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is not designated development.

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT

Section 4.46 of the EP&A Act states that development requiring consent and another activity approval is defined as “Integrated Development”.

The proposed development is not integrated development.

PROVISIONS OF ANY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN s4.15(1)(a)(iii) EP&A ACT

An assessment of the proposed development against the relevant planning outcomes will be undertaken below.

Uralla Development Control Plan 2011

An assessment is provided below:

Chapter 3 - Residential	Compliance	Comment
3.4 Site Design and Layout	Yes	The proposed development takes place within the footprint of an existing building and will not have any overshadowing and privacy issues for neighbouring properties.
3.5 Density	NA	NA, as the footprint of the building is existing.
3.6 Setbacks and Building Envelopes	NA	NA, as the development requires alterations within the existing building footprint.
3.7 Open Space	NA	NA,- managed open space is provided as part of the existing development.
3.8 Secluded private open space	NA	NA to the development
3.9 Landscaping of Open Space Areas	Yes	The site is set within existing landscaping that is adequate to accommodate the proposed development.
3.10 Privacy	Yes	The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on privacy to or from the adjoining properties.
3.12 Solar Access	NA	Standard applies to dwellings.
Chapter 6 – Access and parking	Yes - The development pre dates the current DCP. Existing access and parking is considered to be adequate to service the proposed development.	<p>The DCP sets car parking requirements for a nursing home or similar facility as: 1 space per 3 beds, plus 1 space for each resident or staff doctor, plus 1 space for each three employees or part thereof.</p> <p>The existing development provides 14 spaces within the development area (incorporating additional land at 35 King Street - also owned by council).</p> <p>The initial development predates the current DCP and while technically the proposed development generates an additional car parking requirement of 0.3 of one (1) space, it is considered that the existing car parking is adequate to accommodate the minor scale of development proposed.</p>

Chapter 3 - Residential	Compliance	Comment
Chapter 9 - Heritage	Yes	The existing development is infill development within a heritage conservation area. The proposal would not result in any significant external alteration (to the existing building and is limited to a door alteration, which is not visible from public spaces). The development will have no adverse impact upon the heritage amenity of the conservation area.
Chapter 13 – notification procedures	Yes	Council’s Community Participation Plan and Council DA Conflict of Interest Policy both apply and have been addressed within the assessment report.
Chapter 14 – contaminated land	Yes	Superseded by <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i> and addressed separately within the planning assessment report.

SECTION 7.12 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN

A section 7.12 Development Contributions levy does not apply to the development as the subject land is owned and managed by a public authority.

Furthermore, the capital investment (CIV) of the development is below the threshold of the contributions plan.

PROVISIONS OF ANY PLANNING AGREEMENT s4.15(1)(a)(iia) EP&A ACT

No planning agreements have been entered into with respect to the subject land or proposal.

PROVISIONS PRESCRIBED BY THE 2021 REGULATIONS s4.15(1)(a)(iv) EP&A ACT**Demolition of a Building (s61(1))**

The proposal does not involve the demolition of a building. Minor internal demolition of walls is proposed.

Fire Safety Considerations (s62)

The proposal does not involve a change of building use for an existing building.

Buildings to be Upgraded (s64)

The proposal does involve the rebuilding, alteration, enlargement or extension of an existing building.

BASIX Commitments (s27 and s75)

BASIX is not applicable to the proposed development.

THE LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT s4.15(1)(b) EP&A ACT

Impacts	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory	Not Relevant	Comments + conditions to ensure satisfactory
Context & setting	x			The proposed development is consistent with the pattern of surrounding development.
Site design	x			The proposed development repurposes an existing laundry and will have no adverse impact upon the existing streetscape which contains residential and related activities.
Bulk, privacy & overshadowing	x			No adverse impacts are anticipated due to suitable separation distances from the boundaries and neighbouring dwellings.
Setbacks	x			The existing development complies with the front and side setback requirements of the DCP.
Landscaping	x			The existing facility is set within a landscaped setting that is adequate to accommodate the proposed alterations and additions.
Streetscape	x			The proposed development will not have any adverse visual amenity on the streetscape of the area due to its location and design elements.
Traffic, access and parking	x			Access to the subject land is from King Street. The site is serviced by 14 off-street car parking spaces, and while the proposed development does generate an additional 0.3 car park space, it is considered that by the minor nature of the development, that the existing arrangements are adequate to service the development and the additional residential room.
Utilities & servicing	x			Water, sewer, electricity, and NBN services are available to the site.
Water quality & stormwater	x			No additional stormwater will be generated by the building alterations.

Impacts	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory	Not Relevant	Comments + conditions to ensure satisfactory
Soils & soil erosion	x			The building alterations are internal and within an existing building
Flora & fauna - biodiversity	x			No site clearing or tree removal is required as part of this development proposal.
Waste	x			Minimal waste will be generated by the works, with demolition of the internal walls of the unit likely to create some waste materials for disposal at a landfill facility.
Noise & vibration	x			Conditions are attached with regards to work hours to ensure impacts are within reasonable limits.
Natural hazards - flooding, bushfire etc.	x			The subject land is not mapped as being bushfire or flood prone.
Safety, security & crime prevention	x			The nature of the facility ensures adequate safety and site security for residents.
Social and economic Impacts	x			Adverse impacts are considered unlikely.
Public Domain	x			Adverse impacts are considered unlikely.
Cumulative Impacts	x			Adverse cumulative impacts considered unlikely for the reasons set out above.

THE SUITABILITY OF THE SITE s4.15(1)(c) EP&A ACT

The proposed development is located in the R1 General Residential zone and is permissible with the consent of council. The suitability of the site has been addressed in the above sections of the report. The development of the site will not create significant adverse impacts on the context and setting of the area. Additionally, the development of the site will not detrimentally affect the adjoining land and is unlikely to lead to land use conflict.

ANY SUBMISSIONS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EP&A ACT, s4.15(1)(d)

The proposed development is not defined as “advertised development” under the provisions of the *Uralla Council Community Participation Plan 2021* (CPP). The development was neighbourhood notified for 14 days, with no submissions received. As the land is council owned and managed a Management Statement was prepared and exhibited for 28 days in accordance with council’s policy. No submissions were received at the conclusion of the exhibition period.

PUBLIC INTEREST s4.15(1)(e) EP&A ACT

The proposed development is considered to be of minor interest to the wider public due to the relatively localised nature of potential impacts.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is permissible with the consent of council. The proposed development complies with the relevant aims, objectives and provisions of LEP and *Uralla Development Control Plan 2011* (as amended). A section 4.15 assessment of the development under the EP&A Act indicates that the development is acceptable in this instance. Attached is a draft Notice of Approval outlining a range of conditions considered appropriate to ensure that the development proceeds in an acceptable manner.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

The development was neighbourhood notified for 14 days in accordance with the CPP, with no submissions received. As the land is council owned and managed a Management Statement was prepared and exhibited for 28 days in accordance with council's policy. No submissions were received at the conclusion of the exhibition period.

Policy and Regulation

The proposal is consistent with matters for consideration pursuant to section 4.15 of the EP&A Act including LEP and relevant State Environmental Planning Policies. Additionally, the proposal demonstrates acceptability with wider applicable strategic planning considerations.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The development relates to council owned and managed land. The development will be funded from CAPEX assigned to McMaugh Gardens in the 2025/26 FY budget. Once the development is carried out, there will be positive long-term financial plan impacts from the revenue of an additional room.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

There will be a minor adjustment required to the asset management plan for McMaugh Garden's building to account for the additional room.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

There will not be any need for additional staff to cover the resident hours for the additional room.

Legal and Risk Management

This report follows the assessment process for the additional room, which takes into account the legislative requirements for development of this nature.

Performance Measures

Assessment will exceed 40 days due to public notification requirements and review processes.

Project Management

The carrying out of the development will be managed and overseen by Manager Assets and Director of Nursing, McMaugh Gardens.

13.2 Staged expansion of McMaugh Gardens

Department:	Group Community Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Community Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/25/33789

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	1.	We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community
Strategy:	1.4.	Access to and equity of services
	1.2.	A safe, active and healthy shire

SUMMARY

This report outlines the proposed staged expansion of McMaugh Gardens to 50 beds. This report seeks a resolution supporting the lodgement of a Concept Development Application ('Concept DA') for the proposed 2 stage expansion of McMaugh Gardens as a means of significantly improve the prospects of success in future grant applications.

This report details potential funding pathways for Stage 1 and Stage 2. Council approval is also sought to apply for future grant funding under the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program ('ACCAP') when a grant round is opened for the New England Region.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the report on the proposed staged expansion of McMaugh Gardens to 50 beds.
2. Endorses the preparation and lodgement of a concept development application for the staged expansion of McMaugh Gardens to 50 beds.
3. Submits a grant application for the proposed expansion under the next Aged Care Capital Assistance Program round that Uralla Shire Council is eligible to apply for.

BACKGROUND

At the Ordinary meeting of March 2025, Council resolved as follows in respect of McMaugh Gardens:

1. *Endorses Option 2 as discussed in this report as the basis of for seeking grant funding, detailed design, and business planning.*
2. *Submits a grant application for grant funding under the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program.*
3. *Prepares a detailed design for Option 2 to support the grant application.*
4. *Undertakes a revised financial analysis in the context of the new aged care legislative and funding provisions.*
5. *Receives a further report on the financial analysis and the outcome of the grant application.*

ACTIONS TAKEN FOLLOWING THE MARCH 2025 RESOLUTION

Following the Council resolution 18.03/25, a detailed design masterplan/concept proposal for the proposed expansion of McMaugh Gardens from 36 beds to 50 beds was prepared. The purpose of this was to lodge a grant application to seek funding from the ACCAP for the proposed expansion of McMaugh Gardens.

On 16 May 2025, a grant application was lodged, seeking funding for the proposed expansion under the ACCAP.

Concurrently with the above, Council engaged Stewart Brown consulting accountants to prepare a financial analysis report on the financial sustainability of the proposed expansion of McMaugh Gardens to 50 beds.

On 19 September 2025, Council received correspondence advising that the ACCAP grant application was unsuccessful.

On 5 November 2025, Council received the following feedback on the 2025 ACCAP grant application (no emphasis added):

*As outlined in the general feedback available on the Department's website, this round of ACCAP was highly competitive, with demand significantly exceeding available funding. A total of 367 applications were received, requesting over \$2.4 billion in funding against the \$300 million available. Ultimately, 63 applications were supported, meaning approximately **83% of applications were unsuccessful**.*

*The overall quality of applications was strong, and many submissions—while well-prepared and addressing genuine service needs—could not be supported due to the limited funding envelope. This includes your application, which was assessed as **suitable** but not prioritised for funding in this round.*

In determining priorities and overall value for money, the assessment process considered a range of factors including:

- *The relative urgency/need of the project compared to other projects/applications.*
- *The amount of grant funding sought.*
- *Whether any co-contribution was being provided and if so, the amount of contribution.*
- *Geographic distribution and equity of funding across jurisdictions.*

While your application demonstrated merit, it was not prioritised as highly as others in this round based on these considerations.

In addition to the general feedback, we have provided below some individualised comments on how your application addressed the selection criteria. These are intended to support future applications and highlight areas for potential improvement. Please note that criteria not listed were considered satisfactorily addressed.

Your application could have been strengthened by:

Criterion 2

- *More clearly describing the organisations plan of "how" to complete the activity in a cost-effective manner.*

Criterion 3

- *More clearly describing where the funds for the co-contribution are coming from and the current status (e.g approved, in possession, yet to be requested).*

The next round of ACCAP grant opportunities is currently under active consideration. While specific dates have not yet been confirmed, details—including eligibility criteria and eligible activities—will be published on the department's website at <https://www.health.gov.au/accap> and on GrantConnect as they become available. We encourage interested parties to monitor these platforms regularly for updates.

This feedback will be addressed in developing a future ACCAP grant application by focussing on more clearly describing how Council will complete the activity in a cost-effective manner including:

- Undertaking a structured review with designers, engineers, and the builder to identify cost-saving alternatives without reducing quality or compliance. This might be part of a separate detailed design component of the tender, which would then feed into the construction drawings.
- Implementing a procurement approach that balances cost, quality, and risk. This would include an open competitive tender as required under the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW).
- Noting that this development will tie into existing infrastructure (i.e., sewer, water, roads, electricity), which saves on costs compared to a new build.
- Implementing clear governance arrangements into the tender documents:
 - require the appointment of a dedicated project manager as part of the project;
 - appointing a project steering committee;
 - establish regular cost monitoring and reporting processes;
 - use fixed-price construction contracts where feasible; and
 - maintain a realistic contingency allowance.
- Minimising holding and escalation costs by:
 - completing design and approvals early;
 - aligning procurement with construction scheduling; and
 - reducing project delays through early contractor involvement.

In light of the above, it is important to have the Concept DA submitted before any future ACCAP grant application is prepared and lodged. Having a 'shovel ready' development, will make our application more competitive against other grant applications.

In addition, any future ACCAP grant applicant needs to clearly describe the sources of co-contribution funds. This is further discussed later in this report.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED IN THE CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF MCMAUGH GARDENS

The development subject of the proposed Concept DA is substantially the same as the development that proposed in the master plan that was submitted for the previous ACCAP grant application, namely to increase the number of beds to 50.

However, the material change is to carry out the development in 2 stages. A brief description of each stage is set out below.

Stage 1 – New 8 Bed Dedicated Dementia Wing

Stage 1 includes the following development:

- demolition of internal doors, walls, finishes and capping of redundant services in rooms 24 and 25 (located in Salisbury Court Wing);
- demolition of the existing gazebo in the northern corner of the site;
- demolition of the existing laundry and kitchenette (located in Balala Wing);
- construction of new Dementia care facility (Salisbury Court Wing) comprising:
 - 6 new rooms with ensuites;
 - storage;

- staff WC;
 - accessible WC;
 - kitchen with hidden staff only pantry;
 - basin;
 - lounge/dining area;
 - outdoor dining area;
 - treatment room;
 - nurses station;
 - treatment room;
- construction of new laundry for resident's clothes, etc (located in Balala Wing).

Preliminary cost estimate provided by Architect for Stage 1 is \$1,275,142 including GST and a 10% cost contingency.

Stage 2 – New Chiswick Wing and Nurses Accommodation

Stage 2 includes the following development:

- demolition of internal doors, walls, finishes and capping of redundant services in room 20 and Chiswick Sitting Area;
- demolition of 4 existing sheds located on the southern side of the site;
- relocation of gas tank on southern boundary (location to be old generator location as concrete pad is there and relatively easy to relocate gas lines to this location);
- demolition of the courtyard outside staff room;
- demolition of existing building located at 35 King Street;
- construction of new Dementia care facility (Salisbury Court Wing) comprising:
 - 10 new rooms with ensuites;
 - storage;
 - staff WC;
 - accessible WC;
 - kitchen with hidden staff only pantry;
 - basin;
 - lounge/dining area;
 - outdoor dining area;
 - treatment room;
 - nurses' station;
 - treatment room;
- construction of nurses' accommodation comprising 4 single bed units.

Preliminary cost estimate provided by the Architect for Stage 2 is \$2,924,209.75 including GST and a 10% contingency.

We have estimated \$30,000 for the preparation of the development application documentation which will involve a number of consultants that will have to be involved. It is expected that we will have to work with:

- Aged care compliance specialists to ensure that detailed drawings comply with aged care requirements;
- Fire consultants as specialist sprinklers will need to be integrated into the expanded sections of McMaugh Gardens;
- Town Planning Consultant to collate information and to prepare the Statement of Environmental Effects;
- Detailed drawings for Stage 1 to form part of the DA; and
- Quantity Surveyor to provide firmer costing based upon final drawings.

These funds will come out of CAPEX allocated to McMaugh Gardens for this financial year and will not impact the budget.

BEQUEST TO FRIENDS OF MCMAUGH GARDENS FROM MR KEITH FULLER

In May 2025, Mr Keith Fuller, a former resident of McMaugh Gardens passed away and left the majority of his estate to the Friends of McMaugh Gardens. This generous bequest is intended to support McMaugh Gardens and its residents, which could include the construction of several additional rooms to assist elderly residents in a hospice-style setting.

At the Friends of McMaugh Gardens meeting in April 2026, it was unanimously decided to contribute up to \$700,000 from proceeds received from the bequest towards Stage 1 of the proposed expansion of McMaugh Gardens. Their decision includes conditions which will be included in a memorandum of understanding, which Friends of McMaugh Gardens are currently drafting. Council will be notified of the final amount to be contributed following the sale of the house (which forms part of the estate), and all estate expenses being paid.

It is important to ensure that Friends of McMaugh Gardens are actively involved in and informed of the planning and construction of the proposed Stage 1 expansion.

COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS STAGE 1 EXPANSION

Council's financial contribution to Stage 1 of the proposed expansion is intended to be met through the strategic reallocation of existing capital expenditure ('CAPEX') allocations for the McMaugh Gardens project within the 2026/27 financial year. This approach enables Council to support the progression of the project without requiring additional unbudgeted funding or placing further pressure on future financial positions.

As part of Council's standard financial management practices, a portion of unspent CAPEX from the 2025/26 financial year is proposed to be carried forward into the 2026/27 budget. This rollover reflects delays in delivery and/or revised project timing, and ensures that previously allocated funds remain available for their intended purpose.

The current proposed CAPEX allocation for McMaugh Gardens in the 2026/27 financial year is \$690,000. It is anticipated that this allocation would contribute approximately 50 per cent of the total construction cost for Stage 1 of the expansion. The remaining funding requirement would need to be met through complementary funding sources, which may include external grants, partnerships, or future budget allocations, subject to Council consideration and approval.

It is noted that the reallocation of this expenditure is not yet committed and will be subject to a future resolution of Council. Council will be required to formally consider and determine whether to proceed with the project, including the endorsement of the proposed funding approach, at the time a detailed report is presented for decision.

This funding strategy provides a financially responsible pathway to initiate Stage 1 works, while maintaining flexibility for Council to assess and secure the balance of funding required to deliver the project in full.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED EXPANSION OF MCMAUGH GARDENS

Council engaged Stewart Brown to update previous financial modelling, considering significant changes in the aged care operating environment over the past three years, anticipated sector reforms, and updated site development plans for the facility.

Methodology

Stewart Brown developed a ten-year financial forecast model based on:

- Consultation with the management team to confirm budgets, revenue streams, key assumptions (including indicative construction costs), and strategic plans.
- Analysis of Council-provided data, including recent financial benchmark survey submissions and the Business Case Master Site Development Plan.
- Supplementation with industry benchmark data where appropriate.
- Preparation of detailed financial models, including income and expenditure statements, cash flow projections, and sensitivity analysis.

This approach ensures the modelling reflects current performance and strategic objectives while allowing for stress testing of assumptions as the project progresses.

Financing Scenarios

The modelling examined several funding options for the proposed extension, including:

- Full grant funding, along with Council funds and potential funding from donations.
- Use of Refundable Accommodation Deposit ('RAD') funds and Council funds.

Key Findings

Preliminary projections indicate that, under conservative assumptions, the proposed expansion is financially viable and would deliver positive operating results. A significant portion of improved performance is attributable to new revenue streams commencing from 1 November 2025, including:

- increased hotelling supplement;
- RAD retentions;
- gradually increased RAD amounts; and
- indexed Daily Accommodation Payments.

Key Risks

Risks associated with the project include:

- Limited access to government capital grant funding.
- Construction cost overruns.
- Extended room unavailability during development.
- Variations in accommodation payment mix compared to assumptions.

Ways to Mitigate Key Risks

- Construction will only proceed if grant funding is secured or funds from community donations become available.
- Any construction cost overruns can be addressed through the cost management measures outlined in the report to ensure the project is delivered in a cost-effective manner.

- Delivering the project in stages, with each stage scheduled within a compressed construction timeframe and supported by a dedicated project manager, will help minimise the period during which rooms are unavailable and ensure any disruption is limited and predictable.

CONCLUSION

The proposed further staged expansion to 50 beds represents a strategically aligned response to the increasing demand for residential aged care services within the Uralla local government area and surrounding region. It is also consistent with the Council adopted position on the expansion of McMaugh Gardens. Independent financial modelling indicates that, under conservative assumptions, the expansion can be delivered in a financially sustainable manner, subject to careful management of occupancy levels, construction costs and accommodation payment mix.

While the recent ACCAP application was unsuccessful, feedback received indicates that the proposal was considered suitable but was not prioritised in a highly competitive funding round. The feedback received identifies areas that can be addressed in any future application to make it more competitive.

Stage 1 of the expansion concept includes the development of a dedicated dementia wing and associated internal works. Potential funding sources for these works may include the in-principle contribution from Friends of McMaugh Gardens noted above, and the reallocation of programmed CAPEX funds. However, detailed design, refined cost estimates and funding confirmation would be required before any decision is made to proceed with construction.

At this stage, Council is only being requested to endorse the lodgement of a Concept DA, and seeking a resolution to lodge an application for any future ACCAP funding round when it becomes open to Council. Lodging the Concept DA will provide planning certainty, support future funding applications, and enable further investigation of the project's feasibility.

Importantly, lodgement of the Concept DA does not commit Council to the delivery of Stage 1 or any subsequent stages of the development. Any decision to proceed with carrying out the development would be subject to further detailed costing, funding confirmation and a subsequent resolution(s) of Council.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

The expansion of McMaugh Gardens is likely to attract strong community interest, particularly from residents, families and staff. A targeted communication strategy will be implemented, including:

- briefings for residents and families;
- consultation with staff regarding staging and operational impacts;
- public information updates through Council's website and media channels.

Policy and Regulation

The proposal aligns with Council's strategic objectives relating to community wellbeing and ageing in place. The development will require:

- lodgement and assessment of a Concept DA under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)*;
- compliance with the *Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth)* and associated *Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards*;
- adherence to relevant building, fire safety and accessibility standards.

Any future changes to Commonwealth aged care funding frameworks will need to be monitored and incorporated into future financial modelling.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Stage 1 is proposed to be funded through:

- community donations; and
- the reallocation of programmed capital renewal funding.

Council may need to update the Long-Term Financial Plan to incorporate capital expenditure, and projected operating impacts once it determines to proceed with the development.

Stage 2 is contingent on external grant funding or alternative financing arrangements.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The expansion will increase Council's building asset base and associated lifecycle costs.

Reallocation of capital renewal funding should be assessed to ensure no unacceptable asset condition risks arise elsewhere within the facility. This has been considered by the Manager Assets.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

The proposed expansion from to 50 beds will have material workforce implications across clinical, care, hospitality, administration and management functions. This was considered in the Stewart Brown report.

Workforce planning considerations include:

- Progressive recruitment aligned with staged bed activation to manage labour costs during occupancy ramp-up.
- Ensuring appropriate registered nurse coverage, personal care staffing ratios and skill mix in accordance with Commonwealth aged care requirements.
- Recruitment and retention challenges in a regional labour market.
- Training and capability development, particularly in dementia-specific care associated with the proposed Salisbury Court Wing.
- Review of rostering to maintain financial sustainability while meeting care standards.

Legal and Risk Management

Key legal and risk considerations include:

- compliance with planning and building legislation;
- management of community donations funds in accordance with the terms of the MOU;
- contractual risk allocation in construction procurement;
- managing operational risk during construction;
- grant compliance risk for any future ACCAP funding.

Performance Measures

To evaluate project success, Council may adopt measurable indicators such as:

- occupancy rates post expansion;
- operating surplus or deficit against forecast;
- compliance with aged care quality standards;
- resident satisfaction;
- construction delivery within approved budget and timeframe.

These measures could be incorporated into regular reporting to Council.

Project Management

Given the staged nature of the development, a structured project governance framework will be implemented, including:

- appointment of a project control group;
- defined project scope, budget and timeline;
- procurement strategy consistent with Council's Procurement Policy;
- detailed cost planning prior to tender;
- staged commissioning and operational readiness planning.

Enhanced documentation of the delivery methodology will also strengthen any future ACCAP application, directly addressing prior feedback.

13.3 Outcome of public exhibition and public hearing for Plan of Management for 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra | Grace Munro

Department:	Group Community Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Community Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/8841

Attachments:	1. Report on Public Hearing for PoM for Grace Munro ⇒
	2. Draft Plan of Management 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra ⇒

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	1. We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community
	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	1.4. Access to and equity of services
	3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders

SUMMARY

This report presents the outcome of the public exhibition and statutory public hearing for the Draft Plan of Management ('Draft PoM') for Lot 24 DP 753646, 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra, the site of the Grace Munro Aged Care Facility. The Draft PoM was publicly exhibited from 26 February to 13 April 2026, during which no submissions were received. A public hearing was held on 21 April 2026 in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* ('LG Act') and was independently chaired. The oral submissions received supported the Draft PoM and the proposed categorisation of the land as Community Land – General Community Use.

The Independent Chair has confirmed that the statutory requirements have been met and has recommended that Council proceed with categorisation and adoption of the Plan of Management.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- Notes the outcome of the public exhibition of the Draft Plan of Management for Lot 24 DP 753646, 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra, including that no written submissions were received, and no objections were raised at the public hearing.
- Receives and notes the Report of the Independent Chair of the Public Hearing (Attachment 1).
- Determines, in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, that Lot 24 DP 753646 be categorised as Community Land – General Community Use.
- Adopts the Plan of Management for Lot 24 DP 753646, 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra, as exhibited (Attachment 2).

REPORT

Outcome of Public Exhibition – Draft Plan of Management | 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra (Grace Munro Aged Care Facility)

At its Ordinary Meeting of 24 February 2026, Council resolved to place the Draft PoM for Lot 24 DP 753646, 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra, on public exhibition and to conduct a public hearing in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the LG Act.

Public Exhibition

The Draft PoM was publicly exhibited from 26 February 2026 to 13 April 2026. No written submissions were received during the exhibition period.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on 21 April 2026 at the Bundarra School of Arts Hall, chaired by an independent chairperson, Mr Brett J. McInnes, in accordance with the requirements of the LG Act. Approximately 20 community members attended the hearing.

Oral submissions were made by or on behalf of community members and representatives associated with the Grace Munro Aged Care Facility. All speakers who addressed the Draft PoM confirmed that they held no concerns with the document and supported the proposed categorisation of the land as Community Land – General Community Use.

A number of broader matters were raised during the hearing relating to lease negotiations, financial and operational challenges facing the aged care facility, and perceptions within the community about the future operation of the site. These issues were not considered to relate directly to the content or intent of the Draft PoM, but they were addressed by Council staff at the conclusion of the oral submissions provided at the public hearing.

Independent Chair's Findings

The Independent Chair's Report (Attachment 1) concludes that:

- the statutory exhibition and public hearing requirements have been satisfied;
- no objections were raised to the Draft PoM or the proposed land categorisation; and
- the Draft PoM is consistent with the objectives of the General Community Use category under the LG Act.

The Independent Chair recommends that Council proceed with the initial classification and categorisation of the land as Community Land, Category General Community Use, and consider adoption of the Draft PoM.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Council has met its statutory community engagement obligations through public exhibition of the Draft PoM and the conduct of an independently chaired public hearing in Bundarra. Community interest and participation were evident, and no objections were raised to the Draft PoM. Ongoing communication with key stakeholders may assist in addressing broader community concerns raised outside the scope of the Draft PoM.

Policy and Regulation

The Draft PoM and proposed land categorisation have been prepared and progressed in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the LG Act. Adoption of the Draft PoM and categorisation of the land as Community Land – General Community Use is consistent with Council's legislative obligations and policy framework governing community land.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

There are no direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the Draft PoM. The Draft PoM provides a framework to guide future use and tenure of the land, which may inform future financial considerations, including lease arrangements, maintenance responsibilities and potential capital investment, to be considered separately through Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The Draft PoM supports the ongoing use of the site as a community asset providing aged care and health services. Adoption of the Draft PoM assists in clarifying permissible uses and management objectives, enabling more informed asset planning, maintenance programming and future decision-making consistent with Council's Asset Management Strategy.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

There are no direct workforce implications arising from this report. Council staff resources associated with the preparation, exhibition and hearing processes for the Draft PoM have been accommodated within existing operational arrangements.

Legal and Risk Management

The statutory requirements for public exhibition and public hearing of the Draft PoM have been satisfied, reducing legal risk associated with the classification and management of the land. Adoption of the Draft PoM provides clarity around the use and governance of the site, assisting Council in managing ongoing legal, reputational and operational risks.

Performance Measures

Completion of the statutory process and consideration of adoption of the Draft PoM contributes to delivery of Council's governance and compliance performance objectives. Implementation of the Draft PoM will support longer-term monitoring of land use and management outcomes for this community asset.

Project Management

This matter represents the completion of the statutory phase of the Draft PoM process approved by Council in February 2026. No further project management actions are required at this stage beyond Council's determination on adoption and implementation of the Draft PoM. This will likely lead to the next step in ongoing long term lease tenure negotiations with the current operators of the Grace Munro Aged Care facility.

13.4 Draft Terms of Reference - s355 Thunderbolt Festival Event Committee

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Corporate Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/8347

Attachments:	1. DRAFT Terms of Reference -Thunderbolt's Festival Committee March 2026
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LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

SUMMARY

At its Ordinary Meeting of February 2026, Council resolved that it did not have capacity to take on additional events or expenditure, while also directing staff to call for expressions of interest ('EOI') for the establishment of a Section 355 committee to manage the Thunderbolt Festival ('Festival').

This report progresses the EOI component of that resolution and outlines the governance, administrative, and resourcing implications of establishing and operating such a committee. It notes that, while a Section 355 committee may offer benefits for Festival delivery, any governance model adopted will require increased administrative coordination and oversight by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes that its February 2026 resolution requires staff to progress an Expressions of Interest process for a Section 355 committee, while also noting Council's resolved position regarding capacity for additional events or expenditure.
2. Acknowledges that an Expressions of Interest process can be undertaken; however, the establishment and ongoing operation of a Section 355 committee would require ongoing governance, administrative, and compliance support by Council.
3. Receives this report as satisfying the requirement to progress the Expressions of Interest component of the February 2026 resolution and as providing advice on the implications of further implementation.
4. Notes the draft Terms of Reference attached to this report as indicative of the governance arrangements and support requirements associated with an operational Section 355 committee.
5. Discontinues efforts to convene a Section 355 committee to manage the Thunderbolt Festival having regard to the resource requirements detailed in this report and the Council resolution confirming that Council has no capacity to take on any additional events or expenditure.

REPORT**Background**

At its Ordinary Meeting of February 2026, Council resolved as follows:

Resolution 24.02/26

That Council:

- *Writes to Uralla Rotary acknowledging their withdrawal from future Thunderbolt Festival events and recognising their past contribution.*
- *Notes the advice regarding cash and in-kind support provided by Council for previous Festivals.*
- *Confirms Council has no capacity to take on any additional events or expenditure.*
- *Calls for expressions of interest for a Section 355 committee to run the Thunderbolt Festival.*

Progressing an EOI process requires preliminary governance, administrative, and compliance work by Council. Further, if Council were to proceed to establish a Section 355 committee following an EOI, additional ongoing obligations would arise.

Draft Terms of Reference

Section 355 of the *Local Government Act 1993(NSW)* enables a council to exercise its functions through a committee, including committees that comprise persons who are not councillors and that are delegated specific functions by Council. Where Council elects to utilise this mechanism, it is important to note that the establishment of a Section 355 committee does not transfer Council's legal, financial, or reputational accountability, all of which remain with Council at all times. A clear and well-defined Terms of Reference is therefore critical to setting appropriate expectations, managing risk, ensuring compliance with legislation and Council policy, and supporting effective governance and oversight of the committee's activities.

The draft Terms of Reference attached to this report set out a governance framework suitable for an operational Section 355 committee. They illustrate the level of reporting, and oversight typically required to support a committee intended to operate with the level of autonomy contemplated by Council.

In summary the draft terms:

- Establish the Festival Committee as a Section 355 committee with operational responsibility for planning and delivering the Festival, subject to Council oversight.
- Set clear governance arrangements, including membership appointed by Council, meeting and reporting requirements, and compliance with Council policies and the Code of Conduct.
- Delegate limited authority for the Festival Committee to authorise expenditure and operate a Council-owned bank account for Festival purposes, subject to strict financial controls, reporting, and audit oversight.
- Require the Festival Committee to keep Council informed of activities and issues, provide regular financial reporting, and submit a detailed annual report (including an accountant's certificate) by 28/29 February each year.
- Confirm that all accountability remains with Council, with Council retaining the ability to amend the Terms of Reference or dissolve the Festival Committee at any time.

The draft Terms of Reference are provided to assist Council in considering whether the establishment of a Section 355 committee for the Festival aligns with Council's current governance capacity, risk tolerance, and strategic priorities.

Governance and Accountability

Where Council establishes a Section 355 committee, it retains responsibility for ensuring that the committee operates in accordance with legislative requirements, Council policies, and approved delegations.

Operational committees, particularly those responsible for event delivery, generally require a higher level of governance oversight than advisory committees due to the scale, complexity, and risk profile of the activities involved.

Administrative and Resource Impacts

All Section 355 committees require ongoing administrative and governance support from Council. This typically includes:

- Establishment and appointment processes.
- Development, maintenance, and review of terms of reference and delegations.
- Governance and legislative compliance oversight.
- Financial monitoring and reporting assurance.
- Risk management, insurance, and WHS oversight.
- Periodic review and, where necessary, dissolution.

These activities represent an ongoing organisational commitment. While they may be manageable where committee operations are limited in scope, they become more resource-intensive where committees undertake operational responsibilities.

Potential Benefits of a Section 355 Committee

Where a Section 355 committee has strong capability, stable membership, and clear governance arrangements, the model can offer a number of advantages, including:

- Increased community involvement and ownership of the event.
- Potential for more responsive day-to-day decision-making.
- Improved engagement with local stakeholders, sponsors, and volunteers.
- Opportunities for local fundraising and partnerships.
- Reduced reliance on Council staff for operational decision-making.

Operational autonomy, supported by appropriate delegations, can support efficiency and volunteer motivation, particularly where committee members bring relevant skills and experience.

Risks and Challenges

At the same time, the use of a Section 355 committee for operational event delivery presents challenges that require careful management as:

- Council retains full legal, financial, and reputational responsibility for the committee's actions.
- Financial delegations, including the operation of a committee bank account, require robust controls and regular monitoring.
- Volunteer turnover or variable capability can increase the risk of non-compliance.
- Council officers must dedicate time to oversight, reporting, audit support, and issue resolution.

It is understood that the intention for the Festival Committee is that it plans and delivers the Festival autonomously of Council. To achieve this the Festival Committee would need its own bank account.

This would require explicit Council approval and clear delegations. Any such account would need:

- To be established in Council's name.

- To be opened by a Council officer.
- To have Council-approved signatories.
- To remain subject to Council financial policies, audit, and reporting requirements.

Allowing this level of autonomy increases Council's governance, audit, and administrative workload.

Alternatively, if a separate bank account is not approved, all income and expenditure would need to be processed through Council's financial system. This approach reduces financial risk but increases transaction processing requirements and ongoing liaison between Council staff and the Festival Committee.

CONCLUSION

This report progresses Council's February 2026 resolution to undertake an EOI process for a Section 355 committee and outlines the associated governance and administrative implications. While a Section 355 committee model may support community-led delivery of the Festival, it would require clear delegations, strong financial controls, and ongoing governance oversight by Council. Regardless of the approach adopted, the continued delivery of the Festival will require increased administrative coordination and focus by Council, representing additional resourcing implications.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

The proposed governance arrangements support community involvement in the planning and delivery of the Festival through a Section 355 committee structure. Ongoing communication between the Festival Committee and Council will be required to ensure transparency and alignment with Council expectations.

An EOI would be posted on Council webpage and advertised through Council's social media platforms

Policy and Regulation

The establishment and operation of a Section 355 committee must comply with the *Local Government Act 1993* and relevant Council policies and procedures. Clear Terms of Reference are essential to ensure compliance and define the scope of delegated authority.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

While the Festival is intended to be delivered without additional Council expenditure, the use of a Section 355 committee introduces ongoing governance and administrative costs. These impacts will need to be monitored to ensure consistency with Council's Long Term Financial Plan

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The proposal does not involve the creation of new Council assets.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

The delivery of the Festival through a Section 355 committee will require ongoing staff involvement to provide governance, financial oversight, and compliance support. This represents an additional demand on existing workforce capacity which would require reprioritisation of existing activities.

Legal and Risk Management

Council retains all legal and financial responsibility for the actions of a Section 355 committee, requiring robust governance and risk management arrangements.

Performance Measures

The Festival Committee performance can be assessed through compliance with reporting requirements, financial management, and delivery of a safe and successful Festival. Outcomes will be monitored through regular reporting and an annual report to Council.

Project Management

Group Manager Corporate Services.

13.5 Complaints Management Report - Half Yearly Update 2025-26

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Corporate Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/5441

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3.	An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	3.1.	Informed and collaborative community leaders
	3.3.	An efficient and effective independent local government
	3.2.	A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

Summary The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Council's Complaints Management between 1 September 2025 to 27 February 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Council's Complaints Management – Half Yearly Report 2025-26.

REPORT

The effective and efficient management of complaints enables Council to resolve customer dissatisfaction promptly and fairly, maintain public trust, and ensure accountability in service delivery. By addressing issues early and consistently, Council can reduce escalation, manage reputational and operational risk, and use complaint data to identify service gaps and drive continuous improvement, ultimately enhancing customer experience and organisational performance.

The overarching objective of managing complaints effectively and efficiently is to maintain public trust and confidence in Council. Secondary to this however is recognition of the fact that escalating complaints cost time and money which detracts from our capacity to deliver services to our community.

Council operates a tiered response system to manage customer requests and complaints in a transparent and fair manner. This framework ensures matters are addressed at the most appropriate level, with clear escalation pathways where issues cannot be resolved at first contact.

Most customer interactions with Council are requests for service, such as reporting potholes or waste issues, which are managed through Council's Customer Request Management System (CRM). A complaint, by contrast, is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with Council's service, actions, or failure to act within agreed timeframes.

Proposed Future Complaints Management Approach

Council recognises that the current complaints management process is largely decentralised and relies on individual responsible officers to finalise matters in accordance with the Customer Service Charter. While this approach allows flexibility at the service level, it limits Council's ability to consistently record, track, analyse, and learn from complaints across the organisation.

To strengthen governance, transparency, and continual improvement, Council proposes a more coordinated and systematic complaints management approach.

Centralised recording and tracking

Under the proposed model, all complaints received by Council (excluding anonymous complaints) will be centrally recorded by the Records Officer in both the Customer Request Management System (CRM) and the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).

Centralised recording will:

- Ensure complaints are captured consistently across service areas
- Enable tracking of complaint status, timeframes, and outcomes
- Provide reliable data to identify trends, recurring issues, and organisational weaknesses
- Support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement initiatives

The information collected will be analysed and reported as part of Council's ongoing continual improvement program.

Council recognises that despite best efforts, there will be occasions where customers experience frustration with service quality or timeframes. Council actively encourages customers to raise concerns so that issues can be addressed promptly and improvements made.

Tiered complaints resolution model

Council will continue to apply a tiered approach to complaint resolution, with a strong emphasis on early resolution.

Tier One – First Contact Resolution

- Complaints are managed and resolved by frontline staff wherever possible
- Staff investigate, take appropriate action, and provide a timely response
- This ensures matters are addressed quickly, close to the source, and with minimal escalation

Escalation where required

Where a complaint is complex, sensitive, or unable to be resolved at Tier One, staff may escalate the matter to an appropriately delegated officer within the management hierarchy.

Escalation decisions will be documented and tracked within the CRM and EDMS.

This approach promotes accountability while ensuring complaints are assessed at the appropriate organisational level.

Tier 1 complaints are recorded in the CRM system and referred to the responsible officer for resolution. Council received 1107 customer requests between 1 September 2025 to 27 February 2026.

The following were the CRM Types received for the period:

Function / Request Type	Percentage of Total
Animal Control	9.39%
Council Properties	2.35%
Development and Building Controls	0.63%
Economic affairs	0.27%
Environmental Management	3.88%
Land Use and Planning	0.18%
Noxious Weeds	0.99%
Parks and Reserves	5.69%
Public Health	0.3%
Rates and Valuations	0.09%
Risk Management	0.63%
Roads and Infrastructure	28.73%
Sewerage and Drainage	5.96%
Staff Request (Internal Log)	0.45%
Traffic and Transport	0.99%
Waste Management	25.38%
Water Supply	14.09%

Source of Requests	Percentage of Total
Correspondence	0.45%
Counter	9.39%
Email	17.25%
In person on site	0.45%
Internal	2.62%
Submitted through Councillor	0.99%
Telephone	68.85%

Tier Two – Resolution via internal review

Customer complaints which have not been resolved on the spot or after further investigation by a more senior officer are referred to as Tier Two complaints and reviewed by the General Manager, public officer or designated senior officer.

Council managed 23 tier 2 complaints between 1 September 2025 to 27 February 2026.

	Alleged Issue(s)	Management	Resolution
various	<p>Erroneous Water Bills</p> <p>Numerous (in excess of 50) complaints about excess water bills following a focus on undertaking formal and accurate water meter reads after a period of estimations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management has worked through each complaint to verify issued water bills and explain the circumstances leading to the current bill. • The volume of matters resulted in some delays in responding to customers which led, in turn, to further complaints. • Director Infrastructure and Development in conjunction with Finance and Water coordinated the response to finalise all matters. 	<p>The majority of matters have now been resolved.</p>
UINT/25/26956	<p>Yarrowyck Crossing</p> <p>Resident who requires the use of the crossing has complained that Council has not repaired/upgraded the crossing to a suitable standard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management has a contractor to project-manage the issue, liaise directly with NSW Fisheries, and progress an interim repair approach acceptable to Fisheries, subject to a demonstrated pathway to a compliant long-term solution. • Resident has been advised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim actions: Council is progressing an interim repair solution, with the consultant working with Fisheries to secure conditional approval based on evidence that a compliant long-term solution is planned; a REF is underway and RFQs have been issued (CM U26/8964). • Long-term constraints: A compliant long-term solution is likely to require a bridge, but significant funding challenges exist, with limited council funds and low prospects of grant success given the small number of beneficiaries.
UI/26/791	<p>Sealing of part of Bridge Street</p> <p>Concerns raised about responsibility for sealing and drainage of the laneway to a swelling located on Bridge Street, including uncertainty about approvals where access is via Crown land and an assertion that Council should seal the laneway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRM logged and investigated; internal consultation undertaken; Crown Lands confirmed the laneway is Crown land; historical DAs reviewed and confirmed the original sealing condition was formally removed by Council following an appeal. 	<p>Council advised resident that there is no current approval or condition requiring sealing, and as the laneway is Crown land with the condition explicitly removed, Council has no legal or planning obligation to undertake works.</p>

<p>UINT/26/2426</p>	<p>Use of local waterways for roadworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A landholder complained that Council road works during drought conditions involved pumping water from Kentucky Creek, allegedly draining the last remaining waterhole and leaving cattle without access to water. • The complainant questioned the timing and rationale of the works during extreme dry conditions and requested the issue be escalated due to impacts on farming operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior management contacted the complainant directly to discuss the issue and clarify the circumstances. • Management acknowledged the concern and agreed that drought conditions and water availability should be more explicitly considered when planning road works. • The issue and Council’s reasoning were explained, and the feedback was accepted as valid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complainant was satisfied that the concerns had been heard and understood following the discussion. • Council committed, in principle, to better factoring drought conditions and impacts on water users into future road works planning. • No further escalation occurred, and the matter was considered resolved at an operational level.
<p>UINT/26/7421</p>	<p>Intensive agriculture causing offensive odour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complainant alleges that an intensive pig farming operation at Invergowrie is generating ongoing offensive odour that adversely affects their property and neighbouring residents. • The complainant contends that the use is prohibited under the Uralla Local Environmental Plan 2012. • complains that the issue has remained unresolved for approximately 12 months without any formal response from Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations on this matter are ongoing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complainant has been updated on progress.

<p>UI/25/6265</p>	<p>Veracity of DA Determination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A complainant challenged Council’s planning determination that a particular business required a development application to continue operating, asserting that earlier advice indicated no DA was required and questioning the basis for Council’s later decision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management provided factual and procedural responses to the complainant, explaining that the planning decisions were lawful, documented, and part of the public record. After continued correspondence, management determined that ongoing engagement on the matter was vexatious, not made in good faith, and represented an unreasonable impost on Council resources, as the issues had already been addressed and were not required to be relitigated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The complainant was formally advised that Council would not enter into any further correspondence on the matter, and the issue was considered closed.
<p>UO/25/3654</p>	<p>Code of Conduct allegation</p> <p>Alleged that a Councillor had inappropriately discussed a DA matter and had interfered with the DA process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allegations were investigated by Group Manager Corporate services. Determined that matters raised did not constitute a Code of Conduct complaint in accordance with the procedures. Alleged breach of confidentiality refuted as information was a matter of public record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complainant advised of outcome of investigation and that no further action would be taken. Complainant advised of right of review of determination.
<p>AD26/3780</p>	<p>Pothole repair</p> <p>Request for repair of Potholes on Bligh Avenue – complaint about lack of response or action by Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> interim fix required until funding for the project is secured. The long-term solution requires full rehabilitation of the pavement including K&G. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> customer contacted to advise temporary pothole patching and proposed long term solution.
<p>UI/26/1059</p>	<p>Barking Dogs</p> <p>Complaint about barking dog(s) - Sandon Close area.</p>	<p>Management investigated the complaint and determined that ranger intervention was required to manage two dogs.</p>	<p>One dog has now been rehomed and the second is housed off site when the owner is absent.</p> <p>The complainant has been notified.</p>
<p>UINT/26/4350</p>	<p>Water Quality</p> <p>Complaint about consistent poor water quality – Duke Street.</p>	<p>Management has investigated the claim that the water bill was excessive and found that the issued bills were correct.</p> <p>Ongoing investigation is being undertaken with regard to the water quality.</p>	<p>Manager Water and Waste water will contact customer when water quality enquiries are completed.</p>

UI/26/786	Water Interruption Complaint about unplanned water interruption to commercial premises.	Interruption of water supply to commercial premises overnight due to water main break. Complaint about lack of communication to affected residences and businesses.	Council has written to the complainant thanking them for their feedback and providing more details about the unplanned nature of mains breaks. Undertaking to review emergency response communication to avoid a future occurrence of this instance.
UI/26/413	Footpath defects Complaint about paving defects in footpath allegedly resulting a trip and fall (Bridge Street).	Footpath hazard logged in Council CRM for follow up.	Written response to complainant acknowledging incident and confirmation that a works request has been logged in maintenance system.
UI/26/450	Derelict structures Complaint about derelict terrace house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjoining unoccupied terrace has deteriorated into a derelict state, with vermin infestation causing health, safety, and amenity impacts on neighbouring properties. • Shared structural elements have been affected by neglect, and Council action is sought to address the abandoned condition, including unpaid rates where relevant. 	Council is undertaking periodic maintenance of the property with the costs of the work accruing as a charge on the land. This cost will be recouped when the property is sold.
UI/26/352	Anti social behaviour Complaint about anti-social behaviour intersection of Kendall and Kareela Roads.	Group Manager Corporate service responded to advise the matter raised need to be referred to the Police. Local Police also advised directly.	After multiple emails GM Corporate Services advised that the matter had been dealt with to the extent possible by council and that no further correspondence would be entered into on this subject.
U25/8815	Breach of Customer Service Charter Complaint that Council did not meet its Customer Service Charter response timeframe for queries about hazard reduction, storm damage, and development notification – Thunderbolts Way.	Council acknowledged the delay, apologised, clarified responsibilities, and provided information on proposed site works and relevant planning and fire management processes.	Complaint upheld regarding delayed response; apology issued, information provided, actions outlined, and the matter formally finalised.

<p>UI/26/3</p>	<p>Staff/contractor speeding</p> <p>Complaint that Council staff and contractors were allegedly speeding in Depot Road and within the Council depot, disregarding posted speed limits and causing ongoing safety, noise, and dust concerns, with earlier Council intervention said to have had only temporary effect.</p>	<p>Councils WHS officer investigated the veracity of the claims and found that there was no substance to the matters claimed.</p> <p>Notwithstanding all Council staff were reminded of their safety obligation when approaching the depot and to comply with all speed restriction.</p>	<p>Council staff acknowledged receipt of the complaint.</p>
<p>UO/25/4752</p>	<p>Mowing</p> <p>Complaint: Verge mowing at Leece Road allegedly scalped grass, damaged plants on and near the property frontage, and prior Council works left a dead gum tree on the verge, causing amenity and safety concerns.</p>	<p>Council acknowledged the concerns, apologised, explained mowing constraints, agreed to stop mowing the verge unless requested, and arranged follow-up regarding tree removal and a water-related query.</p>	<p>Verge mowing ceased at the complainant’s request, the matter was addressed with an apology and commitments for follow-up action, and the complaint was considered resolved.</p>
<p>UINT/25/32245</p>	<p>Street plantings</p> <p>Council received a complaint that two dense shrubs on a nature strip were obstructing driveway sightlines and creating a safety risk; despite repeated requests over several months, no action or update had been provided and the shrubs remained in place.</p>	<p>Council undertook an inspection when the matter was first reported and assessed the shrubs did not present the traffic and pedestrian hazard reported. Notwithstanding this, given the complainant’s continuing concerns, council officers revisited the original decision and agreed to remove the shrubs to allay the complainant’s concerns.</p>	<p>Council has removed the shrubs.</p>
<p>UI/25/6690</p>	<p>Christmas Fair participation</p> <p>A local business alleged they were unfairly excluded from participation in the Christmas Street Fair and did not receive timely or adequate responses to repeated requests for information about operating during the event.</p>	<p>Management reviewed communications, advised that the business had received the same formal information as other stakeholders, explained that the event required coordinated use of public space for safety and logistics, and confirmed that individual exclusion from agreed arrangements was not feasible.</p>	<p>Participation in the Christmas Street Fair was not approved under the central event plan; the business was advised it could operate within non-public space at its premises, and the matter was recorded as a complaint and considered finalised.</p>

UI/25/6351	<p>Speed limits reduction - Invergowrie</p> <p>Objection to the proposed reduction of the speed limit on Bundarra Road from 100 km/h to 80 km/h, arguing it would adversely affect a key regional route and that safety concerns should instead be addressed through targeted intersection improvements rather than a blanket speed reduction.</p>	<p>This is not a Council matter – complainant referred to Transport for NSW.</p>	<p>No further action by Council required.</p>
AD25/15190	<p>Service delays – Dog Registration</p> <p>A complaint was lodged alleging delays and lack of follow-up by Council's Ranger in processing dog registration matters, including change of address, registration of working dogs, return of microchip barcodes, and provision of confirmation paperwork, despite repeated enquiries and assurances.</p>	<p>Matter investigated by Ranger. Numerous attempts to send required paperwork without success.</p> <p>Subsequent emailed forms to finalise update of records.</p> <p>Noted also that an address/name discrepancy was preventing all dogs from being shown on the register. A request sent to complainant to check all details.</p>	<p>Matter now pending owner's response.</p> <p>Newly produced paperwork from owner has the current barcode details. No further action required.</p>
<p>UI/25/7077</p> <p>UI/25/5671</p> <p>UINT/25/26848</p>	<p>Barking Dogs</p> <p>A complaint was made alleging ongoing excessive barking from a neighbouring dog in a residential rural area, causing sleep disturbance, ongoing distress, and concerns that the issue had not been adequately addressed.</p>	<p>Council investigated the barking dog complaint through site inspections, interviews, unannounced day and night listening visits, overnight monitoring by the Ranger, and sound recordings, concluded the complaint was substantiated.</p>	<p>Council has continued working with the dog owners to reduce the nuisance, although the issue has not yet been fully resolved.</p>

<p>UI/25/5454</p>	<p>Squatting on public reserve</p> <p>A Complaint was received about unauthorised squatting near the Queen St caravan park was alleged to involve vegetation clearing, fires, rubbish and antisocial behaviour.</p>	<p>Matter was investigated and appropriate orders were issued.</p> <p>The occupant was also referred to local community services for further assistance.</p>	<p>No further action was required of council.</p> <p>Issue resolved.</p>
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Tier Three – Resolution via external review

Complaints which are unresolved and are referred externally are classified as Tier Three complaints, these include:

- Alternative dispute resolution procedure, such as mediation or reconciliation.
- Complaint referred to external agency, such as the Ombudsman.
- Complainant informed of appeal procedure or other legal remedy.

Council had one tier three complaint between 1 September 2025 to 27 February 2026.

	Alleged Issue(s)	Management	Resolution
<p>UO/25/4759</p>	<p>Complaint to Ombudsman about an unusually large water account and Council's handling of the subsequent request for a payment plan.</p>	<p>Responded to request from Ombudsman to deal with this matter in accordance with our complaint handling policy.</p> <p>Customer was contacted in writing</p>	<p>Response sent to Ombudsman and customer was contacted in writing.</p>
	<p>Anonymous Complaint forwarded to USC from Food Authority regarding a local food vendor</p>	<p>Matter investigated by Council's Environmental Health Officer.</p> <p>The matter could not be progressed as the complaint was anonymous, details could not be verified.</p>	<p>No further action.</p>
<p>UI/25/6783</p>	<p>The EPA received complaints alleging inconsistent application of daily cover and windblown litter escaping the Uralla Landfill, resulting in unmanaged waste, litter beyond the site boundary, and non-compliance with licence conditions. These concerns prompted an unannounced EPA inspection to assess landfill operations and environmental impacts.</p>	<p>This matter arose when Council had committed resources to the snow storm remediation efforts. As a consequence the standard of daily cover was insufficient. Resources have been returned to the site and coverage is now to standard.</p>	<p>A subsequent inspection by EPA has closed the matter.</p>

CONCLUSION

Council recognises the need to continually review our request and complaints handling processes. We aim to improve our data collection for our Customer Request Management System (CRMS) and our reporting to allow us to successfully manage the full lifecycle of customer requests from submission, acknowledgment to resolution and closure. Our goal is to improve the efficiency, update tracking and monitoring to improve closing off CRMs and in the long-term customer satisfaction in council business.

We will continue to report on customer satisfaction, requests and complaints, to Council twice a year.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Nil.

Policy and Regulation

Complaints and Other Feedback Management Policy 2025

Model Code of Conduct

Relevant NSW Ombudsman Guidelines and Manuals

Local Government Act 1993

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Nil

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

In line with the Customer Service Charter and *Complaints Management Policy 2025*, all council staff are responsible for ensuring to follow the Complaints Management Policy within their function of operation, when unable to resolve an issue, it should be referred to their manager or supervisor for review.

Legal and Risk Management

As a regulatory authority and service provider, there is a reputational risk to Council if we do not facilitate complaints, submissions, review and provide the right to external review. To manage this risk, Council has the Complaints Management Policy which is publicly available and is implemented across the organisation.

For transparency we provide a biannual report to Council which delivers management of this risk and demonstrates to the community that we are committed to continual improvement.

Performance Measures

Performance measures will be in line with the *Complaints Management Policy 2025*.

Project Management

Corporate Services.

13.6 Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2026 - 2027

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Corporate Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/8095

Attachments:	1. Parts 1 & 2 - Draft Operational Plan 2026 - 2027 ⇒
	2. Part 3 - Draft Budget 2026 - 2027 ⇒
	3. Part 4 - Draft Revenue Statement 2026 - 2027 ⇒
	4. Part 5 - Draft Fees and Charges 2026 - 2027 ⇒
	5. 2026 -2027 Fees and Charges Exception report ⇒

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.2. A strategic, accountable and representative Council

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to place the Draft Operational Plan 2026 - 2027 on public exhibition so that it can be presented for adoption at the June 2026 Ordinary meeting.

The Draft Operational Plan 2026-2027 comprises five parts:

- PART 1 & 2 – Introduction and explanation of the requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework, and a list of the actions that Council will undertake to deliver against the activities in the four-year Delivery Program 2026 - 2029;
- PART 3 – Draft Budget 2026-2027 (including the operational and capital budget);
- PART 4 – Statement of Revenue 2026-2027; and
- PART 5 – Fees & Charges 2026-2027.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. The Draft Operational Plan 2026-2027 including the draft budget, draft statement of revenue policy and draft fees and charges be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 day.**
- 2. Following public exhibition, a further report is provided to Council which addresses any submissions received from the public, and any operational considerations that may arise as a result.**

REPORT

The Draft Operational Plan and Draft Budget details the works and services that Council intends to undertake during the next financial year. The actions contained in the Draft Operational Plan 2026-2027 have been compiled following discussions and workshops with Council staff and Councillors. The proposed actions are aligned with the activities contained in the Draft Delivery Program 2026-2029 and address the goals and strategies contained in the Draft Community Strategic Plan 2025-2034.

This report presents the suite of documents that make up the Draft Operational Plan 2026 -2027 seeking Council endorsement to place them on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

The Draft Operational Plan 2026- 2027

Parts 1 and 2 of the Draft Operational Plan outlines the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework and illustrate the connections between the Draft Community Strategic Plan, Draft Delivery Program, and Draft Operational Plan.

The Council is responsible for coordinating and planning annual operational activities to achieve the deliverables specified in the Draft Delivery Program. Each service area within the Draft Operational Plan includes a statement explaining the purpose, activities, and methods of the business unit by addressing the questions: “Why?”, “What?”, and “How?”. This provides our community with an overview of the core functions of each service.

Part 1 and 2 of the draft Operational Plan 2026-2027 is included as attachment 1

Draft Budget 2026-2027

Part 3 of the Operational Plan contains the Draft Budget for 2026 -2027.

The Draft Budget and supporting commentary by the Chief Financial Officer are included as attachment 2.

The Draft Statement of Revenue & Draft Schedule of Fees/Charges

Parts 4 and 5 of the Draft Operational Plan contain the Draft Statement of Revenue and Draft Schedule of Fees & Charges for the 2026-2027 financial year. The Draft Statement of Revenue outlines the expected income for Council over the next financial year from rates, grants, fees and charges. The Schedule of Fees and Charges outlines the prices of all fees and charges for services provided to the community.

There are several sources of income available for Council. However, (after grants) rates income remains the predominant source of income. This is supplemented by statutory and other charges, user fees for services, grants, and income from commercial endeavours in our aged care services. The Revenue Statement is included as attachment 3.

Fees and charges for 2026 - 2027 generally reflect a Consumer Price Index increase on 2024 -2025 rates, subject to minor rounding up or down. The proposed Fees and Charges for 2026-2027 are included as attachment 4. An exception report summarising fees and charges exceeding CPI including justification is included at attachment 5.

Public Exhibition of the Draft Operational Plan

Feedback from elected members and the community is a critical component in developing the Draft Operational Plan for adoption. The Draft Operational Plan will be placed on public exhibition for a period of not less than 28 days inviting the community to make submissions. To maximise community awareness of the submission period the Draft Operational Plan will be exhibited in accordance with Council’s adopted Community Engagement Strategy.

CONCLUSION

Council is required to place the Draft Operational Plan 2026-2027 on public exhibition for 28 days and consider public submission prior to adoption.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, the IP&R suite of documents must be exhibited for public comment for a period of 28 days. Submissions received during the public exhibition period will be reported to Council prior to adoption.

Policy and Regulation

Local Government Act 1993 (NSW); Local Government Regulation (General) 2021 (NSW); Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW (Sept 2021).

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The development of the suite of IP&R documents presented for endorsement has considered the Principles of Sound Financial Management as outlined under section 8B of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*. Section 8B of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* provides that Council spending should be responsible and sustainable, aligning general revenue and expenses.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Under the IP&R framework, Council must plan for and manage all existing assets under its control, as well as any new assets proposed in the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program. The primary objective of asset management is to deliver agreed levels of service that meet community needs in a cost-effective and sustainable manner. Levels of service, together with technical and sustainability requirements, are key drivers of asset planning. Asset Management Plans support the effective delivery of strategies outlined in the Delivery Program.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Actions arising from the Workforce Management Strategy are contained in the Draft Operational Plan under the Human Resources service function.

Legal and Risk Management

The adoption of the Draft Operational Plan and Draft Budget is time critical requiring formal adoption no later than 30 June 2026. Council and the General Manager will not have the power or delegation to undertake spending beyond 01 July 2026 unless the Draft Operational Plan and Draft Budget are adopted prior to 30 June 2026.

Performance Measures

These are set out in the Draft Operational Plan 2026-2027.

Project Management

Chief Financial Officer; Group Manager Corporate Services.

13.7 Loans as at 31 March 2026

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	Senior Finance Officer
Authorised By:	Chief Financial Officer

SUMMARY

This report provides the Council with a reconciliation of borrowings as at the end of the reporting month.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the total loan position as at 31 March 2026 was \$1,056,643.

REPORT

This report outlines the Council's borrowing position as at end of the reporting month. As per reconciliation for borrowings as at 31 March 2026, the loan balance stood at \$1,056,643.

Loan 188 was finalised at the end of March 2026, with the final repayment processed during the reporting period. Following this, the loan account was in a credit position and the surplus balance was refunded. The loan was formally closed on 1 April 2026.

Loan 190 is paid by quarterly instalments, and the next repayment is due on 11th May 2026.

The table below details the loan's opening balance, interest applied, instalments paid since the last report, and the closing balance at month-end.

Uralla Shire Council Loans as at 31 March 2025

Loan no.	Purpose	Balance as at 28-Feb-2026	Interest Applied	Instalment Paid	Balance as at 31-Mar-2026
165	MGH Property	4,178	28	751	3,455
188	Paving and Power Undergrounding	742	6	748	-
189	Bridge Construction	93,850	629	5,301	89,178
190	Bridge construction & industrial land development	964,010	-	-	964,010
	Total	1,062,780	663	6,800	1,056,643

CONCLUSION

I, Mustaq Ahammed, Chief Financial Officer, hereby certify that the above borrowings have been made in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* (sections 621 to 624) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (section 230).

13.8 Investments as at 31 March 2026

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	Senior Finance Officer
Authorised By:	Chief Financial Officer

SUMMARY

This report contains a summary of bank accounts, term deposits, cash management accounts and investments in structured credit instruments.

The investments have been made in accordance with section 625 of *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, section 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NSW)*, and Council's *Investment Policy 2019*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes:

- 1. The cash position as at 31 March 2026 consisting of:**
 - cash and overnight funds of \$3,567,924
 - term deposits of \$21,000,000; and
 - total cash and term deposits amount to \$24,567,924 as at 31 March 2026.
- 2. Restrictions are reconciled on a quarterly basis. As at 31 March 2026, total cash and investments were \$24,567,924 comprising \$19,008,509 in external restrictions and \$4,514,070 in internal restrictions, leaving an unrestricted balance of \$1,045,345. This compares to an unrestricted cash balance of \$1,112,649 as at 31 December 2025.**

REPORT

Of the cash disclosed in this report, not all funds are available for unrestricted use by Council. A significant portion is subject to external restrictions, including developer contributions, government grants, loans, water supply and sewer services, and refundable accommodation deposits (reported as McMaugh Gardens Bond Liability).

In addition, part of the cash is internally restricted to meet Council's future commitments, such as asset renewals, remediation works, and employee leave provisions.

Council's current investment portfolio earns interest at rates ranging from 4.01% to 5.15%, with an average return of 4.35%. The Reserve Bank of Australia increased the cash rate by 25 basis points to 4.10% on 17 March 2026, following a prior increase in February, in response to ongoing inflationary pressures. There was no monetary policy meeting held in April 2026. The next RBA monetary policy decision is scheduled for May 2026, which may provide further guidance on the future direction of interest rates.

McMaugh Gardens Bond Liability

As per the Department of Health's prudential guidelines, the Council is advised to disclose the amount of McMaugh Gardens Bond Liability in the investment report. Accordingly, McMaugh Gardens Bond Liability status as at 31 March 2026 is provided below:

Particulars	Amount
Opening Balance as at 28/02/26	6,100,000
Add: Bond received during the month	350,000
Less: Bond released during month	200,000
Closing Balance as at 31/03/26	6,250,000

Breakdown of Council's Cash and Investments as at 31 March 2026

Institution	Account	Closing Balance 31 Mar 2026
National Australia Bank	Main Account	\$58,760
National Australia Bank	Trust Account	\$31,297
Regional Australia Bank	Cash Account	\$29,172
Professional Funds (0.15% above RBA cash rate)	Cash Account	\$3,448,696
Total Cash and Overnight Funds		\$3,567,924
Term Deposits	Investments	21,000,000
Total funds available as at 31 March 2026		\$24,567,924

Movement of Term Deposit Investments by Each Bank Since Last Report

Commonwealth Bank	S&P Rating	Allowable Investment Limit %	Max Investment Allowed	Opening Investments 28/02/2026	Movement during the Month	Closing Investments 31/03/2026	% of Actual Investment
National Australia Bank	A-1+	30%	6,300,000	5,200,000	-	5,200,000	24.8%
Bank of Queensland	A-2	30%	6,300,000	2,500,000	-	2,500,000	11.9%
Westpac Banking Corporation	A-1+	30%	6,300,000	5,600,000	-	5,600,000	26.7%
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	30%	6,300,000	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	23.8%
Regional Australia Bank	BBB+	10%	2,100,000	700,000	-	700,000	3.3%
Suncorp	A-1+	30%	6,300,000	2,000,000	-	2,000,000	9.5%
Total				21,000,000	-	21,000,000	100%

List of Term Deposits as of 31 March 2026

Name of the Bank	Term	Interest Rate	Maturity Date	Investment Amount
Regional Australia Bank	6 Months	4.20%	4/04/2026	700,000
Bank of Queensland	6 Months	4.25%	7/04/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 Months	4.35%	7/04/2026	700,000
National Australia Bank	12 Months	4.25%	17/04/2026	1,000,000
Bank of Queensland	8 Months	4.15%	18/05/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	10 Months	4.12%	22/05/2026	500,000
National Australia Bank	12 Months	4.20%	25/05/2026	500,000
National Australia Bank	10 Months	4.05%	1/06/2026	600,000
Bank of Queensland	12 Months	4.10%	2/06/2026	1,000,000
Suncorp	12 Months	4.13%	12/06/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 Months	4.05%	2/07/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 Months	4.12%	22/07/2026	1,000,000
Suncorp	7 Months	4.46%	13/08/2026	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 Months	4.09%	25/08/2026	400,000
National Australia Bank	12 Months	4.05%	25/08/2026	400,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 Months	4.01%	2/09/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	11 Months	4.25%	2/10/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 Months	4.48%	3/11/2026	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 Months	4.45%	4/11/2026	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 Months	4.45%	4/11/2026	1,000,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 Months	4.35%	27/11/2026	1,000,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 Months	4.35%	27/11/2026	500,000
National Australia Bank	10 Months	4.74%	13/01/2027	500,000
Commonwealth Bank	10 Months	4.78%	15/01/2027	500,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 Months	4.82%	5/02/2027	1,000,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 Months	4.82%	5/02/2027	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	11 Months	5.15%	12/03/2027	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 Months	4.62%	18/03/2027	700,000
Total				21,000,000

CONCLUSION

I, Mustaq Ahammed, Chief Financial Officer, hereby certify that the above investments have been made in accordance with section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, section 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, and Council's *Investment Policy 2019*.

13.9 Closure of Council Public Road – Lot 221 DP 755814 (ACEN New England Solar Project)

Department:	Infrastructure and Development
Prepared By:	Group Manager Infrastructure Services
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/26/6604

Attachments:	1. Letter from Acen for Closure of Road within Lot 221 of DP755814
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LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
	2. A sustainable economy that supports prosperity
Strategy:	3.3. An efficient and effective independent local government
	2.3. Well serviced communities

SUMMARY

A request has been received from ACEN Australia to initiate the closure of a Council public (unformed/paper) road located within Lot 221 DP 755814, as part of the New England Solar Project.

The subject road is not formed and is understood to be unused for public access. The proposed closure is intended to facilitate the development and ongoing operation of the solar farm within the project footprint.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to commence the statutory process for the proposed road closure in accordance with the *Roads Act 1993 (NSW)*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Commences the road closure process under the *Roads Act 1993 (NSW)* for the Council public road within Lot 221 DP 755814;
2. Delegates authority to the General Manager to undertake all necessary actions to progress the road closure process, including public notification, consultation, and submission to Crown Lands;
3. Receives a further report following completion of the public notification process.
4. Notes that:
 - (a) the road is not formally closed until publication in the NSW Government Gazette; and
 - (b) all costs associated with the proposed road closure process are to be borne by the Applicant.

REPORT

ACEN Australia has submitted a request to Uralla Shire Council ('Council') seeking closure of a Council public (unformed/paper) road within Lot 221 DP 755814. The request forms part of the broader New England Solar Project, which requires consolidation of land holdings and removal of redundant road reserves within the project area. The subject road is classified as a public road under the *Roads Act 1993 (NSW)*; however, it is unformed, not maintained by Council, and is not required for current public access (although may be in the future). Closure of the road would enable more efficient land use and support the delivery of regionally significant renewable energy infrastructure.

Closure of a Council public road must be undertaken in accordance with Part 4, Division 3 of the *Roads Act 1993 (NSW)*. The statutory process includes a Council resolution to commence the process, public notification for a minimum of 28 days, consultation with adjoining landowners and relevant public authorities, assessment of any submissions received, submission of an application to Crown Lands (Form CL31-30), and formal closure via publication in the NSW Government Gazette. At this stage, Council is only being asked to commence the process, not to approve the final closure.

Preliminary assessment indicates that the road is not constructed or used, does not provide critical public access, and is located within land associated with the New England Solar Project. Based on current information, the road appears to be surplus to Council's operational and strategic road network requirements. These matters will be further tested through the statutory process, including consultation with stakeholders.

The Applicant, ACEN Australia, is not the registered adjoining landowner. Accordingly, consent from the adjoining landowner will be required prior to completion of the closure process, and any subsequent land transfer arrangements will be managed separately between the Applicant and the landowner. Council's role is limited to the statutory road closure process and any subsequent disposal of land in accordance with legislative requirements.

In considering the proposal, Council must ensure that there is no loss of necessary public access, confirm that there is no future strategic requirement for the road, and ensure that any impacts to utilities and infrastructure are identified and appropriately managed. These matters will be assessed through the public notification and consultation process.

All costs associated with the road closure process will be borne by the Applicant, including public notification and advertising, valuation of the land, Crown Lands application fees, and legal and administrative costs. Council will implement appropriate cost recovery measures to ensure it is not financially disadvantaged through the process.

CONCLUSION

The proposed closure of the Council public road within Lot 221 DP 755814 is considered appropriate to progress to the next stage of the statutory process.

The road appears to be surplus to requirements and its closure will support efficient land use associated with the New England Solar Project.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to commence the formal road closure process, with further reporting to Council following public notification should submissions be received.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Section 38B of the Roads Act 1993 (NSW) and Council's Community Engagement Strategy.

This will include:

- public notification of the proposed closure
- direct notification to adjoining landowners
- consultation with relevant public authorities and utility providers

The process ensures that all stakeholders are provided the opportunity to make submissions and that Council can make an informed decision.

Public Interest Considerations

In addition to current use, Council must also consider any potential future strategic need for the road within the broader transport network. This includes ensuring that closure does not constrain future connectivity, access, or infrastructure planning outcomes. This assessment will be undertaken as part of the statutory process.

Policy and Regulation

The proposed road closure will be undertaken in accordance with:

- Roads Act 1993 (NSW)
- Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
- Council's adopted policies and procedures relating to land management and asset disposal.

The process ensures compliance with statutory requirements, including public notification, Crown Lands concurrence, and gazettal.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

There are no direct financial impacts on Council, subject to full cost recovery from the Applicant. All costs associated with the process will be borne by the Applicant, ensuring a cost-neutral outcome.

Should the closure proceed to completion, Council may receive revenue from the sale of the land, which will be determined based on independent valuation and managed in accordance with Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

There is understandably a time cost associated with this process and given then USC anticipate a large number of request for paper road closures, USC is reviewing options to outsource this, noting full cost recovery, to reduce burden and impact to staff time/capacity.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The proposed closure represents a rationalisation of Council's Road asset base by removing a redundant and unutilised road reserve. This supports improved asset management outcomes by:

- reducing long-term maintenance and liability obligations
- aligning Council's asset portfolio with actual service requirements

The proposal is consistent with the principles of Council's Asset Management Strategy.

Further, Prior to closure, Council will ensure that all utilities and infrastructure within the road reserve are identified and appropriately protected. This may include the creation of easements where required to ensure ongoing access and maintenance rights for service authorities.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

The road closure process is resource intensive and places a material administrative and coordination burden on existing Council staff. While this report relates to a single request, Council is aware that there may be between 10 and 50 similar road closure requests over coming years associated with major renewable energy and related land use projects. Collectively, these requests have the potential to create a significant workload impact across Infrastructure & Development, governance, property, and legal support functions.

The work involved is not limited to simple administration and includes preparation of Council reports, coordination of public notification, stakeholder and agency consultation, review and management of submissions, liaison with Crown Lands, management of valuations and legal processes, and progression of subsequent disposal processes where applicable. Given the scale and repetitive nature of this emerging workload, Council is investigating opportunities to outsource some or all of the road closure process to appropriately qualified external providers in order to reduce the burden on incumbent staff and maintain business-as-usual service delivery. Any such arrangement would be subject to full cost recovery from applicants so that Council is not financially disadvantaged.

Without a structured delivery model, this volume of work has the potential to materially impact Council's ability to deliver core services and capital programs.

Legal and Risk Management

The road closure process must comply with the Roads Act 1993 (NSW) and associated legislative requirements.

Key risks include:

- potential objections from stakeholders
- impacts to public access
- unidentified utilities or infrastructure
- failure to comply with statutory process

These risks will be mitigated through:

- structured consultation and assessment
- technical review of the road and surrounding land
- adherence to legislative requirements and Council procedures

Performance Measures

The success of this process will be measured by:

- completion of statutory requirements within required timeframes
- effective stakeholder engagement and management of submissions
- achievement of a cost-neutral outcome for Council
- successful progression of the road closure process to determination

Project Management

The road closure process will be managed as a discrete administrative project within the Infrastructure & Development Directorate.

Key stages include:

- Council resolution
- public notification
- assessment of submissions
- submission to Crown Lands
- gazettal and finalisation

The process will be overseen by relevant Council officers to ensure compliance, coordination, and timely delivery.

13.10 Three (3) Site Specific Crown Land Plans Of Management

Department:	Infrastructure and Development
Prepared By:	Manager Environment & Waste
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/26/8692

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	4.	Good custodianship of our natural and built environment
Strategy:	4.1.	Preserve, protect, and renew our beautiful natural environment

SUMMARY

At its meeting of 24 March 2026 Council resolved to lay the matter of three (3) Site Specific Crown Land Plans of Management on the table and to return to discussion of the item at the April Ordinary Meeting.

This report seeks Council's approval for officers to undertake further review and refinement of the draft Plans prior to resubmission to Council for consideration at a later date.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Releases the previous report from the table.**
- 2. Grants staff further time to review and revise the draft Plans of Management for the three site specific Crown Land reserves.**
- 3. Receives a future report on the revised Plans of Management for endorsement.**

REPORT

At its March meeting, Council discussed the draft Plans of Management and raised a number of concerns regarding their current structure, processes, purpose, and content. Council also identified issues relating to the extent to which the Plans are meaningful to the community, as well as a lack of clarity regarding their intended role and application once endorsed.

Since that meeting, staff have reviewed the draft Plans in light of Council's feedback. As a result of that review, staff now seek Council's support to undertake a process to refine the Plans to ensure they are more practical, meaningful, and achievable.

Following completion of this improvement process, the revised Plans will be reported back to Council for consideration. Subject to Council's endorsement, the Plans would then be forwarded to Crown Lands for Ministerial consent and public exhibition.

CONCLUSION

This report recommends that Council grant staff further time to revise the draft Plans of Management for the three Crown Land reserves to be resubmitted for future Council endorsement.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Community engagement is an important part of the process of developing Plans of Management for Crown Lands. Subject to future Council endorsement and further Departmental engagement, the revised draft Plans will be publicly exhibited for 42 days. Ministerial consent will be required following their finalisation by Council.

Policy and Regulation

Crown Land Plans of Management are required for Crown reserves managed by councils under the Crown Land Management Act 2016. The preparation and public exhibition of the Plans of Management must also comply with the Local Government Act 1993.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

This issue was a key focus of Council's discussion when the draft Plans were most recently reported. It is proposed that the Plans be amended to acknowledge that Council's role as land *manager*, rather than owner, may limit its responsibility to fund works and improvements without external assistance.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Subject to the outcomes of the proposed review and clarification of Council's role as land manager rather than owner, the appropriateness of referencing the Crown Land parcels in Council's Open Space Asset Management Plan will be noted.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Nil impact.

Legal and Risk Management

The *Crown Land Management Act 2016* requires that Crown reserves managed by councils are treated as "community land" under the *Local Government Act 1993*, necessitating a Plan of Management.

Performance Measures

Yet to be determined and will flow naturally from the proposed reviews.

Project Management

The review team will comprise:

- (a) Environment/Biosecurity team, and
- (b) Parks and Open Spaces team
- (c) Director Infrastructure and Development.

13.11 Major Projects and Capital Works - Infrastructure & Development

Department:	Infrastructure and Development
Prepared By:	Group Manager Infrastructure Services
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Goal:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community 2. A sustainable economy that supports prosperity
Attachments:	1. Title Major Projects and Capital Works - Infrastructure & Development - April 2026 Report ⇒
Strategy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2. A safe, active and healthy shire 1.4. Access to and equity of services 2.1. An attractive environment for the business sector 2.3. Well serviced communities

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on major projects and capital works being delivered by the Infrastructure & Development team. While a number of projects are progressing, several key grant-funded projects have been confirmed as high risk following recent procurement outcomes, which have identified significant disparities between market pricing and available funding, as well as ongoing industry capacity constraints.

Council is actively implementing mitigation strategies, including re-scoping works into deliverable packages, adopting alternative delivery approaches, and engaging with funding bodies to seek flexibility in scope and delivery timeframes. These actions are aimed at maximising delivery outcomes within the constraints of current funding and market conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. Notes the Infrastructure Works Update as at March 2026; and**
- 2. Notes that a number of projects remain high risk following recent procurement outcomes, including significant disparities between market pricing and available funding and constrained delivery timeframes, with mitigation strategies actively being implemented.**

REPORT

This report, presented monthly, provides a status update on the progress on Major Projects, some of which are grant funded.

Current Works have been tabulated in an attachment to this Report and have been coloured in accordance with the below to easily identify the relevant risk.

- Low Risk = no colour
- Medium Risk = highlighted Yellow
- High Risk = highlighted Orange

All Projects that are medium or high risk are discussed in further detail below, including projects that were previously medium/high.

Network Operations Update – Road Maintenance and Vegetation Management

Due to the ongoing dry weather conditions across the Shire, Council has implemented changes to its routine road maintenance and vegetation management programs.

Routine maintenance grading activities have been significantly reduced and will largely cease unless a sustainable water source can be identified that does not impact private landholders or downstream users. Water is critical to achieving appropriate compaction of gravel pavements during grading activities. While dry grading can be undertaken, it provides only a short-term outcome and can negatively impact the long-term condition and integrity of the road surface.

Recent grading activities on Barraba Road and Gap Road were undertaken due to the availability of suitable water sources; however, these opportunities are limited and not expected to be ongoing.

In response to these constraints, Council will prioritise alternative maintenance activities that are less reliant on water, including drainage improvements and heavy patching of pavement failures, particularly along key corridors such as Thunderbolts Way.

In addition, roadside vegetation slashing activities have been temporarily suspended due to increased fire risk associated with current dry conditions.

Council will continue to monitor weather conditions and water availability and will reinstate normal maintenance activities when conditions improve. In the interim, road users are advised to drive to the prevailing road conditions.

The currently identified High Risk Projects are discussed in detail below:

Uralla Creek Catchment Project (OLG Grant for AGRN1030/1034)

- Market Pricing has been returned for the Procurement Package for the Civil Infrastructure and Creek Regeneration Projects. The pricing was well above (10x) the allocated budgets in accordance with the Grant Deed.
- Direct negotiations have commenced with contractors to identify smaller, deliverable packages of work from the broader projects that can be completed within the available timeframe and budget, while still achieving value for money.
- This Project remains classified as High Risk due to the disparity between market pricing and available budget, combined with the constrained delivery timeframe to 30 June 2026. To mitigate this risk, Council has commenced direct negotiations to re-scope and prioritise works into smaller, deliverable packages; is reviewing procurement pathways to enable staged delivery; and is continuing engagement with the funding body to seek flexibility in scope, staging and/or delivery timeframe. These actions are aimed at ensuring that critical outcomes can still be achieved within funding constraints while maintaining compliance and value for money.

Please note: Notes below are repeated from last report for context

- The Final Study Report, titled “Uralla Creek Catchment Study and Regeneration” was issued 02 March 2026. This provides the scope of works for both future Civil Infrastructure and Creek Regeneration Projects.
- A Procurement Package for the Civil Infrastructure and Creek Regeneration Projects was issued to the market with a return date of 20 March 2026.

- Proposed Early Works Packages that would alleviate the pressure of completing all works by COB June 2026 were not able to be released due to staffing capacity for developing, releasing and delivering out of sequence works.
- This Project has previously been identified as Medium Risk with a further review identified in March 2026. It has now been elevated to High Risk for the following reasons:
 - Council Staff capacity meant that the Draft Report was returned to the Consultant later than anticipated. Final Report from Consultant was delayed as a result.
 - The extent of the Works identified in the Reports from the Consultant was far greater than anticipated, meaning the scope of Works is more extensive and complex. This may extend the Procurement and Construction Periods of the works.
 - Questions coming from potential Contractors, through the Procurement Portal, indicates that they're expecting 'For Construction' Design information, which was never the intention, rather than completing the works under a 'Design and Construct' Model. This may reduce number of potential Contractors and delay the Procurement Process.
- USC Staff are currently awaiting the return pricing from the market on 20 March. Once received, Staff will assess submissions and identify preferred contractors to work with, whilst maintaining compliance with applicable procurement practices, with intention to start construction as soon as possible.
- USC Staff are also working with the funding body to review whether a Variation to extend the required completion date of 30 June 2026 is feasible, given that works will be let and underway by that stage.

King Street and Maitland Street Roundabout Design and Construction

The King Street and Maitland Street Roundabout project continues to form part of the Part B delivery program under the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Phase 4 (LRCI4) funding. There has been no material change to the project status since the previous report, with the project remaining in the construction readiness phase following completion of design and an increased funding allocation through the redistribution of funds from cancelled projects.

Please note: Notes below are repeated from last report for context

The design for the roundabout is completed, positioning the project to transition into the construction phase. However, the project has been elevated to High Risk due to current market constraints and resourcing challenges. Specifically:

- The external Project Manager engaged to assist in delivery of the works has experienced significant difficulty in securing suitably qualified contractors within the required timeframe.
- Broader industry capacity constraints, including competing infrastructure programs and limited contractor availability, are impacting procurement outcomes.
- The fixed funding deadline of 30 June 2026 presents a critical constraint, with limited float available for delays in mobilisation and delivery.

To mitigate these risks, Council is actively implementing a number of measures:

- Early Works / Self-Performance: Council is investigating opportunities to self-perform discrete components of the works (such as site preparation, earthworks, drainage, and service relocations) to reduce the overall construction scope required to be delivered by an external contractor.

- Program Acceleration: Where feasible, early commencement of preparatory works will be undertaken to de-risk the critical path and maximise the likelihood of project completion within the funding timeframe.
- Funding Body Engagement / Variation Request: Council is proactively engaging with the funding body to seek consideration of a potential variation to the project delivery timeframe. This request is being supported by evidence of current market constraints, including limited contractor availability and procurement challenges being experienced across the sector. Early communication aims to provide transparency and position Council to secure additional time, should it be required, to ensure the project can be delivered effectively and in full.

Despite these mitigation strategies, the project remains high risk due to factors largely outside of Council's direct control, particularly contractor availability and market capacity. Council will continue to closely monitor procurement outcomes and delivery progress and will implement further mitigation measures as required to achieve project completion within the funding conditions.

The currently identified Medium Risk Projects are discussed in detail below:

There are currently no projects identified as Medium Risk.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Targeted communication will be required for affected residents, road users and local businesses, particularly where project scopes are adjusted or where construction activities result in disruptions. Broader communication may also be required to manage community expectations where originally planned project outcomes are modified due to budget or delivery constraints.

Public communication will be required to inform the community of changes to routine maintenance activities and to reinforce driver responsibility to adjust to prevailing road conditions.

Policy and Regulation

All procurement activities and any direct negotiations will continue to be undertaken in accordance with the NSW Local Government Act 1993 and Council's Procurement Policy. Any variations to scope or delivery approach will be managed to ensure compliance with relevant funding deed requirements.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

There is a significant financial risk arising from the disparity between current market pricing and available grant funding, particularly for the Uralla Creek Catchment Project. This creates a risk that full project scopes cannot be delivered within existing funding envelopes.

There is also a broader risk that grant funding may not be fully expended within required timeframes, which may result in funding being returned or reallocated. Council is actively mitigating this risk through re-scoping, staged delivery, and engagement with funding bodies regarding potential variations.

Any increased reliance on self-performance may also introduce additional internal cost pressures and resource allocation challenges that will need to be managed within existing operational and capital budgets.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Where projects are delivered in a reduced or staged format, there is a risk that long-term asset outcomes may not fully align with original strategic planning objectives. This may result in the need for future upgrades or additional capital investment to achieve the intended level of service.

Notwithstanding this, delivery of priority components will still contribute to improved asset condition, safety, and serviceability outcomes.

The temporary reduction in grading and vegetation management activities may result in a short-term decline in road condition and roadside presentation. Council will seek to mitigate long-term impacts by prioritising drainage and targeted maintenance activities where feasible.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Internal workforce capacity remains a key constraint impacting project delivery. Increased reliance on Council staff to undertake design coordination, procurement, and potential self-performance of works may place additional pressure on existing resources and impact delivery of other operational priorities.

This reinforces the need to prioritise workloads and consider resource allocation across the broader Infrastructure portfolio.

Legal and Risk Management

Key risks relate to procurement outcomes, contractor availability, and the ability to deliver projects within the constraints of funding deeds. There is also a risk of non-compliance with funding conditions if projects are not delivered within required timeframes or scopes.

Direct negotiation with contractors is being undertaken in accordance with procurement provisions where a satisfactory result is unlikely to be achieved through traditional tender processes. Appropriate governance, probity, and documentation controls are being maintained.

Where Council undertakes self-performed works, additional controls will be implemented to manage work health and safety, delivery risk, and liability exposure.

There is an increased risk exposure associated with reduced maintenance activities, particularly in relation to road condition and fire risk. These risks will be managed through targeted maintenance, appropriate signage where required, and public communication advising road users to drive to conditions.

Performance Measures

Performance will be measured based on Council's ability to secure deliverable procurement outcomes, progress projects within revised scopes, and achieve expenditure and delivery milestones in accordance with funding requirements.

Project Management

Project management is being undertaken through a combination of external project management support and internal Council resources. Delivery models are being actively adapted, including staged delivery and potential self-performance, to respond to current market conditions and improve the likelihood of achieving project outcomes.

13.12 Register Resolutions Actions Status as at 22 April 2026

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Support Officer Corporate Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/7668

Attachments: 1. Action Resolution Register as at 22 April 2026 [⇒](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders
	3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the Resolution Action Status updates.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Resolution Actions Status Report as at 22 April 2026.

REPORT

Following every council meeting, the resolutions of Council which require action are compiled. This document is referred to as the Resolutions Action Status Report.

The purpose of the Resolutions Action Status Report is to enable Council to monitor progress of resolutions until they are actioned.

Once resolutions have been completed, they are removed automatically from the report.

CONCLUSION

The Resolutions Action Status Report is presented to Council at each Ordinary/Extraordinary Meeting.

14 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

14.1 Confidential Report - Community Transport Restricted Fund

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - g of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with advice concerning litigation, or advice as comprises a discussion of this matter, that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege.

15 COMMUNICATION OF COUNCIL DECISION**16 CONCLUSION OF MEETING**