AGENDA

General Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 9 June 2026

Time: 5.45 pm

Location: Cowra Council Chambers
116 Kendal Street, Cowra

Paul Devery

General Manager

Order Of Business

1 Introduction....4
1.1 Recording & publishing....4
1.2 Acknowledgement of Country....4
1.3 Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence by Councillors....4
1.4 Disclosures of Interest....4
1.5 Presentations....4
1.6 Public Forum....4
2 Confirmation of Minutes....4
Confirmation of Minutes of General Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026
3 Mayoral Minute....10
3.1 Mayoral Minute - Rural & Regional Health....10
4 General Managers Report....20
4.1 Community Satisfaction Survey....20
5 Director-Corporate Services Report....94
5.1 Local Government Remuneration Tribunal Report on Mayoral and Councillor Fees....94
5.2 Donation Request - Mstr Panha Hun Attendance at Barca Academy....182
5.3 Donation Request - Jyedon Memorial Team....187
6 Director-Infrastructure & Operations Report....192
6.1 Household Kerbside Bin System Audit 2026....192
6.2 Arrangement to lease or purchase two Council owned lots; Lot 1 DP 1201417 (Lee Street) and Lot 1107219 (River Street); and use of road reserves to comply with General Condition 13 of the Notice of Determination DA 57/2020....270
6.3 Section 355 Committee Minutes - Saleyards Committee....273
6.4 Installation of Electric Vehicle Destination Chargers....280
6.5 Caravan Park Capital Works Planning....286
7 Director-Environmental Services Report....289
7.1 Draft Environmental Sustainability Management Delivery Plan....289
7.2 Draft Planning Proposal aiming to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 by reclassifying Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 from Community Land to Operational status....315
7.3 Seeking endorsement for final Section 7.11 & 7.12 2026 Contributions Plans....322
7.4 Development Application No. 10.2026.37.1, Lot 4 DP 1135952, 2 Amie Street Cowra, two dwellings and 2 lot subdivision, lodged by N Aghili-Josheghani. The property owner is R Dagher....402
8 Late Reports....444

9 Notices of Motions.....444

Nil

10 Confidential Matters.....444

11 Confidential Director-Infrastructure & Operations 444

11.1 Request for Tender 3/2026 - Replacement of Plant 100 - One Telescopic Handler.....444

11.2 Request For Tender 4/2026 - Design, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Solar Photovoltaic, Battery Energy Storage and Power Factor Correction Systems.....444

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Recording & publishing

In accordance with the Local Government Act (1993), Cowra Council is recording this meeting and will upload the recording to Council's website. By speaking at this meeting, you agree to being recorded and having that recording published in the public domain. Please ensure that when you speak at meetings you are respectful to others and use appropriate language at all times. Cowra Council accepts no liability for any defamatory or offensive remarks or gestures made during the course of this meeting.

1.2 Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather, the Wiradjuri people, and pay our respects to elders both past and present.

1.3 Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence by Councillors

List of apologies for the meeting.

1.4 Disclosures of Interest

Councillors and staff please indicate in relation to any interests you need to declare:

a. What report/item you are declaring an interest in?
b. Whether the interest is pecuniary or non-pecuniary?
c. What is the nature of the interest?

1.5 Presentations

1.6 Public Forum

I invite any member of the public wishing to speak on an item in the agenda to please come to the lectern, introduce yourself, state the item you wish to speak on and allow time for any councillor or member of staff if they have declared an interest in the item to manage that conflict which may include them leaving the chamber during your presentation.

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Confirmation of Minutes of General Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026

MINUTES

General Committee Meeting
Monday, 11 May 2026

Order Of Business

1 Introduction....3
1.1 Recording & Publishing....3
1.2 Acknowledgement of Country....3
1.3 Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence by Councillors....3
1.4 Disclosures of Interest....3
1.5 Presentations....3
2 Confirmation of Minutes....3
3 Director-Infrastructure & Operations Report....4
3.1 Cowra Sports Fields Master Plans....4
3.2 IPART Review of WaterNSW Proposed Bulk Water Pricing Increase....4
4 Director-Environmental Services Report....4
4.1 Draft Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026....4
4.2 Endorsement of the Stone Hut Conservation Management Plan for the Stone Hut at the Cowra POW site....5
5 Late Reports....5
5.1 Councillor Information Request....5
6 Notices of Motions....5
7 Confidential Matters....5
8 Confidential Director-Infrastructure & Operations....5
8.1 Acquisition of Land - Binni Creek Road - Lot 4 DP 720563....5

MINUTES OF COWRA COUNCIL
GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE COWRA COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 116 KENDAL STREET, COWRA
ON MONDAY, 11 MAY 2026 AT 5.45 PM

PRESENT: Cr Paul Smith (Mayor), Cr Nikki Kiss OAM (Deputy Mayor), Cr Karren Cave, Cr Tony Horton, Cr Cheryl Speechley, Cr Erin Watt, Cr Peter Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Devery (General Manager), Jarrad Shiells (Acting Director-Corporate Services), Larissa Hackett (Director-Environmental Services), Dirk Wymer (Director-Infrastructure & Operations)

The meeting opened at 5:45 pm.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Recording & Publishing

The Mayor advised that the meeting was being recorded.

1.2 Acknowledgement of Country

The Mayor delivered the Acknowledgment of Country.

1.3 Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence by Councillors

Apology

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM
Seconded: Cr Cheryl Speechley

That apologies from Cr Cheryl Downing and Cr Ruth Fagan be received and accepted.

CARRIED

1.4 Disclosures of Interest

Nil

1.5 Presentations

Nil

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Tony Horton
Seconded: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM

That the minutes of General Committee Meeting held on 13 April 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

3 DIRECTOR-INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS REPORT

3.1 Cowra Sports Fields Master Plans

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Tony Horton
Seconded: Cr Erin Watt

That Council adopt the Cowra Sports Fields Master Plans as presented.

CARRIED

3.2 IPART Review of WaterNSW Proposed Bulk Water Pricing Increase

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM
Seconded: Cr Peter Wright

That the forecast LTFP expenditure on bulk water purchases is adjusted upward to reflect the draft pricing decision from the IPART draft report 'Prices for WaterNSW regional and rural bulk water from 1 July 2026.'

CARRIED

4 DIRECTOR-ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORT

4.1 Draft Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Erin Watt
Seconded: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM

1. **That Council notes the three (3) submissions received from the public exhibition of the Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026.**

2. **That the Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026 be formally adopted in accordance with the provisions of part 2, division 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.**

3. **That a notice of Council's decision to formally adopt the Cowra Development Control Plan 2026 be placed in the public exhibition section of Cowra Council's website, in accordance with the provisions of part 2, division 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.**

4. **That a copy of the adopted Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026 be forwarded to the Planning Secretary in accordance with the provisions of part 2, division 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.**

CARRIED

In Favour: Crs Paul Smith, Nikki Kiss OAM, Karren Cave, Tony Horton, Cheryl Speechley, Erin Watt and Peter Wright

Against: Nil

CARRIED 7/0

4.2 Endorsement of the Stone Hut Conservation Management Plan for the Stone Hut at the Cowra POW site

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM
Seconded: Cr Karren Cave

1. **That Council note the advice from Council's Heritage Advisor, Mr Michael Edwards, regarding the 2017 Stone Hut Conservation Management Plan for the Stone Hut at the Cowra POW site.**

2. **That Council endorse the current Stone Hut Conservation Management Plan dated 20 February 2017, prepared by Carste Studio Pty Ltd Conservation and Heritage Consultants, noting the comments from Council's Heritage Advisor Michael Edwards.**

3. **That Council supports the pursuit of funding sources to continue the restorative work at the Stone Hut.**

CARRIED

5 LATE REPORTS

5.1 Councillor Information Request

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM
Seconded: Cr Cheryl Speechley

That council note the responses provided to questions raised after the General Committee meeting agenda was published.

CARRIED

6 NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nil.

7 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nikki Kiss OAM
Seconded: Cr Tony Horton

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:

8 CONFIDENTIAL DIRECTOR-INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS

8.1 Acquisition of Land - Binni Creek Road - Lot 4 DP 720563

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act, 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 information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.

CARRIED

3 MAYORAL MINUTE

3.1 Mayoral Minute - Rural & Regional Health

File Number: D26/746

Author: Paul Smith, Mayor

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That Council notes the release of the LGNSW's "Caring for our Regions" Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health, which outlines coordinated advocacy priorities to address critical gaps in healthcare access and outcomes for rural, regional and remote communities;**

2. **That Council recognises that people living in rural, regional and remote areas experience poorer health outcomes, reduced access to primary and specialist care, and shorter life expectancy compared to metropolitan communities, and that these inequities are unacceptable;**

3. **That Council adopts the "Caring for our Regions" Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health as a formal advocacy position of Council;**

4. **That Council undertakes appropriate media and communications opportunities to publicly support the "Caring for our Regions" Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health and strengthen coordinated advocacy with other councils.**

5. **That Council writes to the NSW Minister for Regional Health, Ryan Park MP; the Commonwealth Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health, Emma McBride MP; and the local Member(s) of Parliament (State and Commonwealth), seeking their support for the "Caring for our Regions" Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health and calling for coordinated State and Commonwealth action to improve rural and regional health outcomes.**

6. **That Council notify LGNSW of this Mayoral Minute.**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Mayoral Minute is to present Council with an opportunity to collaborate with councils across New South Wales by endorsing the Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health and participating in a coordinated local government advocacy effort ahead of the NSW State election in March 2027.

Council can contribute to a unified call for State and Commonwealth action to improve access to healthcare and health outcomes for rural and regional communities, including our own.

BACKGROUND

This Mayoral Minute seeks Council's endorsement of Local Government NSW's "Caring for our Regions" Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health. The Recommendation calls on Council to formally adopt the advocacy plan and to advocate directly to the NSW Minister for Regional Health, Ryan Park MP, the Commonwealth Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional

Health, Emma McBride MP, and our local Member(s) of Parliament to support the six priority advocacy asks.
The Recommendation is strategic in nature, does not commit Council to additional operational service delivery, and seeks to strengthen coordinated local government advocacy to improve access to healthcare for rural, regional and remote communities.

Communities in rural, regional and remote NSW face persistent and systemic challenges in accessing essential healthcare services. These challenges include chronic workforce shortages across general practice, nursing, allied health and mental health, the closure or bypass of rural maternity services, limited access to patient transport, and inadequate availability of aged care and ageing in place supports.

For Cowra Council, insufficient State and Commonwealth investment in our local rural and regional health services means that:

- Cowra residents have long waits to see GPs
- Cowra suffers a lack of transport to regional health services and specialists
- The Emergency Department in Cowra Hospital shoulders the excess from the GPs, putting additional strain on their staff and facilities.

Over recent years, these issues right across NSW have been examined through multiple parliamentary inquiries into rural and regional health. Councils across NSW have actively engaged in these processes, providing submissions, evidence and case studies that highlight the real world impacts on communities and the growing pressure on councils to intervene where other services are unavailable.

Despite the volume of inquiries and recommendations, many of the underlying challenges remain unresolved. The Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health builds on this extensive body of inquiry and advocacy work.

LGNSW's "Caring for our Regions" Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health identifies six priority areas requiring urgent government action:

1. Strengthening the regional health workforce;
2. Establishing a GP guarantee for rural and regional communities;
3. Reimbursing councils for filling health service gaps;
4. Funding patient transport as core health infrastructure;
5. Restoring safe, local maternity care; and
6. Investing in community-based aged care and ageing in place.

The plan is designed to support coordinated advocacy by the local government sector and to seek meaningful, sustained investment from the NSW and Commonwealth Governments. This Mayoral Minute provides a mechanism for Council to formally support the plan and advocate for improved healthcare access and outcomes for its community.

ATTACHMENTS

1. "Caring for our Regions" – LGNSW's Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health ⇩

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW



"Caring for our regions"

A Six Point Action Plan on RURAL & REGIONAL HEALTH

PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

Communities in rural, regional and remote NSW are facing a crisis in the provision of essential healthcare services. Residents in these areas have poorer health outcomes and face significant challenges in accessing health and hospital services compared to people living in metropolitan areas.[1]

Shamefully, life expectancy for people living in the bush is about 3 years less than those in the city[2].

It is completely unacceptable that someone's postcode will determine their access to essential healthcare services.

For too long, councils have been stepping in to fill the void for their communities.

ONE VOICE FOR COUNCILS

As the peak body representing the local government sector, LGNSW is advocating for the meaningful implementation of all 44 recommendations from the 2022 report of the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into rural and regional healthcare. But the time for inquiries and reports is over. Our communities need and deserve real action to address this crisis.

That is why LGNSW is fighting hard for this six point action plan and stands ready to work with the State and Federal Governments to deliver better health outcomes for our communities.

Darcy Byrne

Mayor Darcy Byrne
President LGNSW

[1] NSW Ministry of Health. (2023). NSW Regional Health Strategic Plan 2022–2032
[2] NSW Ministry of Health. (n.d.). Regional health. HealthStats NSW. Retrieved April 30, 2026

LGNSW'S SIX POINT ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTHCARE CRISIS



1. Strengthen the regional health workforce

The NSW Government must establish a Regional Health Workforce Investment Package, with $440 million over four years, to address systemic workforce shortages across general practice, specialist care, nursing, allied health and particularly mental health services in rural, regional and remote NSW.



2. A GP guarantee

In a country as wealthy as ours, it is unacceptable that in parts of rural, regional and remote NSW accessing a GP is nearly impossible. A GP guarantee is needed, requiring targeted investment in regional training pathways and recruitment and retention incentives, and long-term workforce sustainability. LGNSW calls for a $200 million investment over four years to expand regional GP training, support recruitment in hard-to-fill locations, and ensure consistent access to primary care in under-serviced communities.



3. Reimburse councils for filling the health gaps

The NSW Government must establish a rural, regional and remote health reimbursement scheme to compensate councils for costs incurred in supporting access to local healthcare. LGNSW calls for a $20 million program over four years to reimburse councils that are forced to redirect funding from core infrastructure and community services to support access to local healthcare.



4. Fund patient transport as core health infrastructure

The NSW Government must recognise patient transport as core health infrastructure. LGNSW calls for a $150 million investment over four years to provide sustainable funding for community transport services and integrated health and transport planning to improve access to care across rural, regional and remote NSW.



5. Safe, local maternity care

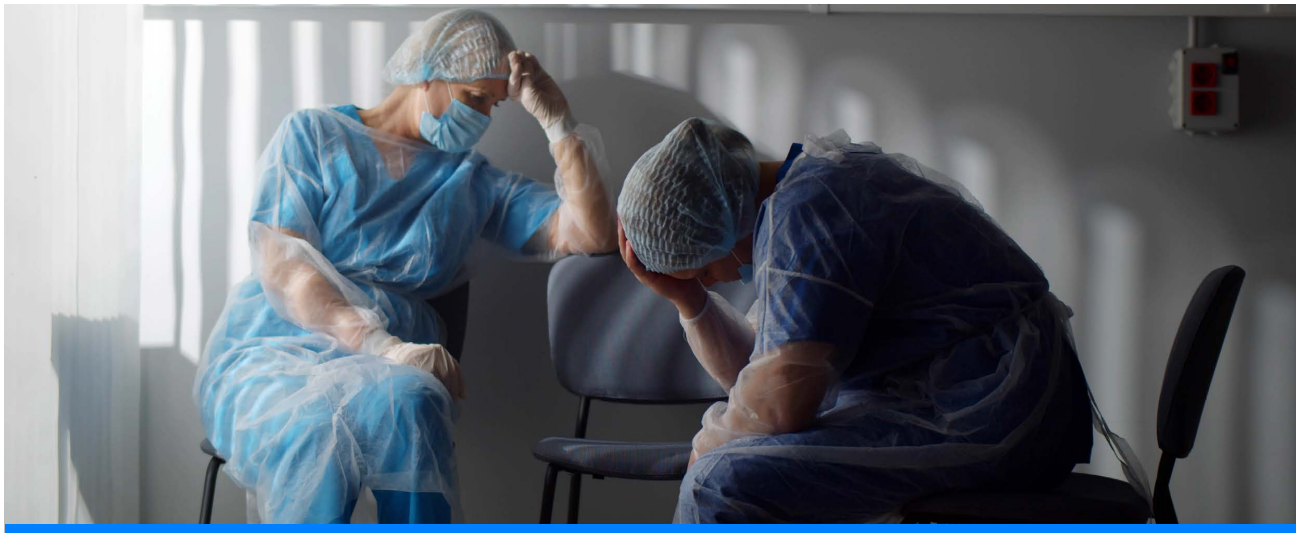
The NSW Government must reverse the decline in rural birthing services and restore safe, local maternity care. This requires targeted investment of $120 million over four years to protect and rebuild rural birthing units and expand midwife-led continuity of care and culturally safe maternity models, including for Aboriginal women and communities.



6. Invest in community-based aged care and ageing in place

The NSW Government needs to work with the Commonwealth to establish a Rural and Regional Aged Care Transition Fund, with $250 million over four years, to:

- expand council-delivered supports for ageing in-place, including in-home care and community-based services in under-serviced regions;
- support transitional care models that reduce hospital discharge blockages; and
- enable faster delivery of residential aged care infrastructure in high-need communities.



#1 STRENGTHEN THE REGIONAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

PROBLEM

Access to health care in rural, regional and remote NSW is fundamentally constrained by a persistent shortage of health professionals. Workforce gaps extend across general practice, specialist care, nursing, allied health and mental health, limiting service availability and placing unsustainable pressure on existing staff.

Health worker attraction and retention is hindered by a combination of structural and lifestyle barriers. These include a shortage of affordable housing, limited access to childcare, and a lack of employment opportunities for partners.

Geographic isolation, limited transport connectivity and professional isolation further reduce the attractiveness of regional practice. At the same time, heavy workloads, reliance on locums and limited career pathways contribute to burnout and high turnover.

While targeted incentives have delivered some improvement, the need for a more sustained and systemic response is needed.

SOLUTION

The NSW Government should establish a Regional Health Workforce Investment Package with additional dedicated investment of $440 million over four years, reflecting the scale and complexity of workforce shortages across rural and regional NSW.

Without this investment, workforce constraints will continue to limit access to care, exacerbate health inequities, and drive avoidable demand across the broader health system.

CASE STUDY

Coolamon Shire Council – health workforce crisis

In 2023, Coolamon Shire Council reported that chronic workforce shortages meant only 22 of its 33 residential aged care beds were operational, despite more than 70 people being on a waiting list for care. After seven years of unsuccessful attempts to recruit registered nurses locally, including offering HECS debt support, council was forced to seek innovative and alternative solutions to keep its aged care facility viable.

To maintain this essential service, council committed over $1M to sponsor 4 overseas nurses and 14 Care service employees, provide training, cover visa and legal costs and construct workforce accommodation. This financial support is continuing with an intended transition into permanent residencies for the overseas workforce and the associated ongoing costs. This case highlights both the severity of regional health workforce shortages and the unsustainable expectation that councils will fund and deliver solutions well beyond their formal responsibilities.

Local Government NSW



#2 A GP GUARANTEE

PROBLEM

People in rural, regional and remote NSW are being denied the most basic element of the health system: access to a General Practitioner close to home. Up to one in five people in some regions are unable to access a GP when they need one. A NSW parliamentary inquiry has heard that more than 40 towns could lose their only GP by the end of the decade.

It is completely unacceptable that communities face weeks-long wait times, are forced to travel hours for primary care, or are left to go without it altogether.

Councils report that GP shortages are a significant and growing challenge in their communities, alongside broader shortages in mental health, nursing and allied health workforces.

GP workforce growth is bypassing the communities that need it most. Training numbers in regional and rural NSW have increased by just 4 per cent in 2025, compared to 17 per cent nationally[3], widening an already unacceptable gap in access to care. In some communities, GPs are continuing to practice well beyond typical retirement age due to the absence of successors.

SOLUTION

A GP guarantee, backed by targeted investment in regional training pathways and incentives, would ensure doctors are trained and retained in the communities that need them most. This requires a dedicated investment of $200 million over four years to expand regional GP training, support recruitment and retention in hard-to-fill locations, and sustain primary care services in under-serviced communities.

Without this investment, communities will continue to lose access to primary care, driving avoidable pressure onto hospitals and deepening health inequities across NSW.

CASE STUDY

Mid-Western Regional Council – Gulgong GP Services

The community of Gulgong was without GPs for 18 months following the closure of its only practice. The return of GP services was the direct result of financial incentives and assistance being provided by the Doctors 4 Mudgee Region initiative. The initiative is backed by Mid-Western Regional Council and three local mining companies.

[3] Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. (2025, January 21). More GPs training in NSW, but rural GP shortfalls show state investment needed.



#3 REIMBURSE COUNCILS FOR FILLING THE HEALTH GAPS

PROBLEM

More than 20 percent of regional and rural councils are stepping in and funding health services where state and federal governments are neglecting their obligation. This includes subsidising running costs of medical facilities, providing health infrastructure, supporting workforce housing and delivering transport assistance.

While councils are not responsible for funding health services, they have little choice if they want to ensure their communities can access critical care. This diverts limited resources away from essential local infrastructure and services.

Often, these are the smallest and most remote councils, least able to afford these additional costs. Yet without council intervention, communities would go without basic health services. This cost-shift embeds structural inequity in both local government finances and regional access to health services.

SOLUTION

The NSW Government must establish a rural and regional health reimbursement scheme to compensate councils for this expenditure. LGNSW advocates for a $20 million program over four years to reimburse councils that are forced to redirect funding from core infrastructure and community services to support local health access.

Without appropriate reimbursement, funds that are desperately needed for libraries, roads, playgrounds and sports fields will continue to be diverted to fund medical services that are the responsibility of State and Federal Governments.

CASE STUDY

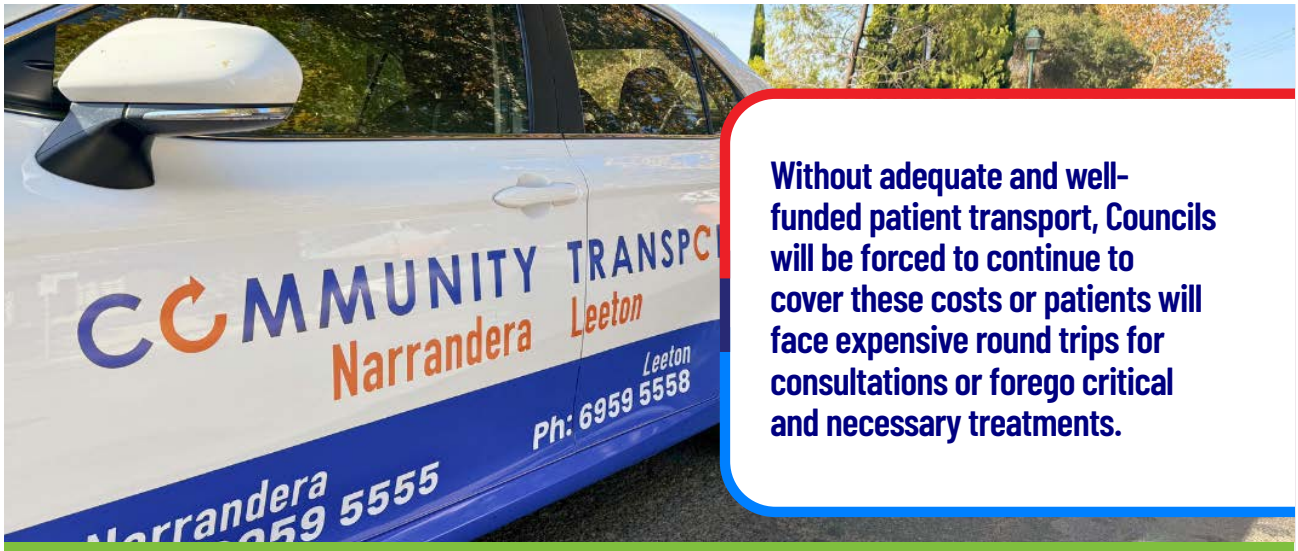
Bogan Shire Council – Medical Centre in Nyngan

Bogan Shire Council has taken on the responsibility for establishing, operating, and funding the only Medical Centre in Nyngan for the last nine years.

Recognising market failure and with an impending crisis in local primary healthcare on the retirement of existing doctors, the accredited practice was established to avoid a critical lack of locally accessible primary, allied and specialist healthcare services.

The services offered have grown since 2017, with two building extensions and the practice now has 3,400 active patients, with a local population of around 2,400, indicating that it services the regional community beyond Bogan Shire LGA.

The practice is well managed and operational costs are contained. However, annual expenditure increasingly outweighs income from patient fees, meaning that the practice is considerably subsidised by over $600,000 per year from Council's other revenue including property rates. The main item of expenditure is fees associated with securing locum doctors, including housing, vehicles and travel.



Without adequate and well-funded patient transport, Councils will be forced to continue to cover these costs or patients will face expensive round trips for consultations or forego critical and necessary treatments.

#4 FUND PATIENT TRANSPORT AS CORE HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

PROBLEM

In rural, regional and remote NSW, access to health care is determined by access to transport. For many residents, particularly older people, people with disability and those on low incomes, the absence of reliable transport makes timely care effectively unreachable. This means missed appointments, delayed treatment, and avoidable pressure on hospitals, emergency departments and ambulance services.

The scale of this challenge is significant. In 2023–24, more than 99,000 travel assistance claims were approved under the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS), an increase of 21% from the previous year[4]. While IPTAAS provides partial reimbursement for travel, it does not provide transport. For residents without access to a vehicle or driver, the scheme is effectively inaccessible. Transport barriers lead people in rural and remote areas to delay primary care and rely more heavily on hospital services, contributing to avoidable pressure on the health system.

Councils are stepping in to fill this gap, operating community transport services that are often the only way residents can attend essential medical appointments. Yet the NSW Government does not fund these services as core health infrastructure. Instead, community transport providers rely on fragmented Commonwealth and State programs that fail to meet the true cost of delivery and restrict services through inflexible eligibility rules.

SOLUTION

The NSW Government must:

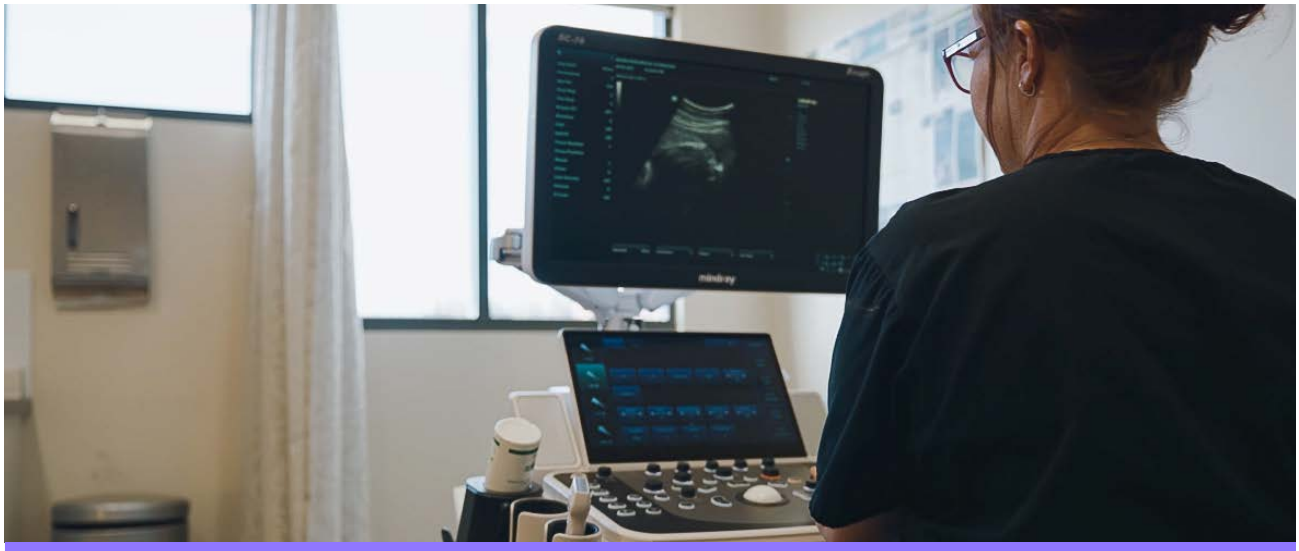
- recognise and fund patient transport as core health infrastructure in rural, regional and remote NSW. This requires a dedicated investment of $150 million over four years to provide sustainable, index-linked funding for community transport in regional and rural areas; and
- integrate transport and health planning to improve coordination and access.

CASE STUDY Narrandera Shire Council

Narrandera Shire Council – Community Transport service

Narrandera Shire Council provides community transport to residents of the Narrandera and Leeton Shires, funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Programmes (Department of Health and Ageing) and the Community Transport Program (Transport for NSW) and supported by both councils. This service is provided to residents aged 65 years and over (or 50 years and over who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander), or those who are transport disadvantaged to attend medical appointments, shopping and social events, both locally and out of town. In 2024-25 the Narrandera Leeton Community Transport service provided 15,171 trips to residents and travelled over 356,455 kilometres, providing services to over 700 active clients. Many of the passengers used the service on a regular basis as their sole means of transport. The service relies heavily on the incredible generosity of 29 volunteer drivers who worked a staggering 7500 hours within the reporting period.

[4] NSW Government. (2024, October 8). Making it easier for regional patients who need to travel for healthcare.



#5 SAFE, LOCAL MATERNITY CARE

PROBLEM

Reduced access to rural maternity services places expectant mothers and their babies at significant risk. Maternity services are not routinely available in rural hospitals, and the ongoing closure and prolonged bypass of birthing units continues to undermine local care. Nationally, Australia lost 41 per cent of its maternity units between 1992 and 2011[5], with closures disproportionately affecting small rural and regional services.

When local birthing facilities close, rural women and their families are often forced to travel long distances or permanently relocate to other towns to start or grow their families. This not only increases financial, social and emotional strain on families, but also contributes to the long term social and economic decline of rural communities as families move to regions with better services.

SOLUTION

The NSW Government must act to reverse the decline in rural birthing units and restore access to safe, local maternity care. This requires targeted investment of at least $120 million over four years to protect and rebuild local services, alongside the expansion of midwife-led, continuity-of-care and culturally safe maternity models, including for Aboriginal women and communities.

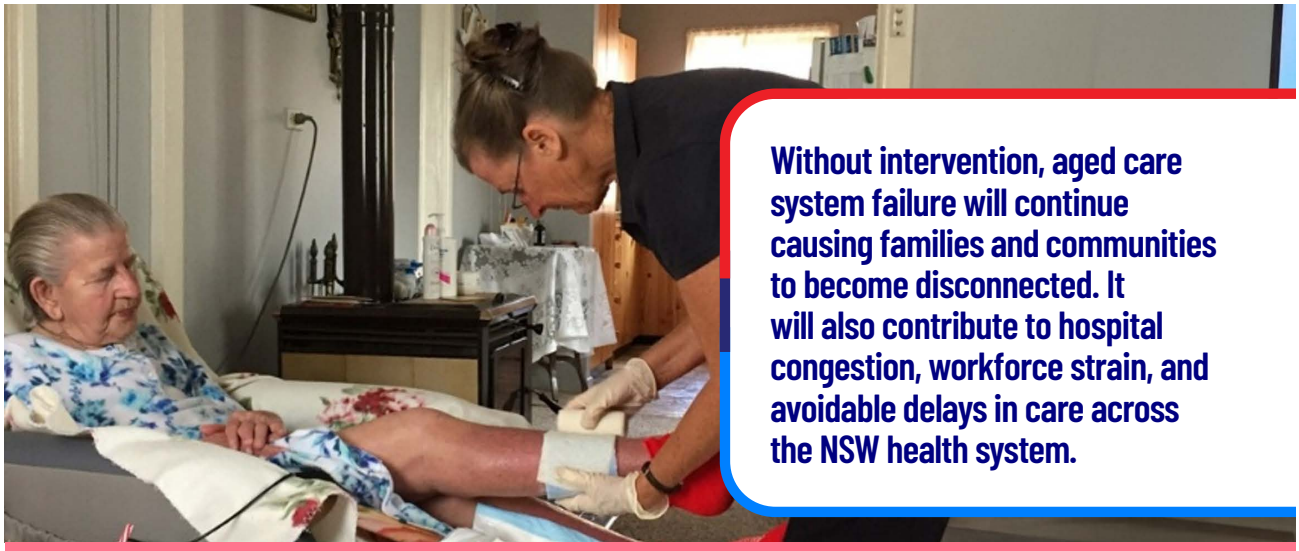
Without decisive action, rural families will continue to be denied the right to give birth safely, close to home.

CASE STUDY Parkes Shire Council

Parkes Shire Council – Local Birthing Unit

The birthing unit at Parkes hospital has been closed since 2019 as it was unable to secure staff. The town's sole obstetrician resigned in January 2025 leaving Parkes without obstetric services. Mayor Neil Westcott reports the community is constantly reassured that Parkes maternity reinstatement is high on the agenda of NSW Health, but a solution does not appear to be any closer.

[5] National Rural Health Alliance. (2025, June 23). Second edition national consensus framework for rural maternity services.



Without intervention, aged care system failure will continue causing families and communities to become disconnected. It will also contribute to hospital congestion, workforce strain, and avoidable delays in care across the NSW health system.

#6 INVEST IN COMMUNITY-BASED AGED CARE AND AGEING IN PLACE

PROBLEM

In around one third of rural and regional communities, local government is the primary or sole provider of a broad range of aged care and community-based services including domestic assistance, community transport, meals, social support programs, respite, home modifications, nursing, personal care and allied health. In some areas councils are even running residential aged care facilities.

Councils are particularly involved where there is a scarcity of service providers and workforce constraints.

Supporting older people to age in place enables older residents to stay connected to established social networks, informal supports, and local services, all of which are critical to wellbeing and independence of the individual but also to the connectedness and wellbeing of the community.

Aging in place also reduces demand on residential aged care and the acute hospital system by enabling earlier and more appropriate support pathways. The lack of access to appropriate aged care in rural, regional and remote communities is placing pressure on the NSW public hospital system, particularly through "bed block" when patients remain in hospital after they are medically cleared for discharge because no appropriate aged care placement or in-home support is available.

SOLUTION

The NSW Government should work with the Commonwealth to establish a Rural and Regional Aged Care Transition Fund, with an investment of $250 million over four years to:

- expand council-delivered ageing in place supports, including in-home care and community-based services in underserviced regions
- support transitional care models that reduce hospital discharge blockages
- enable faster delivery of residential aged care infrastructure in high-need communities.

CASE STUDY Uralla Shire Council

Uralla Shire Council – Providing Aged Care

Uralla Shire Council delivers a range of services for older people and people with disability, spanning entry level support through to more intensive care options. Through Tablelands Community Support, the Council delivers government funded aged care services, including the CHSP, NDIS, and the Support at Home program, and along with Tablelands Community Transport runs a dedicated community transport service that supports many frail aged, disabled and transport disadvantaged residents. The Council's services extend beyond domestic assistance and meals to include personal care, allied health, mobility equipment, home maintenance, in-home respite care, nursing and social support, such as a weekly Elders Aboriginal group. In addition, the council provides short term reablement and facility-based respite and offers access to higher level aged care through its McMaugh Gardens residential aged care facility.

4 GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT

4.1 Community Satisfaction Survey

File Number: D26/752

Author: Paul Devery, General Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the outcomes of the 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the outcomes of the 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey and to highlight both the strong overall performance recorded across a broad range of Council services and facilities and the continued dissatisfaction expressed by residents regarding the condition of rural roads.

BACKGROUND

Objectives

To recap, the principal objectives of the survey are to:

- Measure community satisfaction with and importance of services and facilities provided
- Enable benchmarking of council performance
- Identify and prioritise services/ facilities most in need of attention
- Assess and establish levels of importance for a variety of local issues to residents within the LGA
- Evaluate the consumption of and satisfaction with communications

Executive Summary

The 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey provides a positive picture of community views regarding Cowra Shire Council's performance. The survey found that overall satisfaction with Council's performance in delivering services to the community remained steady and slightly improved on the 2023 mean result, while Cowra's overall score remained clearly above the average recorded by comparable regional NSW councils.

Importantly, Cowra performed above the regional average across all infrastructure measures benchmarked and was also ahead of regional averages across all comparable measures of Council service provision.

While road conditions are a challenge shared by many regional councils, the persistence of dissatisfaction with rural roads shows this remains a core issue for the community and warrants continued and visible attention from Council.

Survey Methodology

The 2026 survey involved interviews with 300 adult residents from a random sample across the Cowra local government area. Interviews were conducted between 16 March and 1 April 2026. Results were weighted to reflect the age and gender profile of the Cowra LGA based on the 2021 Census, with a reported margin of error of plus or minus 5.6 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level. The survey was also designed to enable comparison with previous survey waves and with a broad benchmark set of regional New South Wales councils.

A version of the survey was also made available online to ensure any community member could have their voice heard. Whilst this is not a representative sample and only attracted 76 respondents, the information collected has value and is included in Attachment 2.

Key Outcomes

The survey results indicate that Council is performing well in the eyes of the community across most service areas. Seventeen of the nineteen facilities and services measured recorded a mean satisfaction rating at or above the neutral midpoint of 3.0 out of 5. Overall satisfaction with Council's performance recorded a mean score of 3.37 in 2026, slightly higher than the 2023 result of 3.32, with dissatisfaction also easing compared with the previous survey wave.

However, the results also suggest that a meaningful proportion of residents remain in the neutral category across a number of service areas and in the overall performance rating. This represents both a challenge and an opportunity for Council, because future gains in satisfaction will depend not only on reducing dissatisfaction but also on converting neutral views into more positive perceptions through consistent service delivery, responsiveness and stronger visibility of improvements.

Notwithstanding this overall strength, dissatisfaction with road surfaces remains pronounced, and rural roads continue to stand out as the most persistent source of dissatisfaction in the survey. Satisfaction for rural road surfaces was only 25 per cent on a Top Two basis, compared with 33 per cent for town and village road surfaces, making rural roads the lowest-rated service area measured and reinforcing that this remains an unresolved issue of high importance to residents.

The highest-rated service areas were sewer services, the Regional Library, parks and gardens, the Regional Art Gallery and the Civic Centre.

Satisfaction with customer service also improved, with the mean score rising from 3.73 in 2023 to 3.90 in 2026. Community engagement also showed measurable improvement, with the mean score increasing from 2.89 in 2023 to 3.13 in 2026 and dissatisfaction declining materially. These results suggest that Council's direct service interactions and engagement efforts are being positively recognised by residents.

There were also encouraging signs in the use and perception of community facilities. Satisfaction remained very high across public spaces and cultural facilities, with negligible dissatisfaction across most measures. The Civic Centre recorded a significant rise in satisfaction, while walking and cycling paths, sporting facilities, playgrounds and the Aquatic Centre all showed increased usage compared with the previous survey. This reflects positively on the value residents place on Council's investment in community infrastructure and liveability.

The survey also highlighted the aspects of the Community Strategic Plan that residents see as most important. The highest-rated priorities were advocating for access to adequate health care services and supporting healthy, active lifestyles, developing a safe, vibrant community with clean, welcoming and attractive public places, working to strengthen the local economy, and ensuring access to adequate and connected transport infrastructure and networks. These findings provide useful confirmation that Council's strategic direction is aligned with the issues residents regard as most important to quality of life and the future of the shire.

Benchmark Comparisons

One of the most significant findings from the 2026 survey is the strength of Cowra's performance relative to other rural and regional councils. The benchmarking analysis, against 32 councils, shows that Cowra was above average across all five infrastructure measures included in the external comparison.

In relation to public spaces and cultural facilities, Cowra's results were again highly favourable. The survey found Cowra to be nearly the best on record for walking and cycling paths, at or above average on comparable public space measures, somewhat ahead of the regional average for the Civic Centre and well ahead for the Regional Art Gallery. These are excellent comparative results and reinforce the strength of Council's investment in facilities that contribute to quality of life, community identity and local pride.

Benchmarking of waste management, water and sewer services was similarly strong. Cowra was best-in-class for sewer services and general litter control. While recycling service was noted as slightly below average, this was within a generally high-performing peer field. These results present a strong comparative position for Cowra Shire Council among its peer group.

Areas for Ongoing Attention

While the report is positive overall, the survey also identifies areas where community expectations remain high and continued improvement will be important. Most notably, dissatisfaction with road surfaces remains the clearest service challenge emerging from the survey, with rural roads standing out as the most significant and persistent concern. The condition of rural roads recorded the lowest satisfaction level of all measures tested, and rural road maintenance remains an issue of very high importance to residents.

Town and village roads also continued to perform poorly, but the survey results indicate that dissatisfaction is most acute in relation to the rural road network. It is worth noting that Cowra still performed above benchmark averages on the comparable infrastructure measures, which suggests this is a systemic issue across regional councils rather than one unique to Cowra. Even so, the strength and persistence of community concern means rural road maintenance and renewal should remain a central priority for Council.

Footpaths also emerged as an area of concern, with importance increasing while satisfaction declined. Council communication was also slightly lower than in 2023. These findings do not detract from the overall strength of the result, but they do provide a useful guide for future service planning, advocacy and communication efforts.

Conclusion

The 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey confirms that Cowra Shire Council is performing strongly across a wide range of services and facilities and, importantly, is doing so at a level that compares very favourably with other rural and regional councils.

The results show sound overall satisfaction, very strong performance in a number of highly visible service areas, improved customer service and engagement outcomes, excellent benchmark comparisons across infrastructure, community facilities and services, and a clear indication of the priorities residents see as most important within the Community Strategic Plan.

In particular, the community placed strongest emphasis on health and active lifestyles, a safe and vibrant community, local economic strength and connected transport infrastructure.

At the same time, the survey makes equally clear that dissatisfaction with rural roads remains the most significant and enduring area of concern for residents.

The survey provides Council with a sound basis to acknowledge the positive results achieved to date while maintaining a clear and sustained focus on improving rural roads, lifting neutral perceptions into satisfaction, and addressing other identified areas for improvement.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

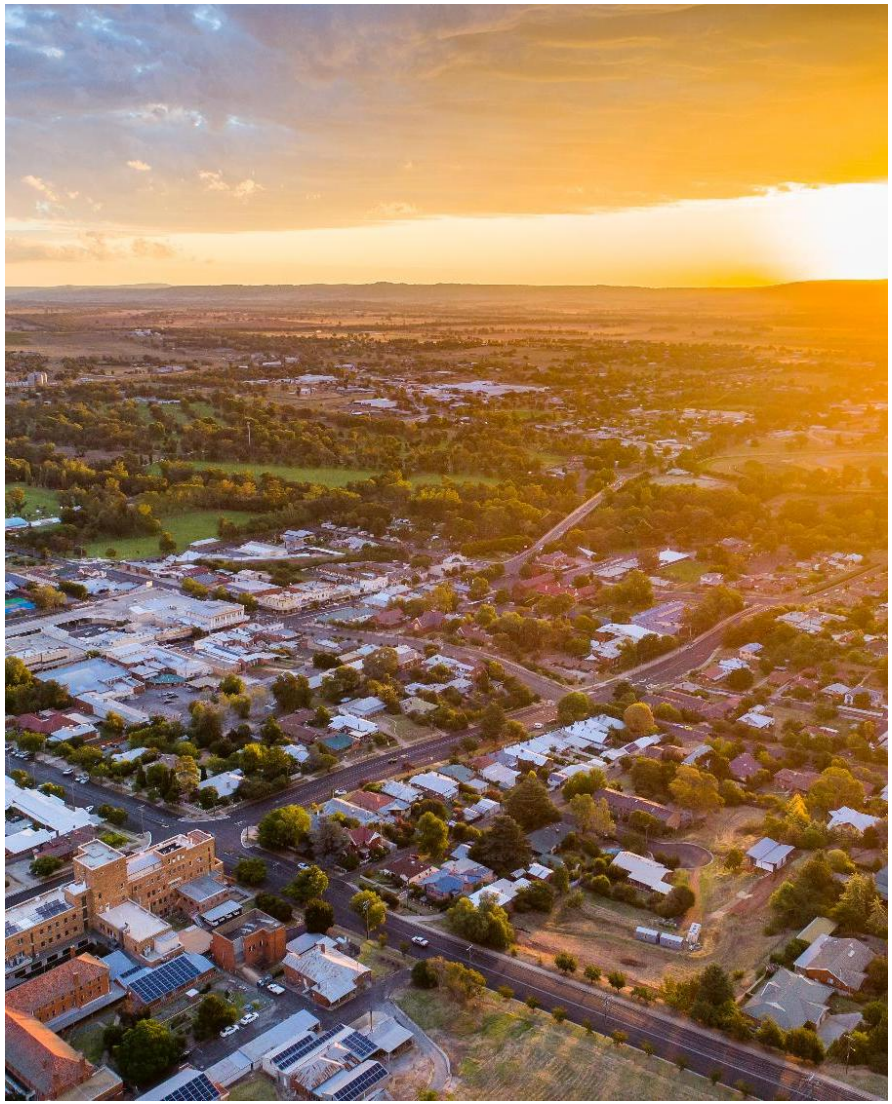
1. Community Satuisfaction Survey 2026 ⇩
2. Results - CATI and Online ⇩

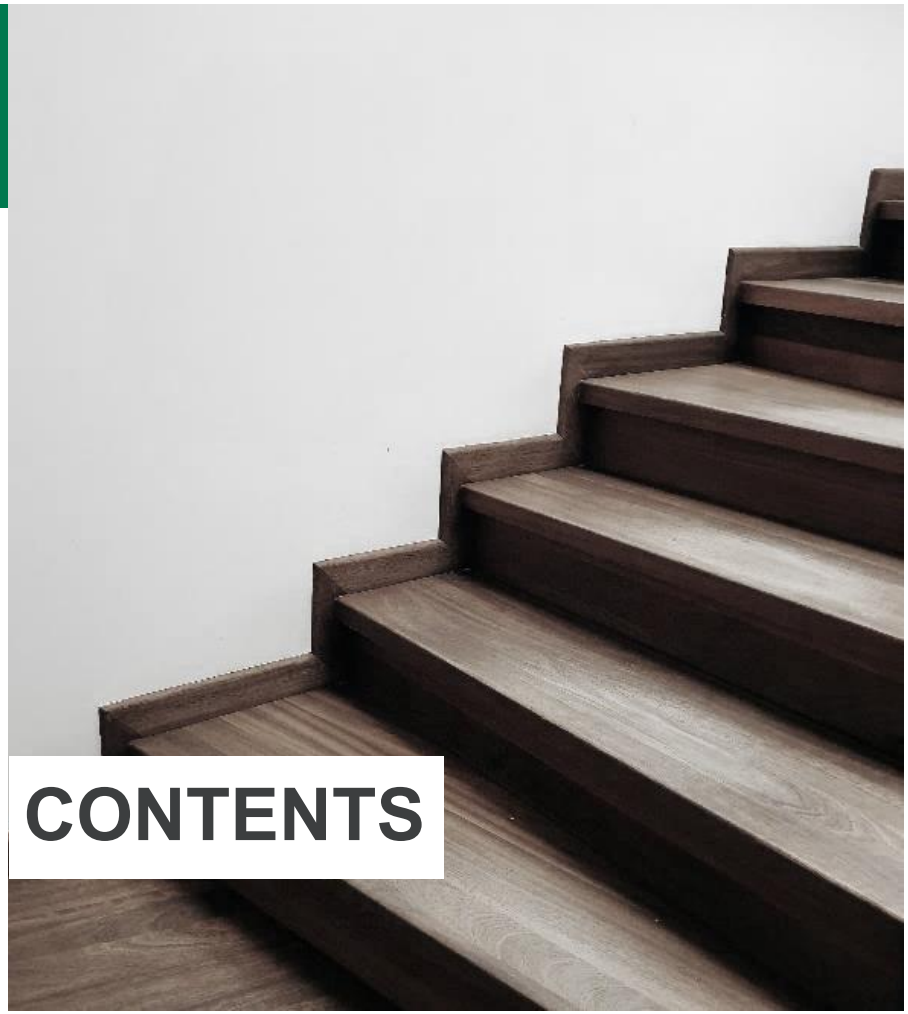
Community Satisfaction Survey 2026

Report of key findings

Taverner RESEARCH GROUP

Cowra Council





CONTENTS

01 Objectives and Methodology

02 Demographics

03 Survey Results

- Infrastructure
- Public spaces and cultural services
- Waste management and water/sewer
- Prioritisation of services and facilities
- Customer services
- Engagement with Council
- Overall satisfaction
- Community strategic plan

04 Key Findings

Research Objectives

This Community Satisfaction Survey tracks Cowra Council's performance in service delivery, identifies priority areas and evaluates Council's communications.

The broad objectives for the Community Satisfaction Survey process are to:

- Rate satisfaction with specific facilities and services, and with overall satisfaction
- Determine the relative importance of a variety of local issues to residents within the LGA
- See how results compare between age, gender, sub-regions etc.
- Compare against previous years' survey results (where possible)
- Benchmark against other regional NSW Councils

3

Methodology

The Community Satisfaction Survey 2026 interviewed **300** adult residents from a random sample across the LGA:

- Interviews were conducted from March 16th to April 1st, 2026, inclusive
- Average interview duration was 16m 24s
- Statistical testing was conducted between 2023 and 2026 results, and across the 2026 results by gender, age, area of LGA live in (Cowra Township v rest of LGA), number of householders, length of time lived in the LGA, ratepayer status, and identifying as with disability. Percentages significantly higher are shown in blue, significantly lower in red.
- Weighted to age/gender profile of the Cowra LGA (ABS 2021 Census)
- Margin of error of +/-5.6% (at 95% confidence level)

4

Reading this report

Statistical Significance

Where differences in this report are classed as **significant**, this implies that they are statistically significant based on independent sample t-scores or other analysis of variation (ANOVA) calculations. In statistical terms, significant differences are unlikely to have been caused by chance alone. Commentary is provided where these differences exist in subsequent sections.

Respondent weighting

As is normal in telephone surveys, the profile of respondents skewed older than the actual population. To correct this and ensure that the views of younger residents were not under-represented, survey results have been post-weighted by age and gender to reflect the actual adult population of the Cowra LGA.

Weightings for this survey vary from a high of 2.29 (for males 18-34) down to 0.53 (for females aged 65+)

Top Two/Bottom Two

This refers to “Top Two” or “Bottom Two” satisfaction or importance scores, on a 1-5 Likert scale (with a score of 4 or 5 being Top Two, 1 or 2 being Bottom Two, and 3 generally meaning neutral or neither).

The Effect of Rounding

Note that where two or more responses have been combined the sum of the combination may be different (+/- 1%) to the sum of the individual items due to rounding. Note also that multiple response questions will generally add to >100%.

Demographic Profile 1



36% Male

64% Female



5% 18-34 years

26% 35-54 years

17% 55-64 years

52% 65+ years



77% Cowra

9% Woodstock

3% Billimari

3% Gooloogong

2% Wattamondara

6% Other areas in LGA



21% One in HH

49% Two in HH

20% 3-4 in HH

10% 5+ in HH



2% Lived in LGA up to 5 years

6% Lived in LGA 6-10 years

9% Lived in LGA 11-15 years

84% Lived in LGA more than 15 years

Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300), **unweighted**

Demographic Profile 2

Identify as living with a disability	
Yes	15%
No	85%
Refused	0%

Ratepayer	
Own/mortgage	86%
Renter	13%
Refused	1%

Have home Internet	
Yes	83%
No	16%
Refused	1%

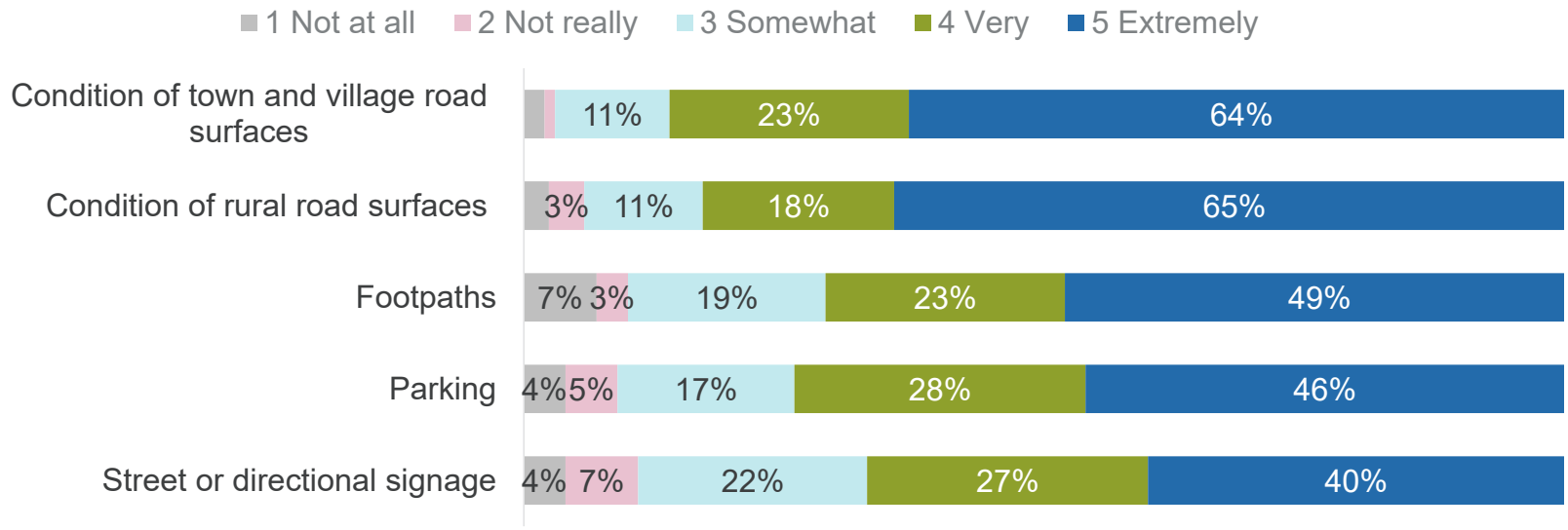
Identify as First Nations	
Aboriginal	7%
Torres Strait Islander	1%
Neither	92%

Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300), **unweighted**


Infrastructure

Infrastructure - Importance

Road quality was classed of primary importance among the five measures tested. However, at least two-thirds of residents classed all five as being Top Two importance

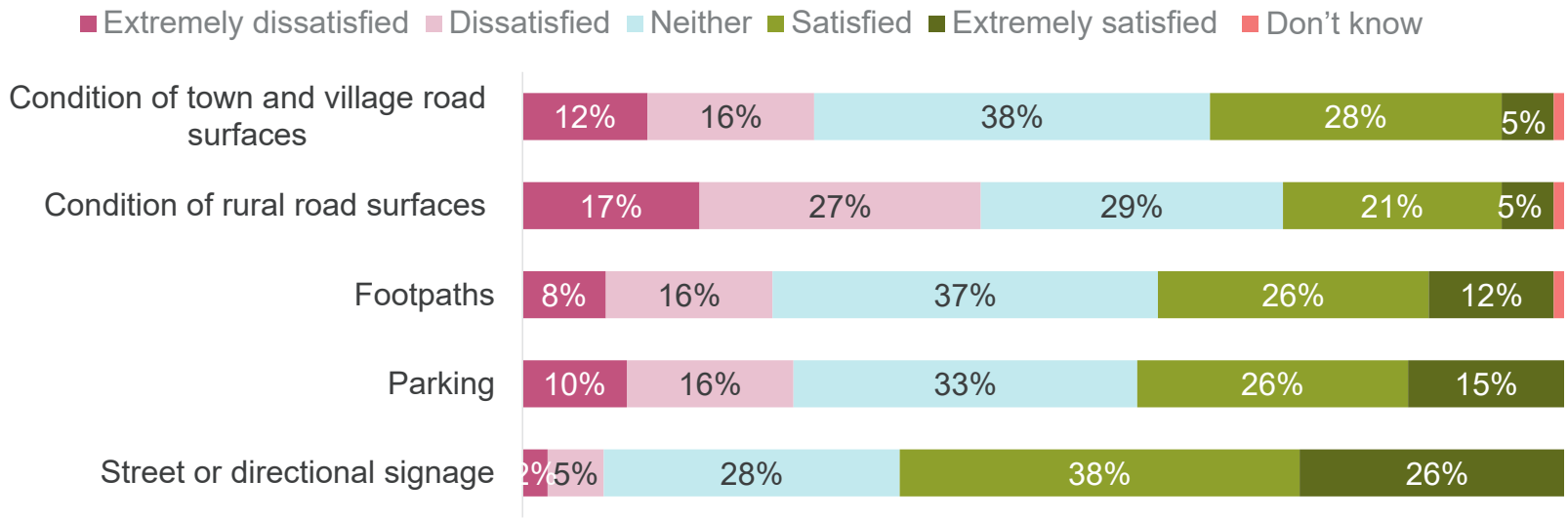


Q1. How important is…to you personally?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

9

Infrastructure - Satisfaction

Residents were happiest with signage (65% satisfied or very satisfied). While satisfaction was relatively low for both town and rural roads, this is common among regional LGAs – see Benchmarks (Slide 13).



Q2. And how satisfied are you with the following services?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

10

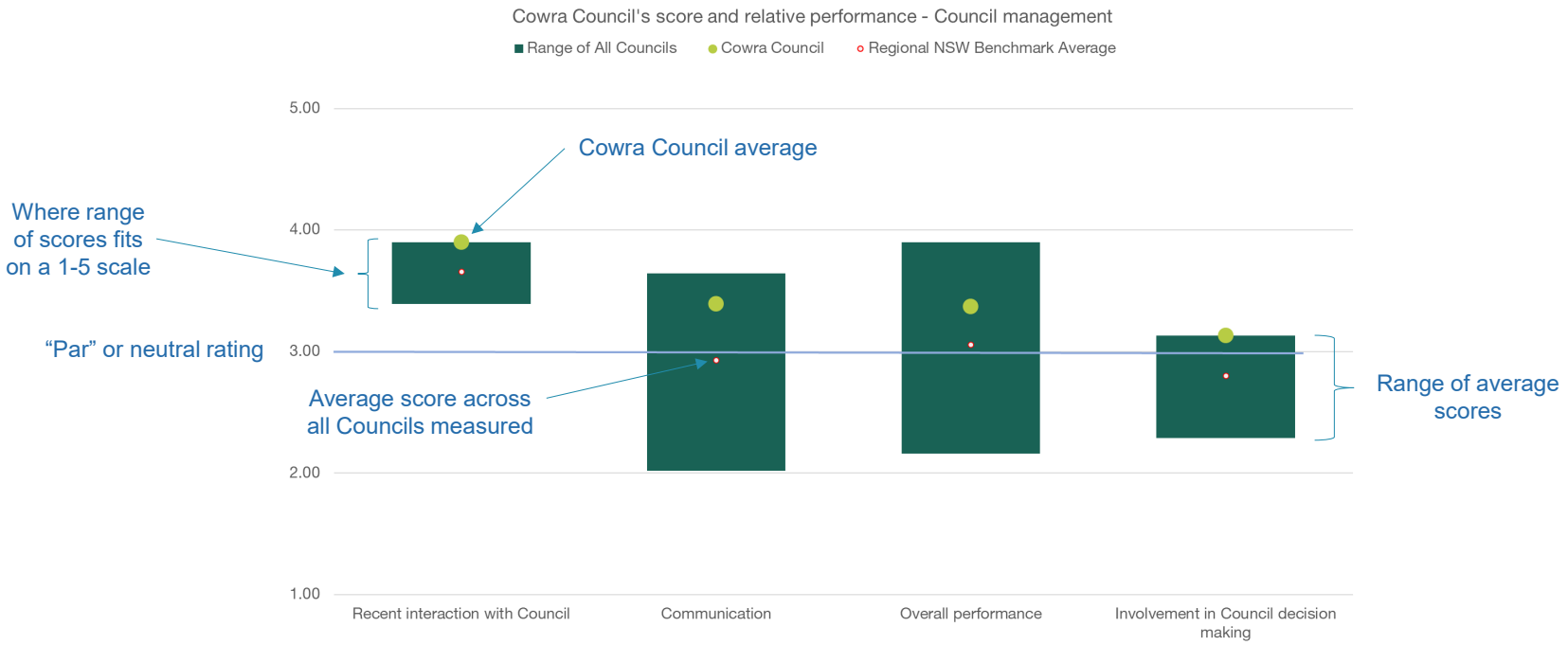
Infrastructure – Top Two

Street or directional signage saw a significant decrease in satisfaction between 2023 and 2026, but also a significant decrease in perceived importance. Footpaths are a potential red flag: rising significantly in importance but falling in satisfaction.

	Importance 2023	Importance 2026	Satisfaction 2020	Satisfaction 2023	Satisfaction 2026
Condition of town and village road surfaces	89%	87%	44%	28%	33%
Condition of rural road surfaces	87%	84%	25%	14%	25%
Footpaths	59%	72%	52%	52%	38%
Parking	76%	74%	NA	47%	40%
Street or directional signage	74%	67%	78%	73%	64%

How to read external benchmarking graphs

These graphs show how Cowra compares with 32 other regional NSW Councils in relation to those facilities and services in common with 4 or more Councils. They include five separate metrics:



12

Infrastructure – External benchmarks

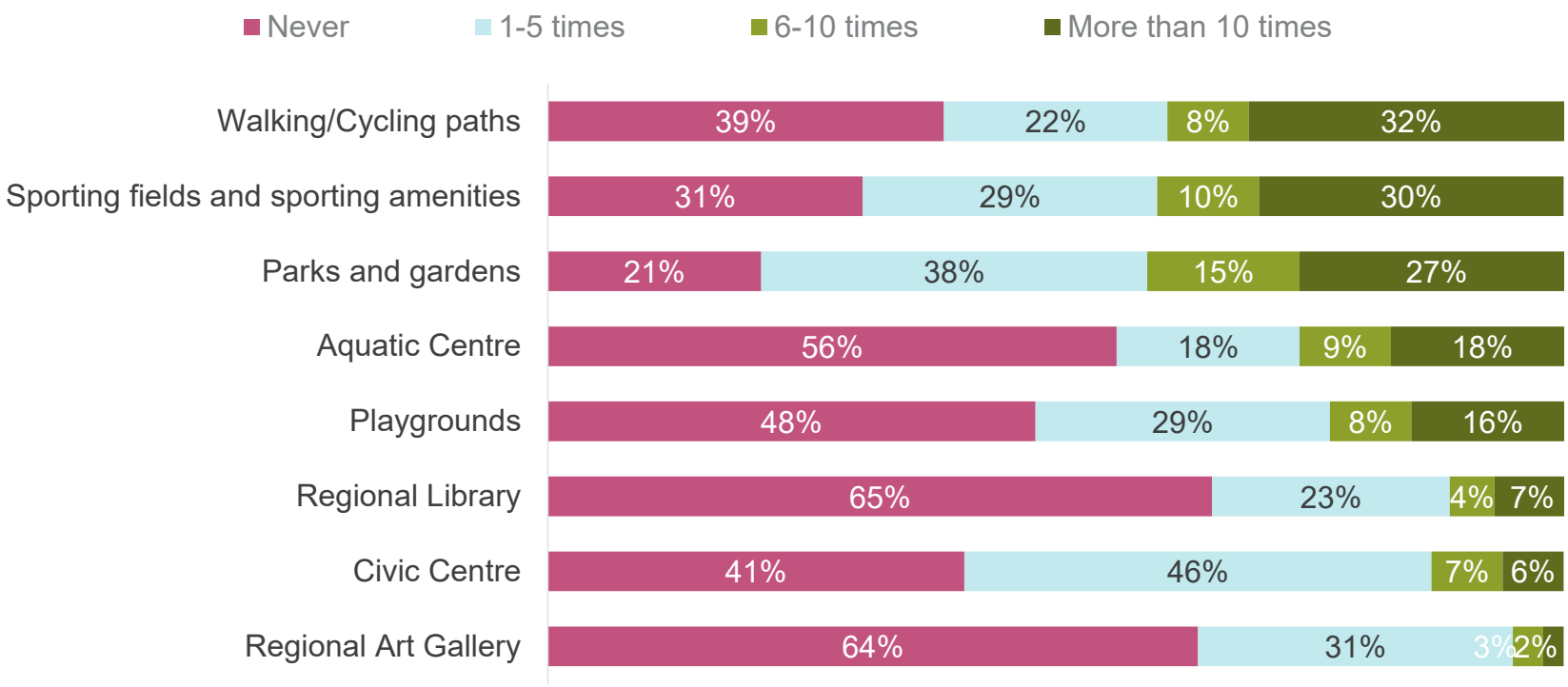
Cowra Council in 2026 was above average across all five infrastructure measures, and best-in-class for Street or directional signage (though with few other regional NSW councils measuring that)



13


Public spaces and cultural facilities

Number of times used in past 12 months

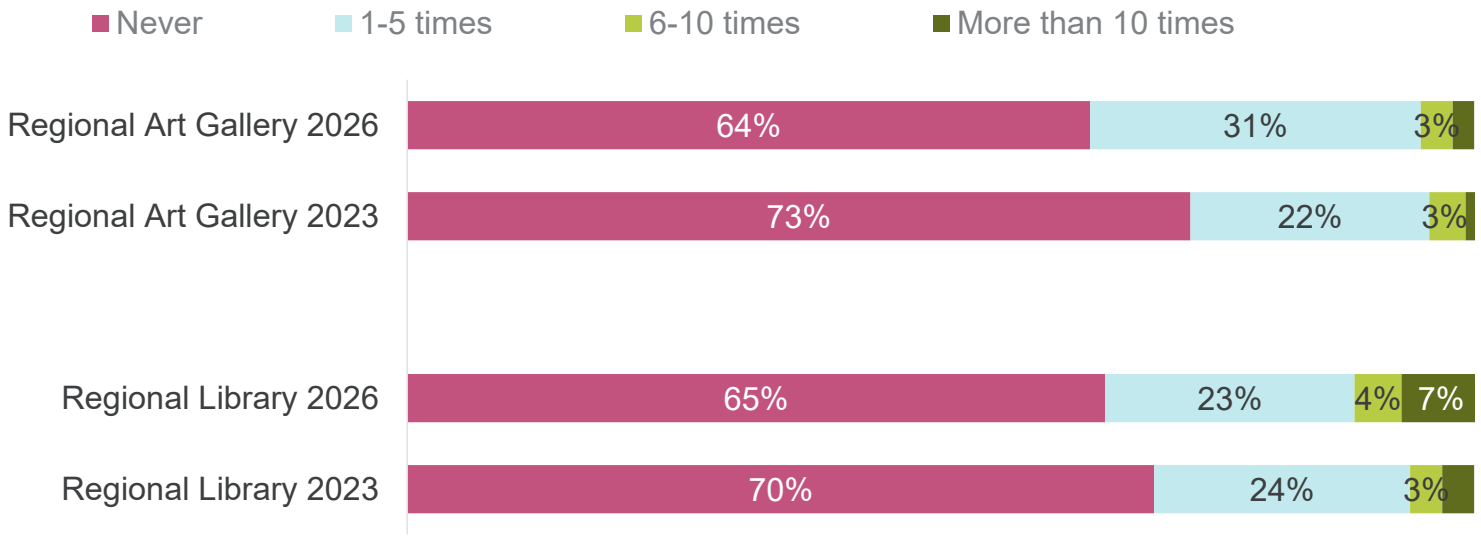


Q3. Can you indicate how many times you have used or attended the following facilities in the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

15

Number of times used in past 12 months

Usage of the Art Gallery increased in 2026, with 36% claiming to have visited in the previous 12 months (up from 27% in 2023). Usage of the Library was (statistically) unchanged

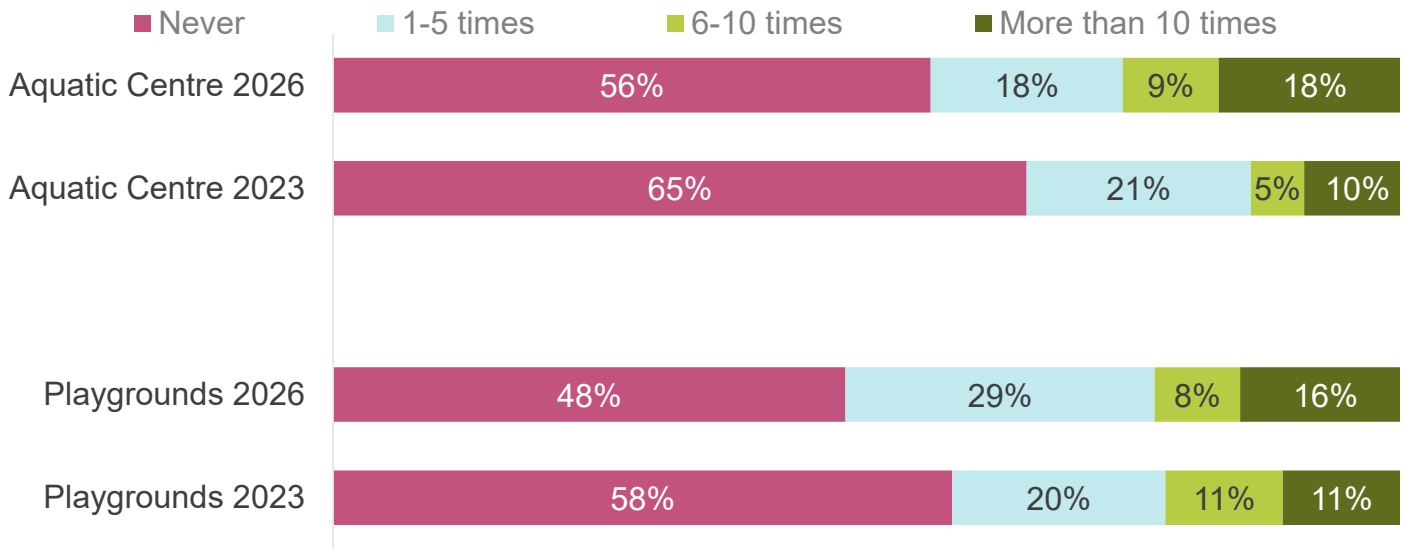


Q3. Can you indicate how many times you have used or attended the following facilities in the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

16

Number of times used in past 12 months

Usage of both playgrounds and Aquatic Centre were up in 2026. In particular, almost twice as many residents said they used the Aquatic Centre “more than ten times” (18% vs. 10%)

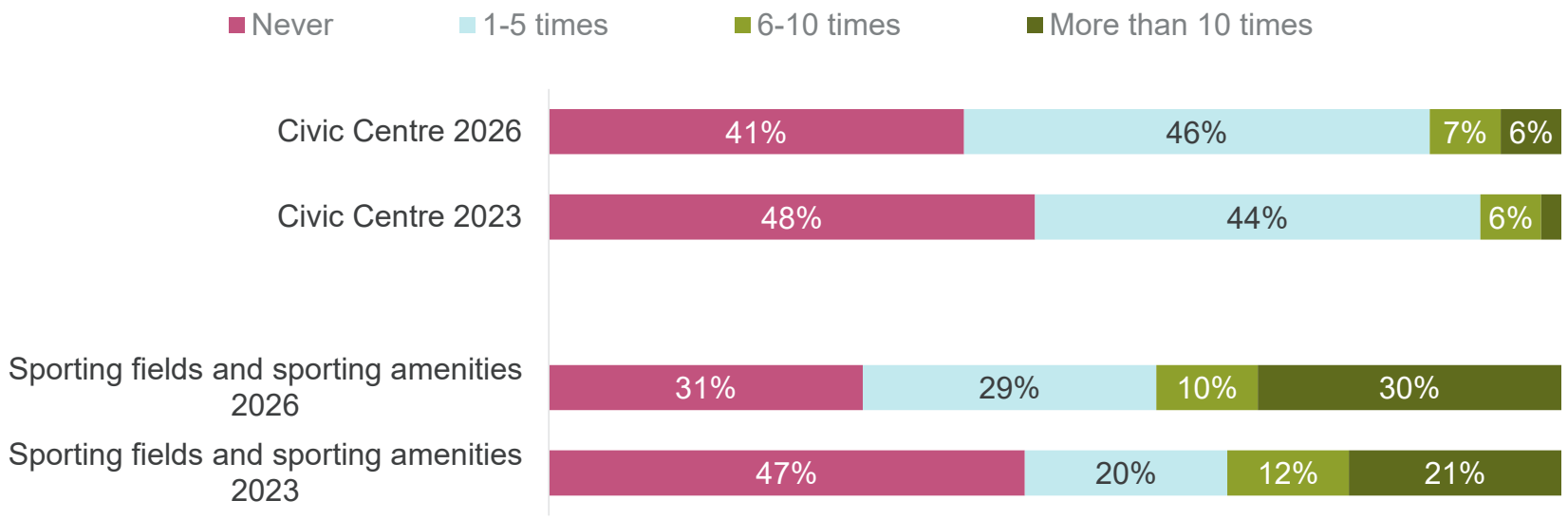


Q3. Can you indicate how many times you have used or attended the following facilities in the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

17

Number of times used in past 12 months

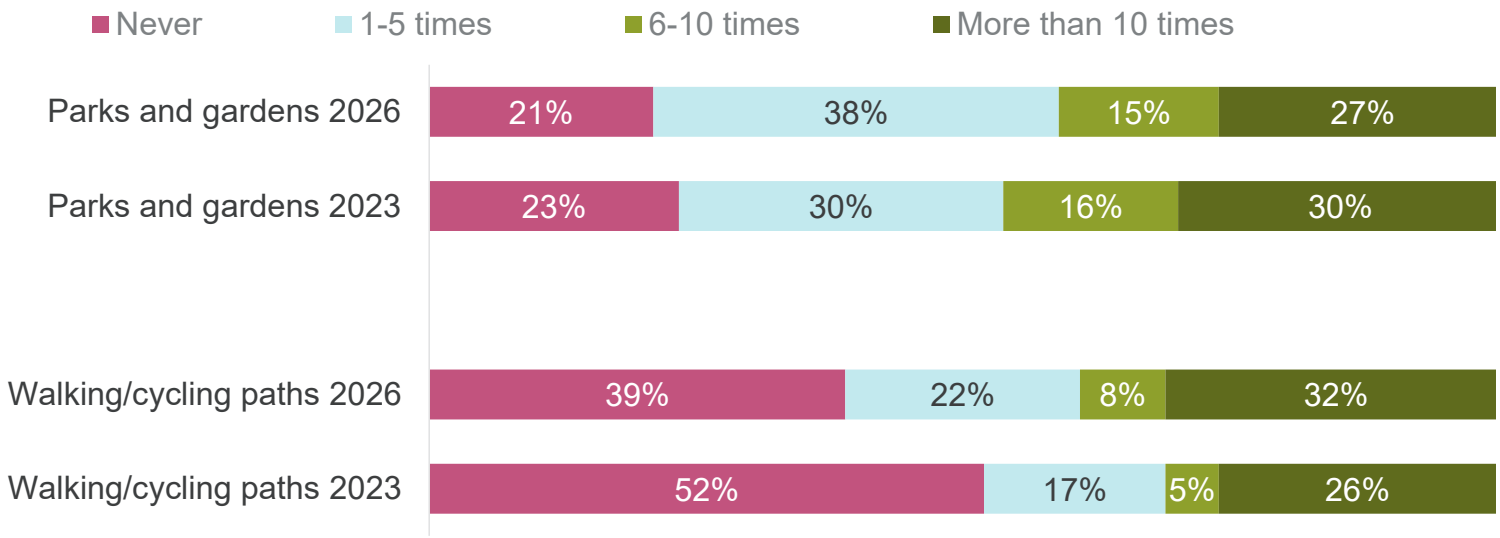
Usage of sporting fields and amenities rose significantly in 2026 – up from 53% to 69%. Visitations to the Civic Centre were largely unchanged.



Q3. Can you indicate how many times you have used or attended the following facilities in the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

Number of times used in past 12 months

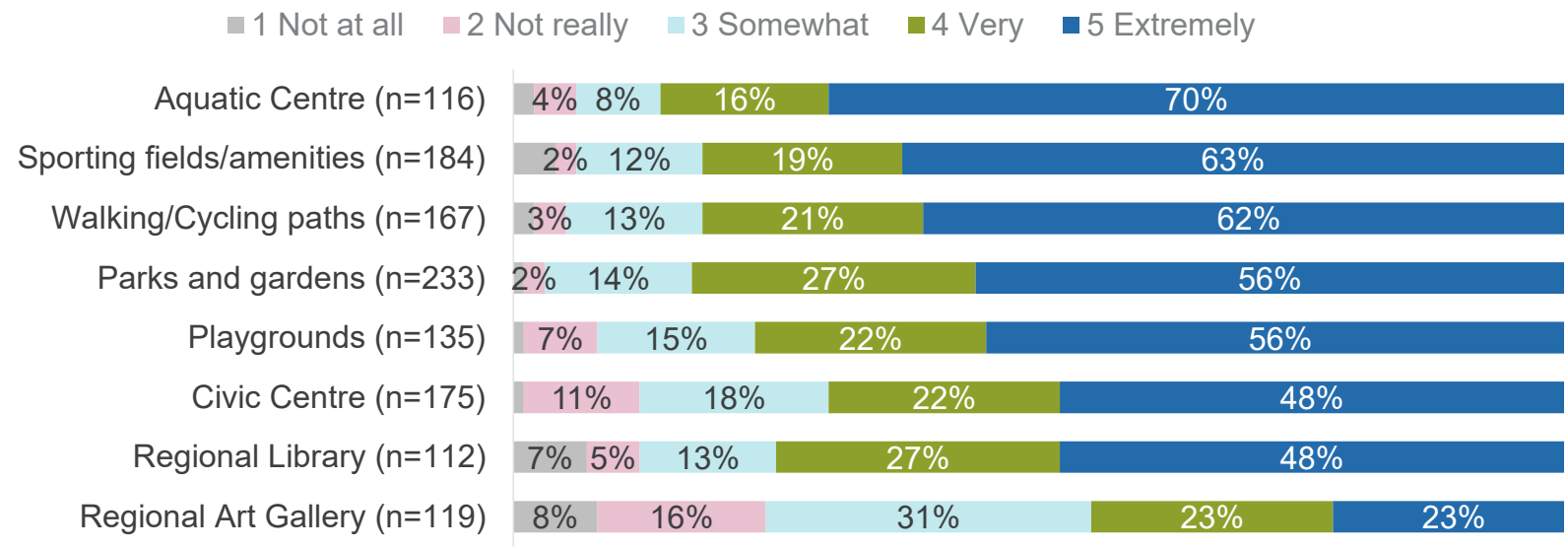
Usage of walking and/or cycling paths rose significantly in 2026, from 48% to 61%. Usage of parks and gardens was unchanged, with close to 80% visiting



Q3. Can you indicate how many times you have used or attended the following facilities in the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

Public spaces & cultural facilities - Importance

With the exception of the Regional Art Gallery, all public spaces/cultural facilities were ranked as "very" or extremely" important by two-thirds or more of respondents. This was led by the Aquatic Centre, sporting fields and walking/cycling paths (with 80+% being Top Two importance)

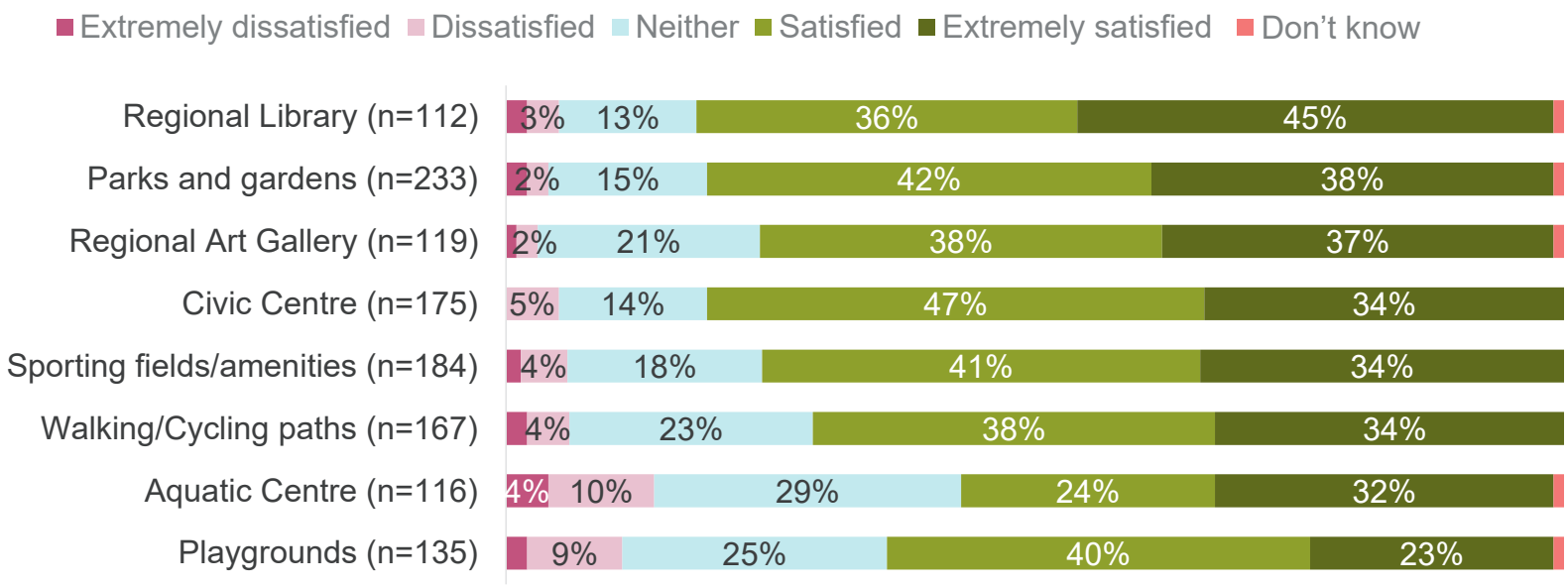


Q4. How important is…to you personally?
Base: All respondents 2026 who used facility in past 12 months

20

Public spaces & cultural facilities - Satisfaction

Satisfaction was extremely high across all public spaces/cultural facilities. Likewise, dissatisfaction levels were negligible across the board (the “worst” being Aquatic Centres at just 14%)



Q5. And how satisfied are you with the following services?
Base: All respondents 2026 who used facility in 12 months

21

Public spaces & cultural facilities – Top Two

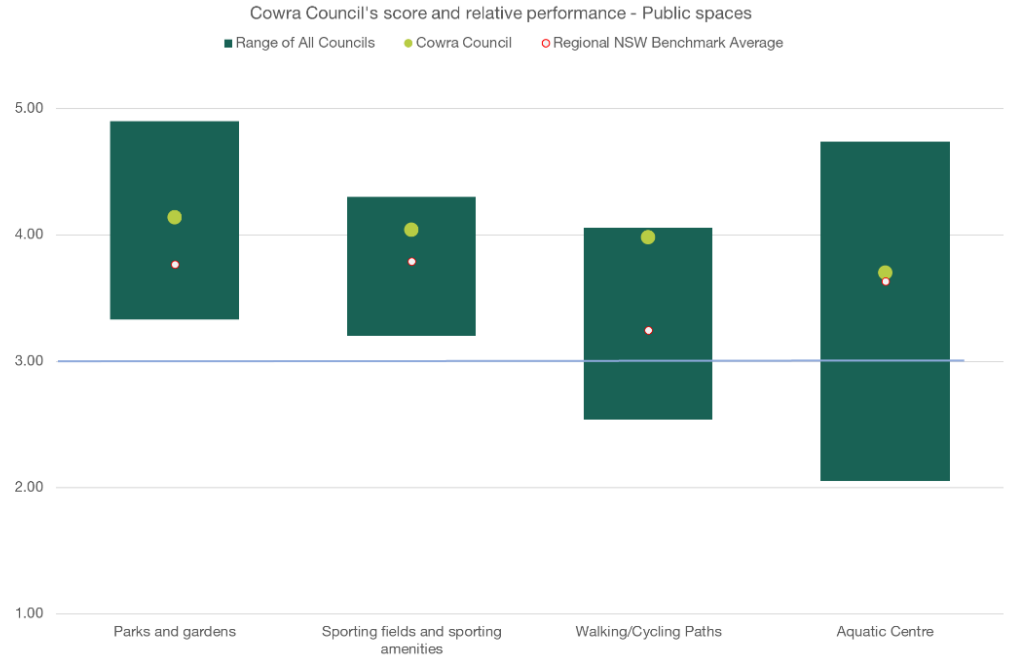
Satisfaction with the Civic Centre rose significantly in 2026 (from 66% to 81%) while that for Art Gallery fell from 86% to a (still high) 75%.

	Importance 2023	Importance 2026	Satisfaction 2020	Satisfaction 2023	Satisfaction 2026
Civic Centre	67%	69%	74%	66%	81%
Regional Art Gallery	62%	46%	83%	86%	75%
Regional Library	69%	75%	82%	76%	81%
Aquatic Centre	84%	86%	75%	67%	56%
Parks and gardens	83%	83%	85%	82%	80%
Sporting fields and sporting amenities	78%	82%	82%	76%	75%
Playgrounds	80%	77%	NA	69%	63%
Walking/Cycling paths	77%	83%	NA	63%	71%

22

Public spaces – External benchmarks

Cowra Council in 2026 was nearly the best on record for Walking/cycling paths, and at or above average for any comparable public spaces' measures



23

Cultural facilities – External benchmarks

Of the cultural facilities that could be compared, Cowra Council in 2026 was somewhat ahead of the regional NSW average for its Civic Centre and well ahead for its Regional Art Gallery

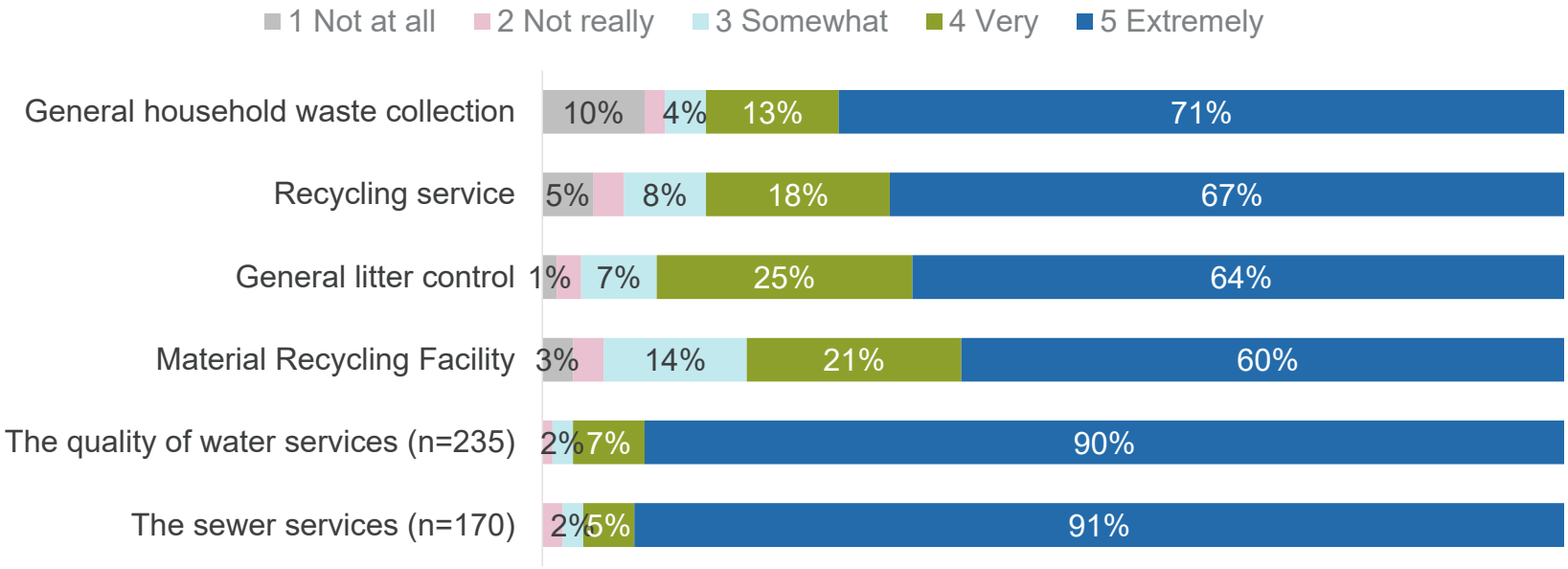


24


Waste management and recycling, water and sewer

Waste and water/sewer - Importance

Predictably importance of water quality and sewer services was paramount. But all six services measured had a Top Two importance score of at least 81%

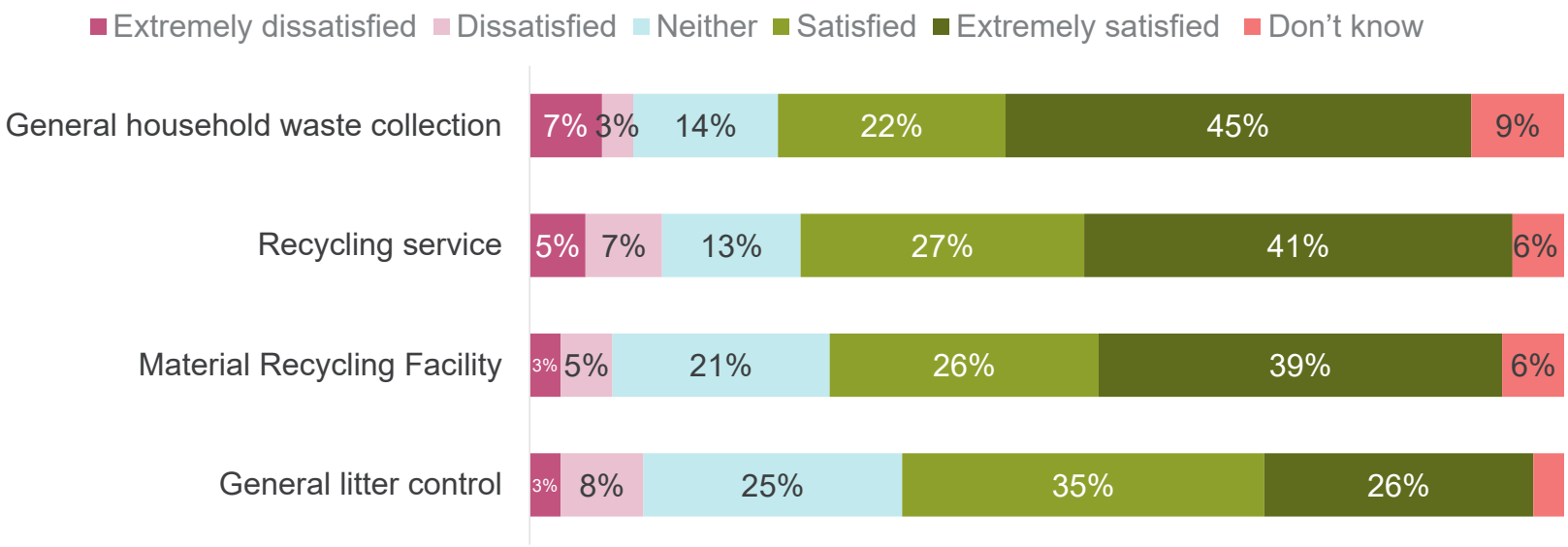


Q6. How important is…to you personally? Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)
Q11. How important is…to you personally? Base: All respondents 2026 with water (n=235) or sewer (n=170)

26

Waste management - Satisfaction

Satisfaction levels for waste management were high across the board, led by a “Top Two” score of 67% for general household waste collection. But none of the services measured had a Top Two score of less than 60% - and maximum dissatisfaction was just 12% (for recycling)

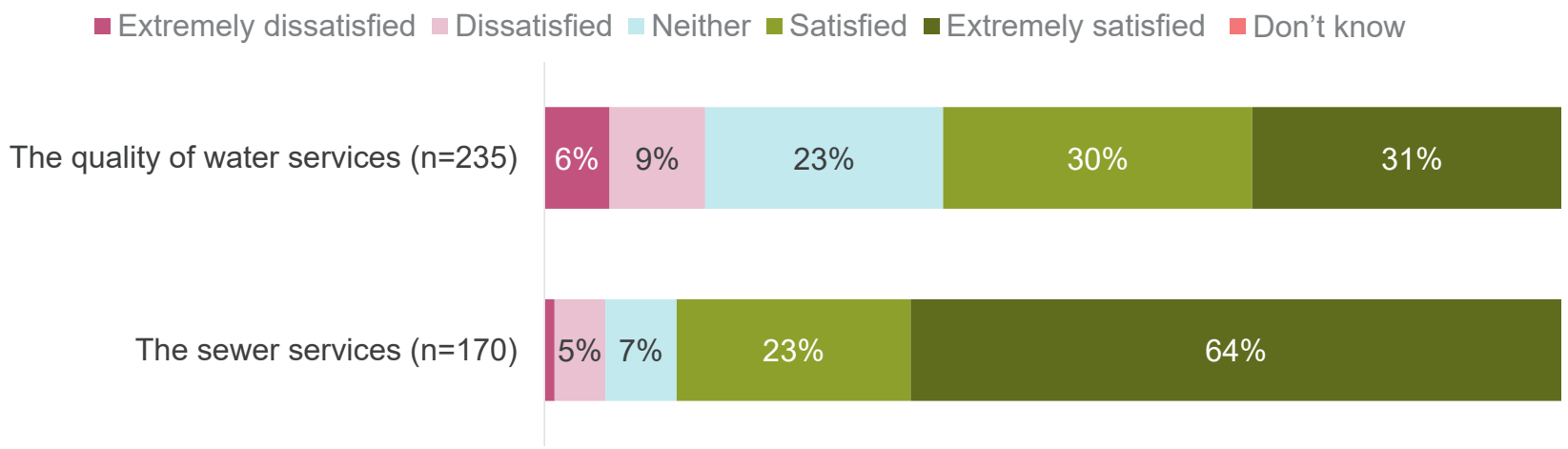


Q7. And how satisfied are you with the following services? Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

27

Water/sewer - Satisfaction

Again satisfaction scores were extremely high, and dissatisfaction minimal



Q12. And how satisfied are you with the following services? Base: All respondents 2026 with water (n=235) or sewer (n=170)

Waste and water/sewer - Top Two

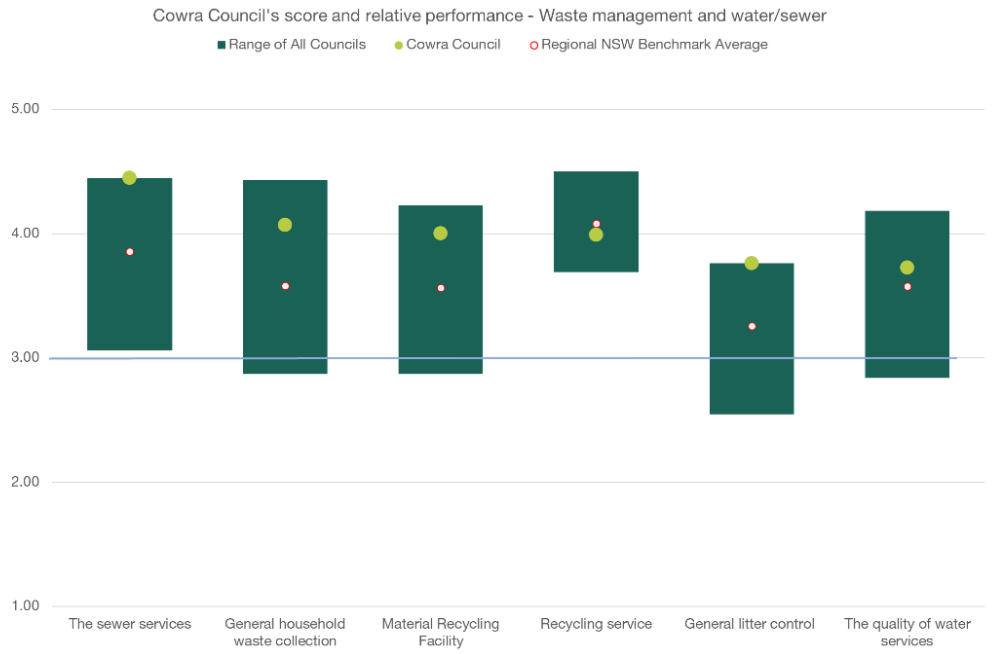
While scores remained high, there were significant decreases in Top Two satisfaction scores for general household waste collection (down 10%), recycling (7%) and quality of water services (11%)

	Importance 2023	Importance 2026	Satisfaction 2020	Satisfaction 2023	Satisfaction 2026
General household waste collection	83%	84%	NA	78%	68%
Recycling service	80%	84%	NA	75%	68%
Material Recycling Facility	75%	81%	NA	67%	65%
General litter control	83%	89%	NA	65%	61%
Quality of water services	94%	96%	49%	73%	62%
Sewer services	96%	96%	58%	90%	87%

29

Waste management and water/sewer benchmarks

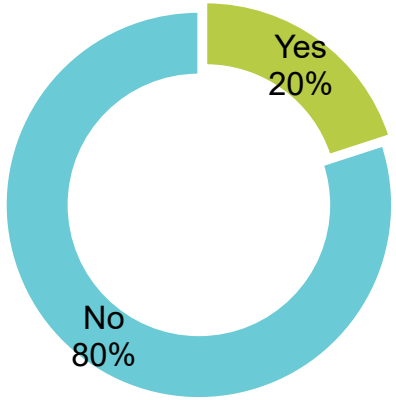
Cowra was best-in-class for Sewer services and General litter control. While being slightly below average for Recycling service, this was a high performing measure among peers



30

Awareness of FOGO

Awareness of FOGO remains low, at just 20%.

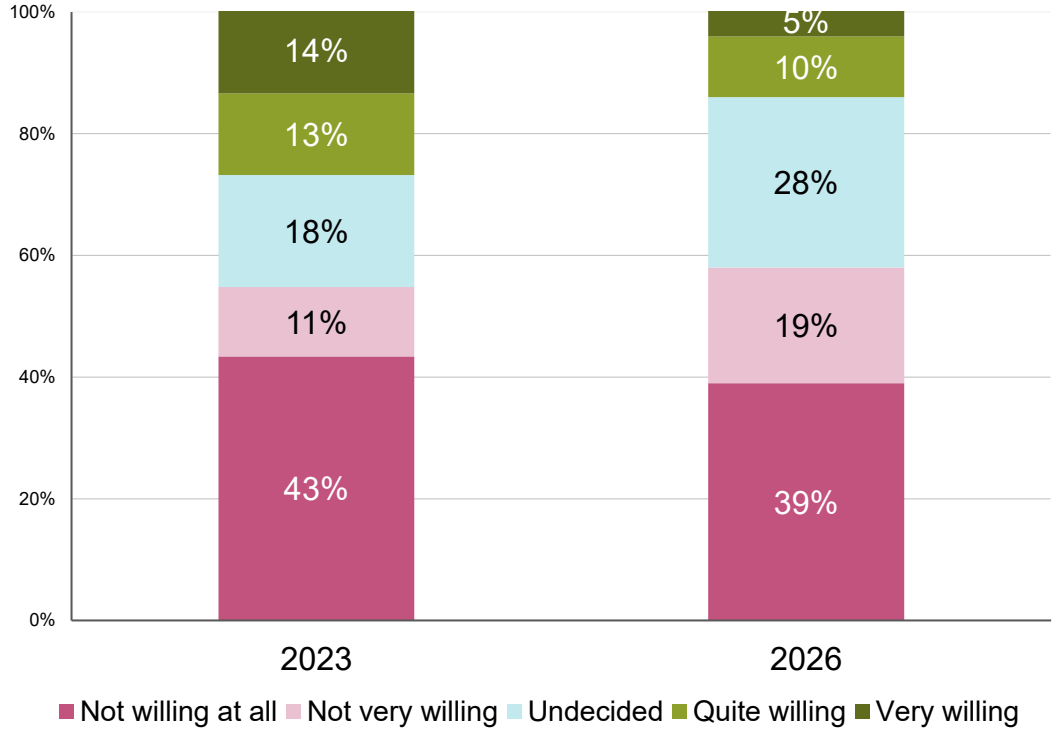


Q8. The NSW Government has instructed all Councils to implement a FOGO – or Food Organics, Garden Organics - collection service for households. This would see food scraps and garden waste diverted from general waste bins and collected separately by Councils to keep them out of landfill. Prior to this call, were you aware that Cowra will be adopting this FOGO system over the next few years?

Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

31

Willingness to pay extra for FOGO



Willingness to pay extra for the FOGO rollout fell significantly, from 27% to 15%. This may reflect cost-of-living pressures (especially noting that the survey took place during a period of highly elevated fuel prices).

Interestingly the proportion undecided rose sharply, from 18% to 28%. That suggests a fresh educational/comms campaign might be useful.

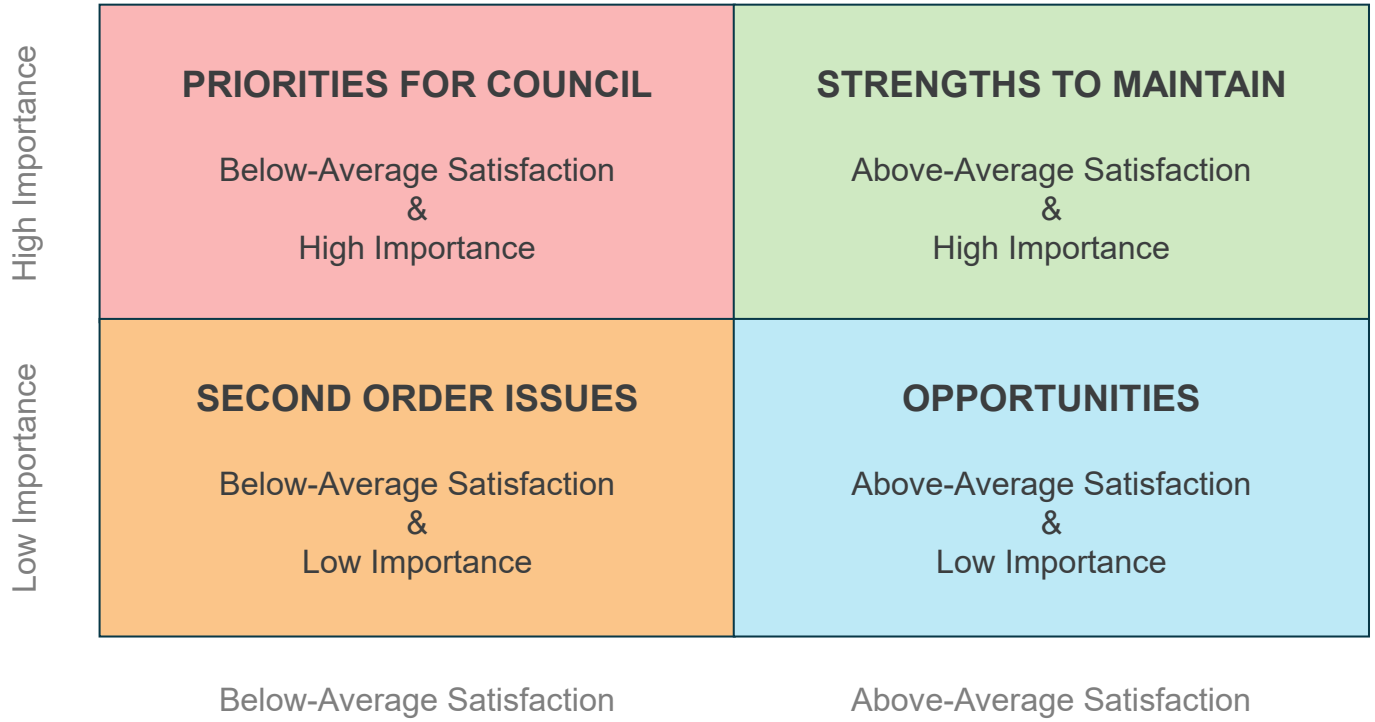
Q9. How willing are you to pay extra in your rates for the FOGO service?
Base: All respondents (2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

32


Prioritisation of services and facilities

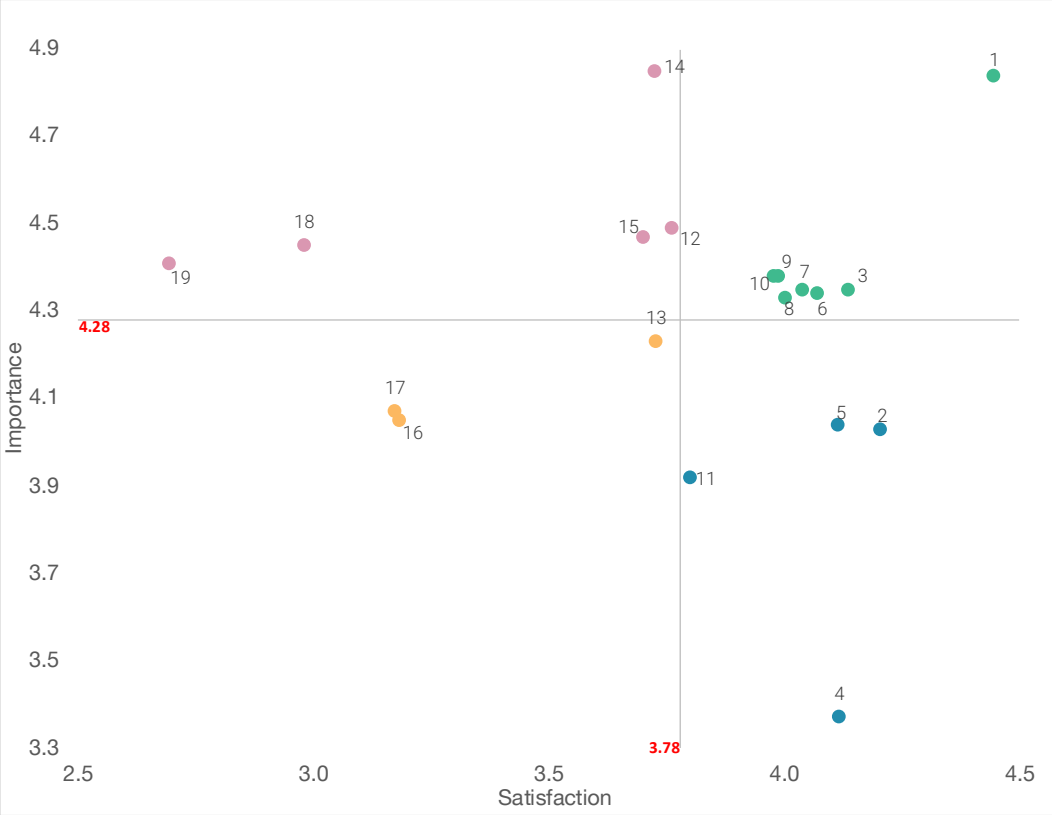
Quadrant Analysis

Below is an explanation of what the four quadrants (on following slides) refer to.



34

Quadrant matrix (plot)



Quadrant analysis simultaneously analyses the importance of a service in terms of driving overall satisfaction and the performance of services in terms of resident satisfaction. To do this, mean satisfaction scores are plotted against importance scores for each Council service. **The labels for each of the dots are on the next page.**

Sewer services (1) stood out for being the highest satisfaction and importance. An arc across the top-left was formed by rural roads (19), town/village roads (18) and water services (14)

35

Quadrant matrix (labels)

PRIORITIES FOR COUNCIL	STRENGTHS TO MAINTAIN
12 General litter control	1 The sewer services
14 The quality of water services	3 Parks and gardens
15 Aquatic Centre	6 General household waste collection
18 Condition of town and village road surfaces	7 Sporting fields and sporting amenities
19 Condition of rural road surfaces	8 Material Recycling Facility
	9 Recycling service
	10 Walking/Cycling paths
SECOND ORDER ISSUES	**OPPORTUNITIES**
13 Playgrounds	2 Regional Library
16 Footpaths	4 Regional Art Gallery
17 Parking	5 Civic Centre
	11 Street or directional signage

To form quadrants, the average importance score and average satisfaction score across all services and facilities were calculated. Services and facilities with a mean satisfaction score less than the overall average were classified as ‘lower’ performing while those with a mean score above the average were classified as ‘higher’ performing.

Similarly, services and facilities have ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ importance depending on their position above or below the overall average

36

Gap analysis - over time

Gap analysis is the difference between Top Two importance and Top Two satisfaction scores. A positive gap indicates a service with satisfaction higher than importance. The largest improvements were for rural roads and Civic Centre, and the largest deterioration was for footpaths

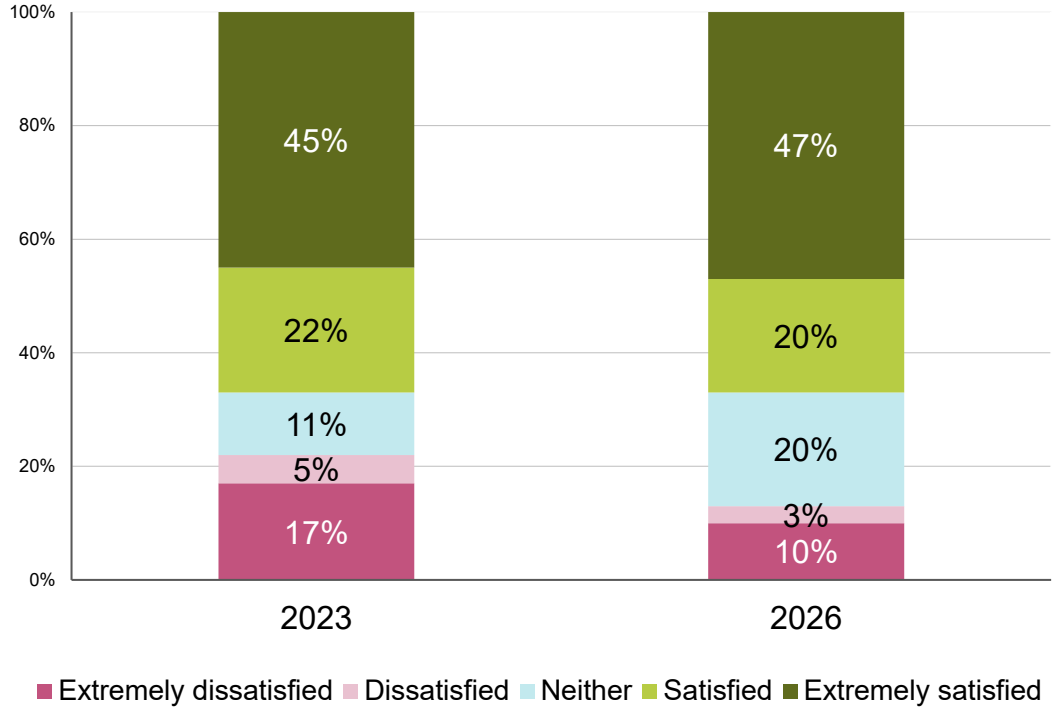
	2023 Gap	2026 Gap	Difference
Condition of town and village road surfaces	-60	-54	+6
Condition of rural road surfaces	-73	-59	+14
Footpaths	-7	-34	-27
Parking	-29	-34	-5
Street or directional signage	-1	-3	-2
Civic Centre	-1	+12	+13
Regional Art Gallery	+24	+29	+5
Regional Library	+7	+6	-1
Aquatic Centre	-17	-30	-13
Parks and gardens	-1	-3	-2

	2023 Gap	2026 Gap	Difference
Sporting fields and sporting amenities	-2	-7	-5
Playgrounds	-11	-14	-3
Walking/Cycling paths	-14	-12	+2
General household waste collection	-6	-16	-10
Recycling service	-5	-16	-11
Material Recycling Facility	-9	-16	-7
General litter control	-18	-28	-10
Quality of water services	-22	-34	-12
Sewer services	-6	-9	-3

37


Customer services
Cowra Council
COLD
DRINK
$2.00 Ca
WAT

Rating most recent customer service



In 2026, 54% of Cowra residents surveyed had contacted Council, against 42% in 2023 and 55% in 2020 (and compared to 49% across all NSW respondents).

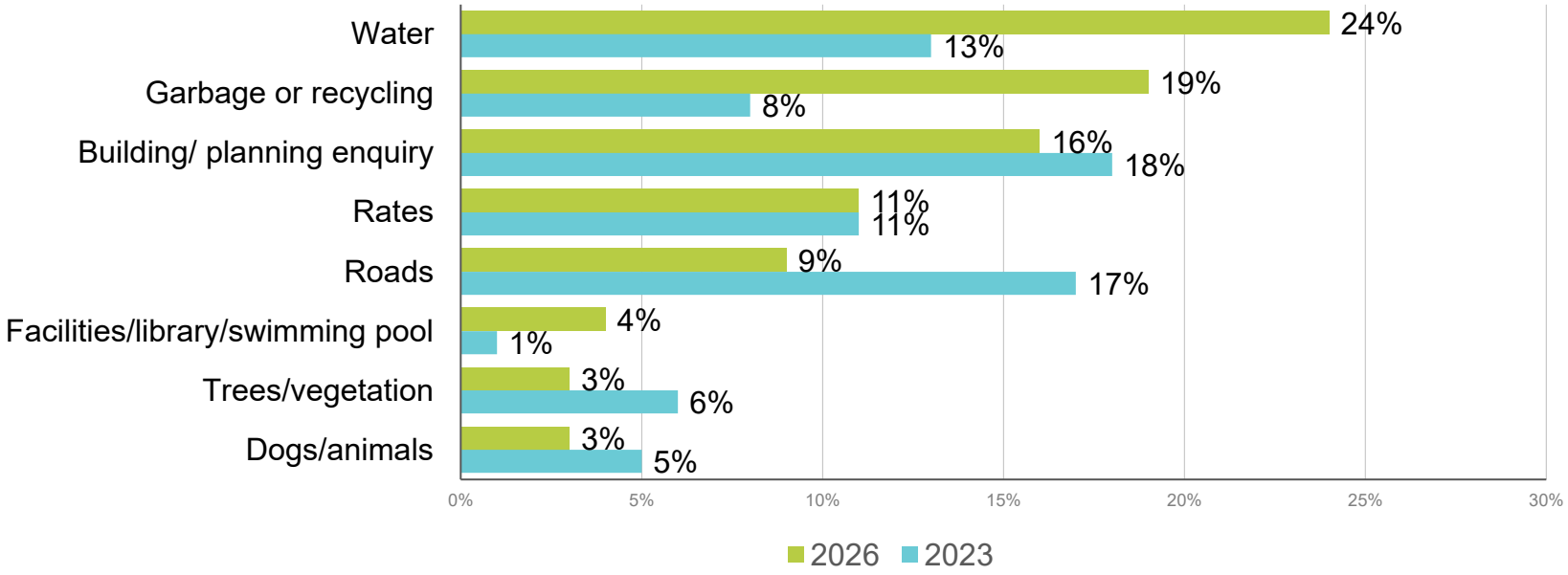
While Top Two satisfaction scores were unchanged in 2026, the proportion dissatisfied (i.e. Bottom Two) fell from 22% to 13%.

As a result, the mean satisfaction score (on a 1-5 scale) rose slightly - from 3.73 to 3.90.

Q13. In the past 12 months, have you had any contact with Council staff? Base: All respondents 2026 n=300
Q16. How would you rate your interaction with Council? Base: All respondents who had customer service contact (2023 n=132, 2026 n=161)

Reason for most recent contact

Water and waste inquiries rose in 2026, while those related to roads fell significantly – correlating with increased satisfaction scores

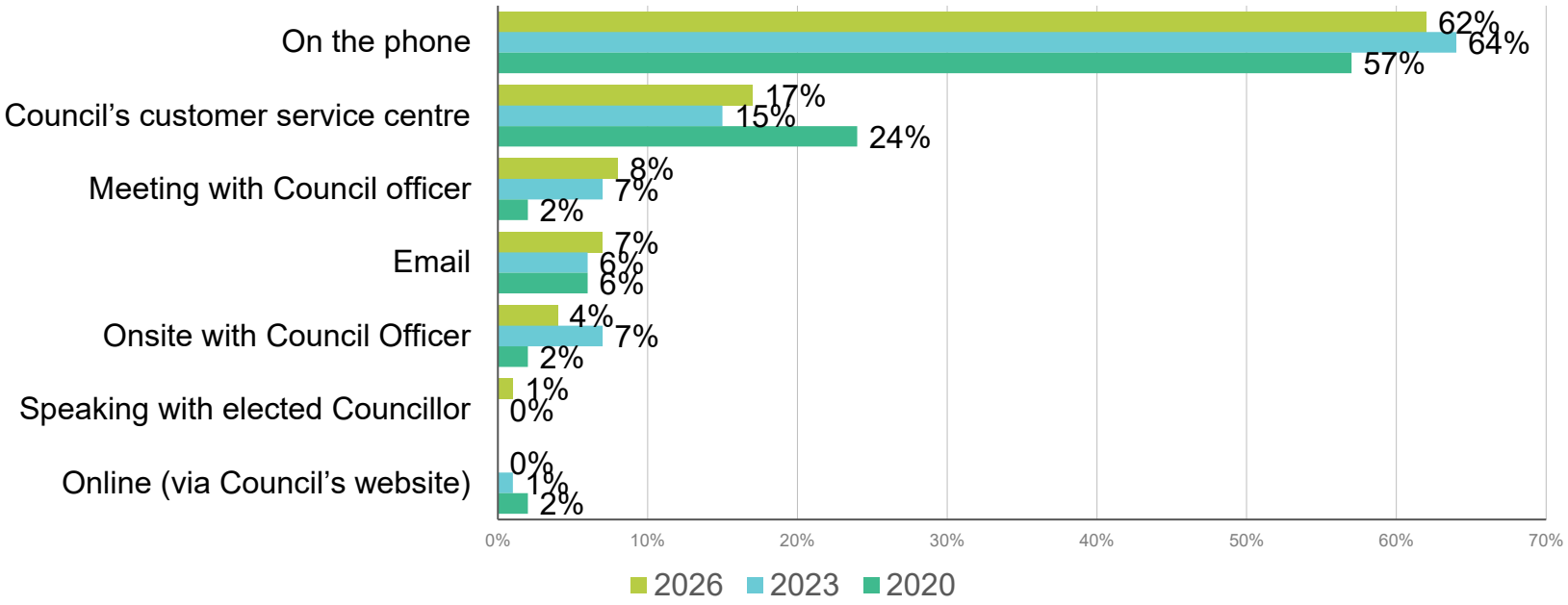


Q14. What was the most recent reason you contacted Council?

Base: All respondents who had customer service contact (2023 n=132, 2026 n=161)

Method of most recent contact

Traditional contact methods – in particular phone and face-to-face at service centre – continue to dominate



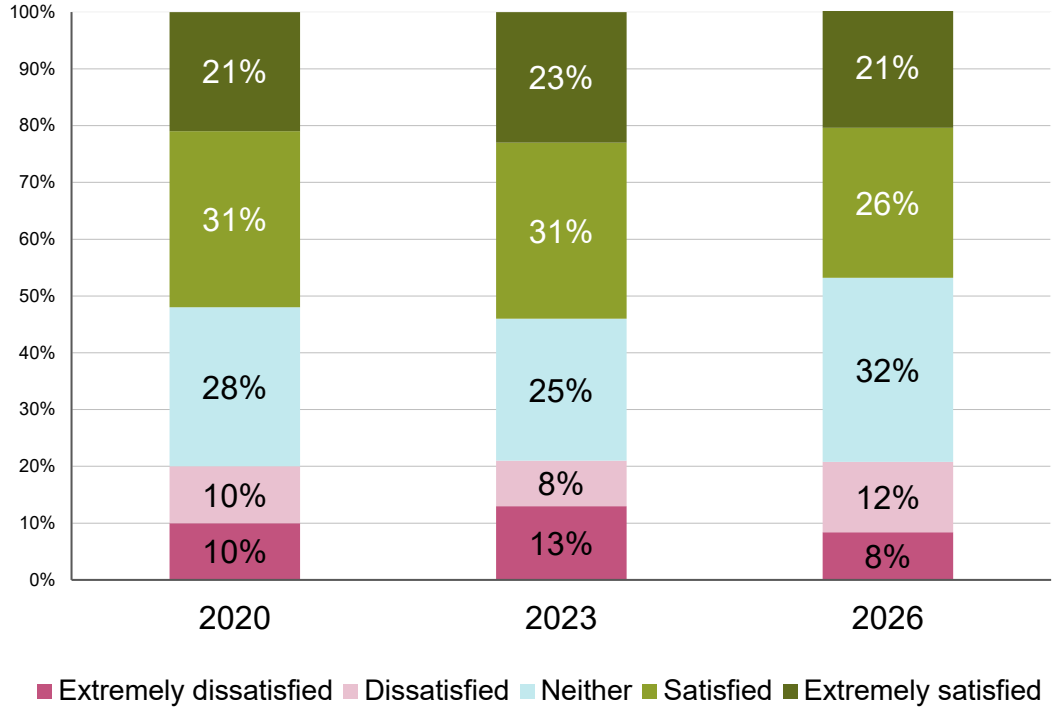
Q15. How did you make your most recent contact with Council?

Base: All respondents who had customer service contact (2020 n=219, 2023 n=132, 2026 n=161)

41


Engagement with Council
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
COWRA
9
Open 7 Days

Rating Council communications



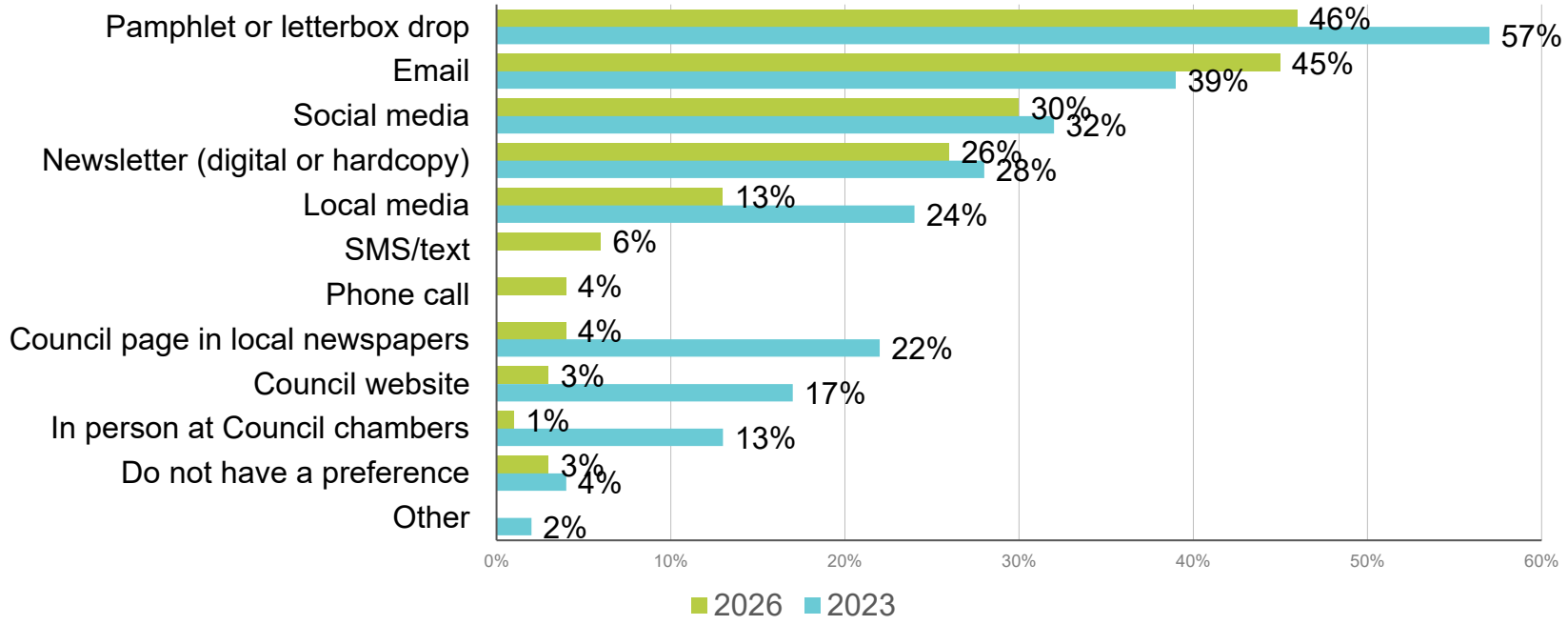
The proportion of residents satisfied with the level and type of Council communication fell from 2023 (54% satisfied) to 2026 (47%). However, this change is not classed as significant.

The mean also fell slightly, from 3.43 in 2023 to 3.39 in 2026.

Q17. How satisfied are you with the level and type of communication provided by Council?
Base: All respondents (2020 n=400, 2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

Preferred method of being informed

Email and SMS are increasingly popular communication methods with residents. While still important, pamphlets or letterbox drops are declining in popularity – perhaps reflecting sharp declines in general mail volumes. There was negligible interest in Council's newspaper column

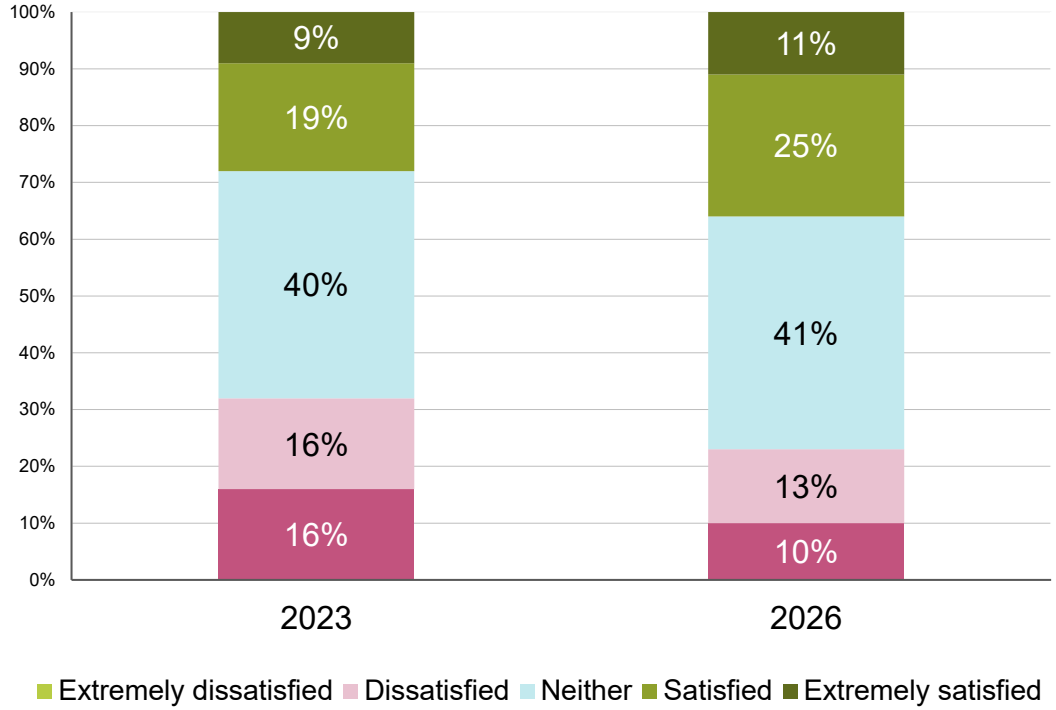


Q18. How would you like to be informed about Council services and activities?

Base: All respondents (2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

44

Rating Council engagement



Satisfaction with Council's community engagement rose slightly in 2026 (with 36% satisfied, against 28% in 2023).

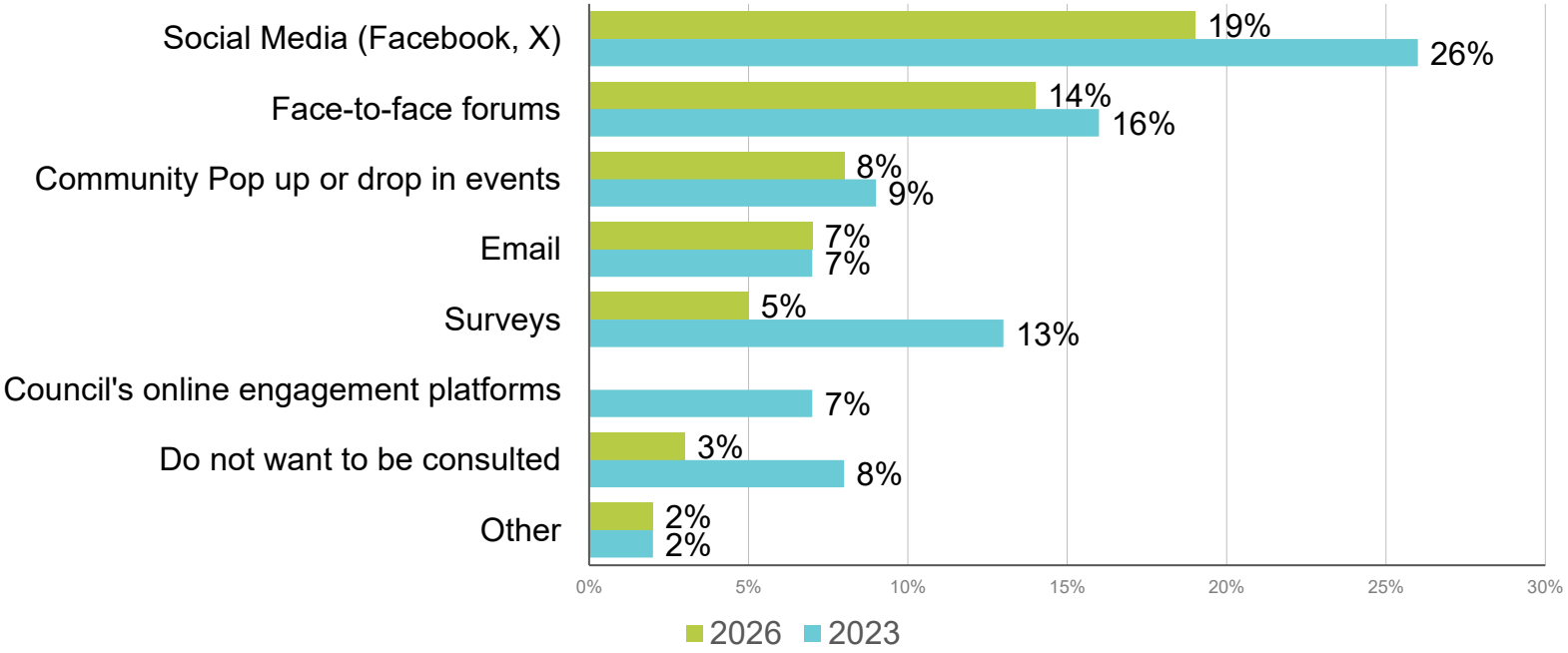
With dissatisfaction falling from 32% to 23%, the 2026 mean satisfaction score (3.13 on a 1-5 scale) was significantly higher than 2023 (2.89).

Q19. How satisfied are you with the level of community engagement Council has with local residents?
Base: All respondents (2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

45

Preferred method of being consulted

Of the consultation methods that could be compared between 2023 and 2026, social media was still the most popular – though down on the 26% recorded in 2023



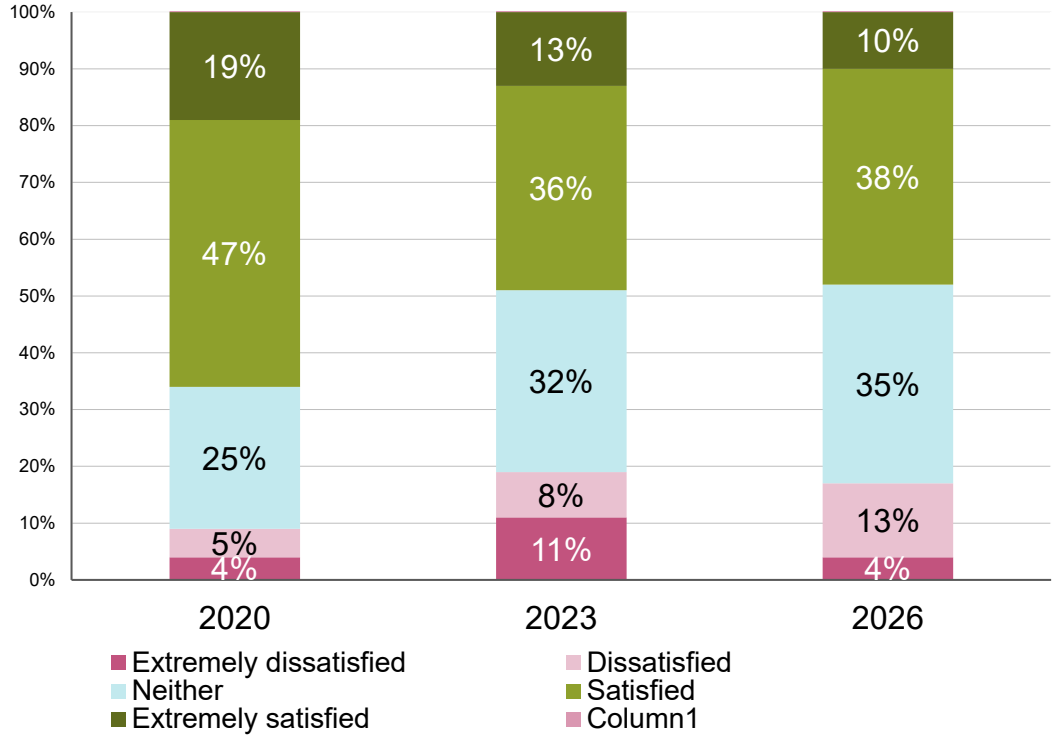
Q20. What is your preferred way to be consulted on important Council initiatives?

Base: All respondents (2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

46


Overall satisfaction

Overall performance



Overall satisfaction levels were on par with 2023: 48% Top Two against 49% in previous wave. Meanwhile dissatisfaction fell slightly, from 19% to 17%.

As a result, the 2026 mean (3.37 on a 1-5 scale) was slightly ahead of the 2023 mean (3.32).

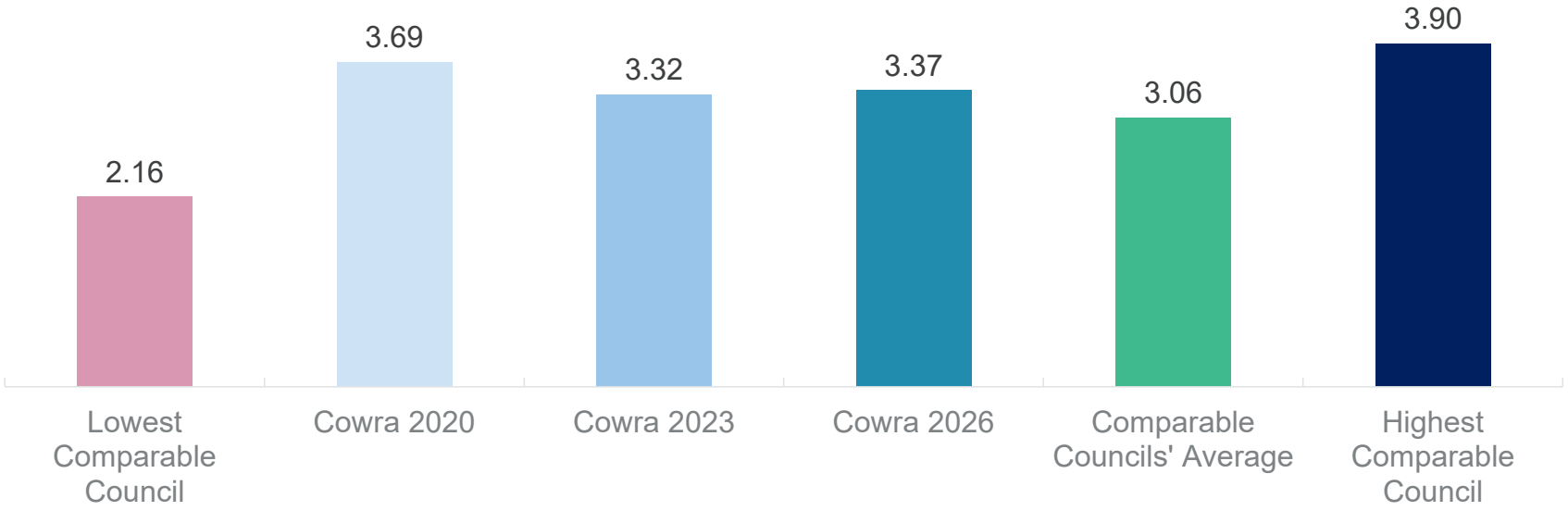
However, satisfaction remains down from 2020, when 66% were satisfied and just 9% dissatisfied (mean 3.69)

Q21. Given the answers you have just provided, how would rate the overall performance of your Council in providing services to the community?
Base: All respondents (2020 n=400, 2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

48

Overall Satisfaction Benchmarks

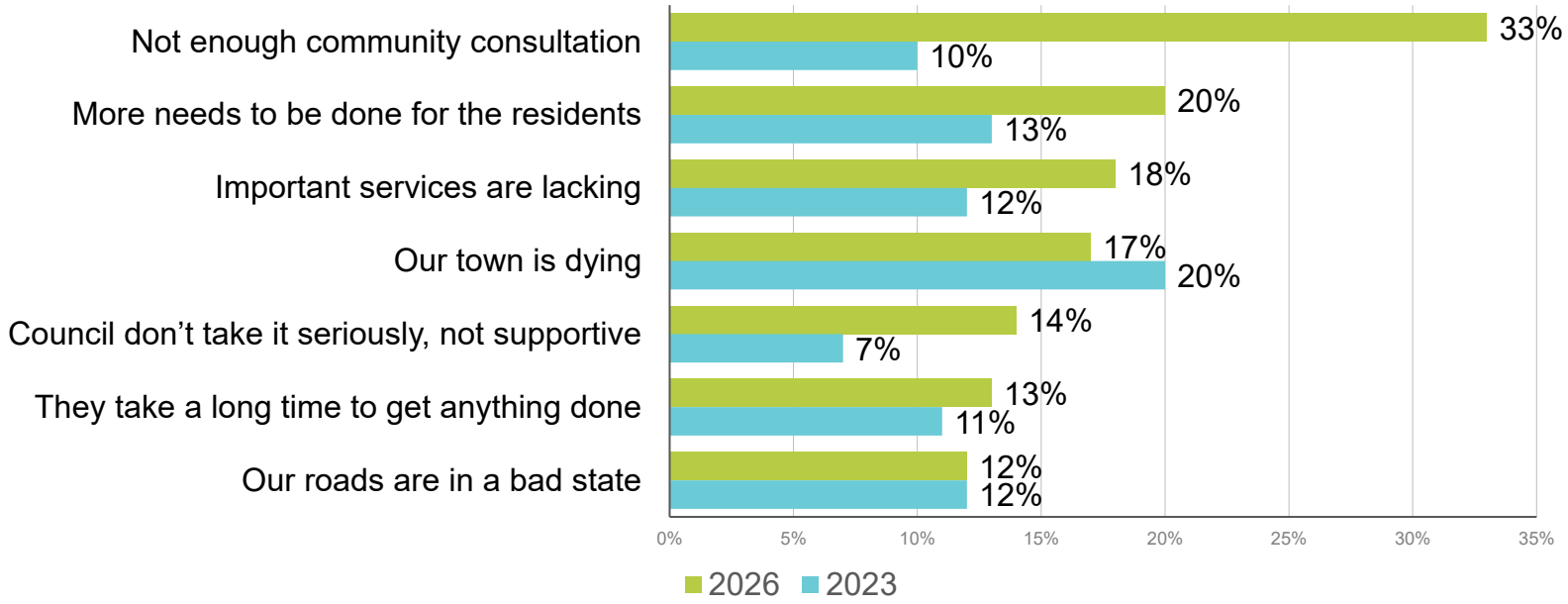
Overall satisfaction in 2026 was slightly higher than in 2023, but remains significantly lower than in 2020



Q21. Given the answers you have just provided, how would rate the overall performance of your Council in providing services to the community?
Base: All respondents (2020 n=400, 2023 n=300, 2026 n=300)

Why dissatisfied (highest mentions)

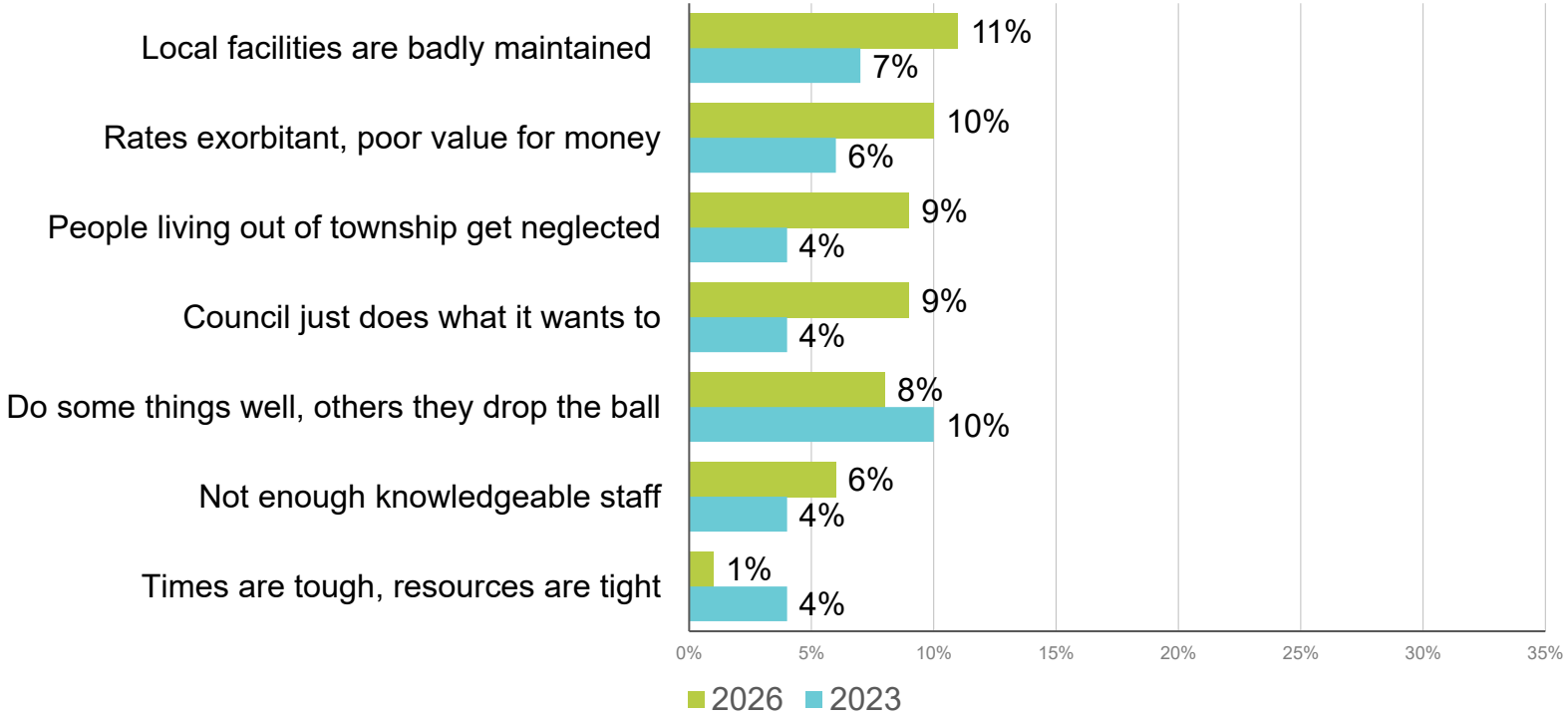
In 2026, a third of those dissatisfied with Council's overall performance cited that there was not enough community consultation, significantly higher than in 2023. (Note these percentages are only of those citing a Bottom Three response – *not* all respondents)



Q22. What are your main reasons for feeling that way? Base: Respondents dissatisfied overall (2023 n=129, 2026 n=144)

50

Why dissatisfied (smaller mentions)

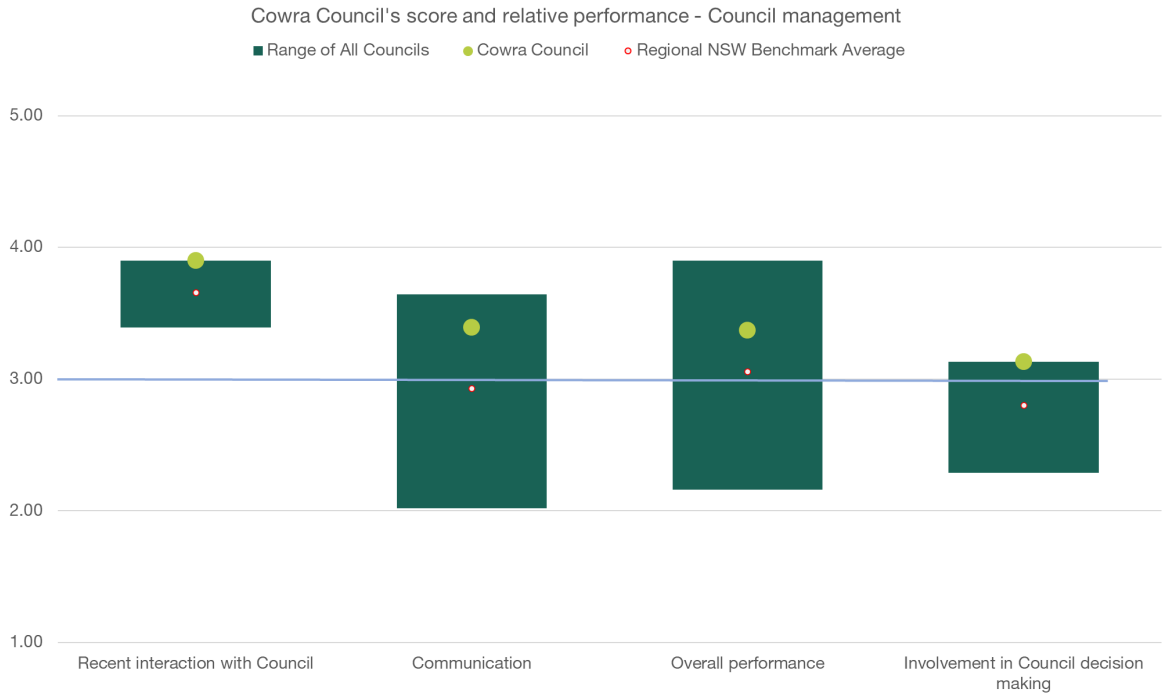


Q22. What are your main reasons for feeling that way? Base: Respondents dissatisfied overall (2023 n=129, 2026 n=144)

51

Council management - External benchmarks

Cowra Council was ahead of the regional NSW averages for all measures of Council management that could be compared (and best-in-class for two of the four)

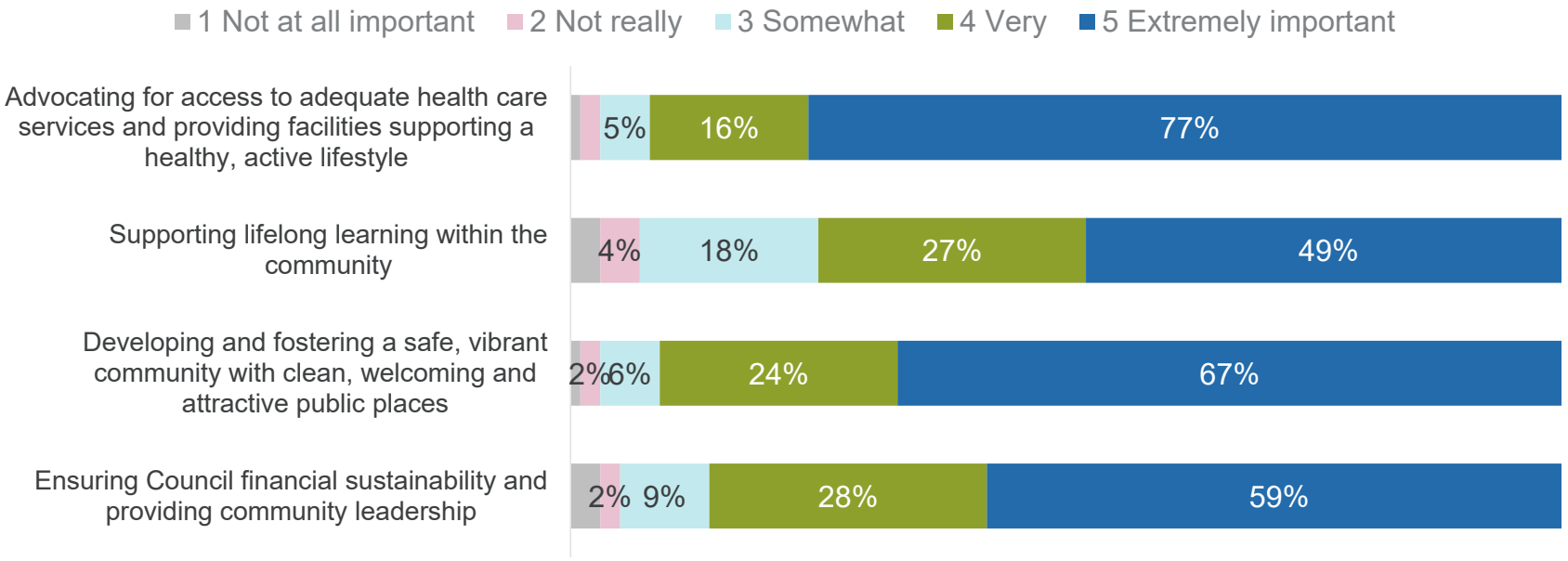


52


Community
Strategic Plan

CSP Importance (1)

While all four cited measures were classed as important (with all having Top Two scores of at least 76%), health care and safe, vibrant community were deemed of highest importance.

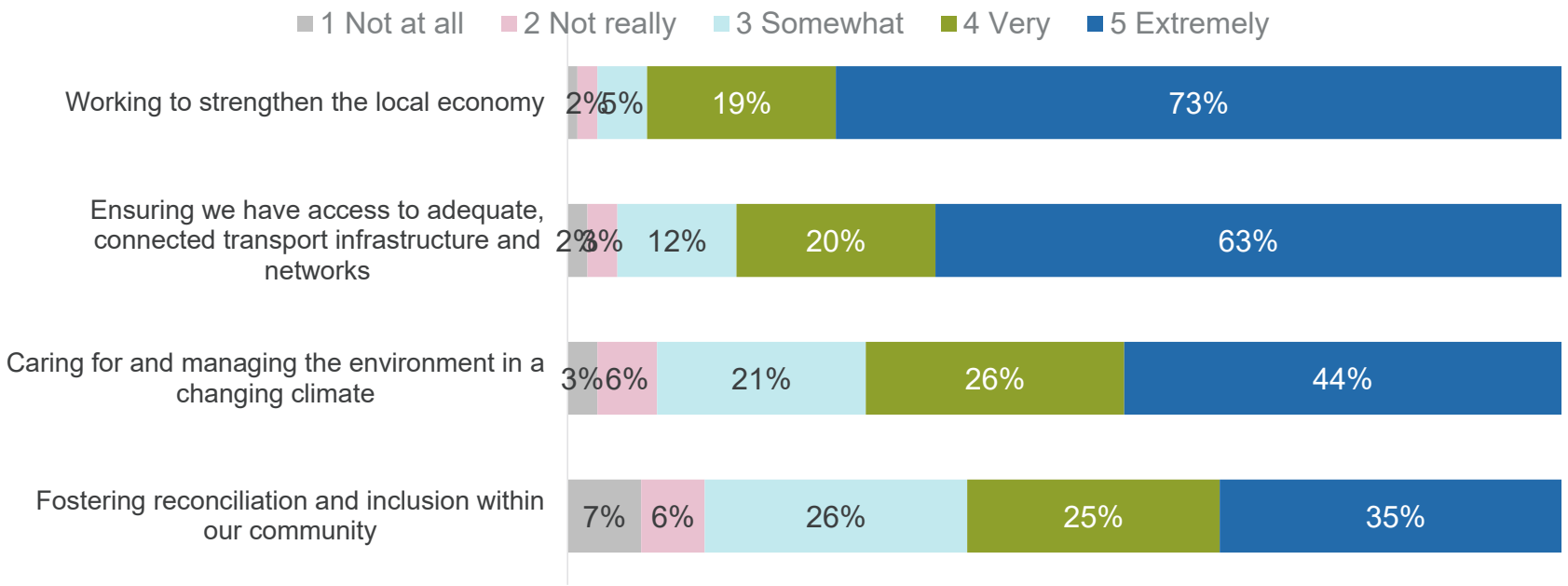


Q24. Council has developed a set of strategies within the Community Strategic Plan to improve the quality of life for residents of the area. How important is…to you personally? Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

54

CSP Importance (2)

Again, all these four measures were classed as important – with Top Two scores of at least 60%. However, strengthening the local economy and adequate, connected transport led the way with 92% and 83% scores, respectively.



Q24. Council has developed a set of strategies within the Community Strategic Plan to improve the quality of life for residents of the area. How important is…to you personally? Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

CSP Importance – Top Two

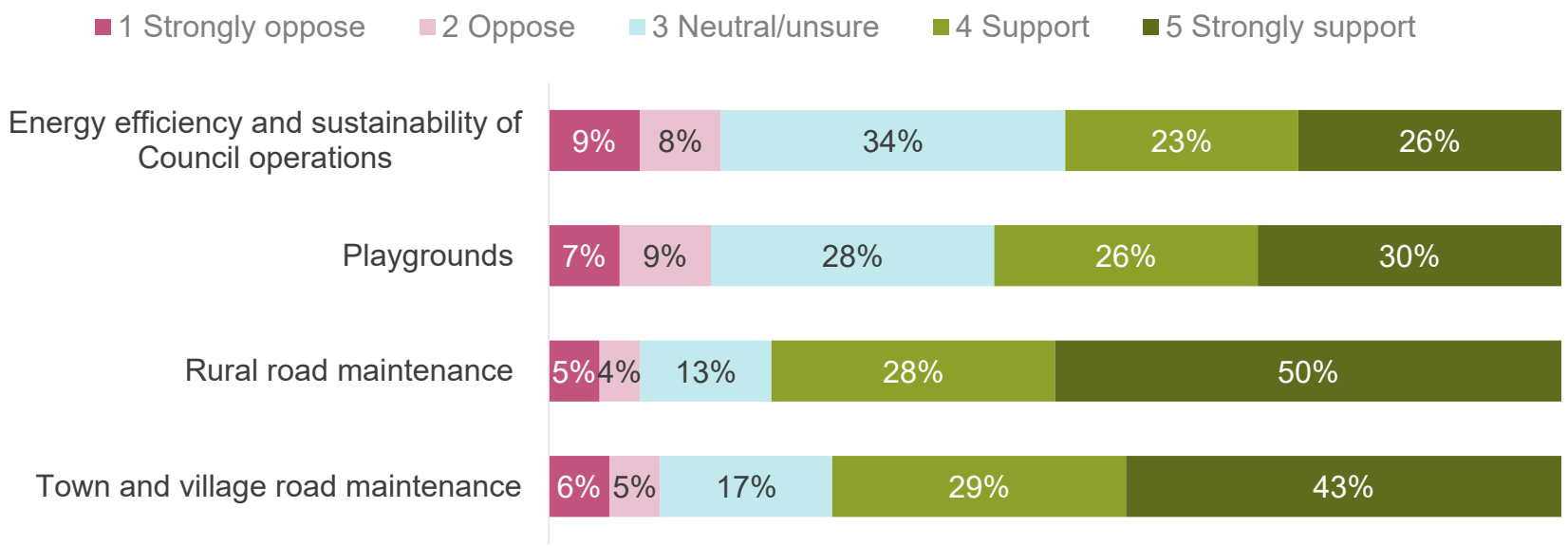
Most CSP scores were on par with 2023 in terms of importance – with significant rises in local economy and transport. However environmental care fell significantly, from 76% to 70%.

	Importance 2023	Importance 2026
Advocating for access to adequate health care services and providing facilities supporting a healthy, active lifestyle	91%	93%
Supporting lifelong learning within the community	76%	76%
Developing and fostering a safe, vibrant community with clean, welcoming and attractive public places	88%	91%
Ensuring Council financial sustainability and providing community leadership	83%	87%
Working to strengthen the local economy	87%	92%
Ensuring we have access to adequate, connected transport infrastructure and networks	76%	83%
Caring for and managing the environment in a changing climate	76%	70%
Fostering reconciliation and inclusion within our community	64%	61%

56

Support rate rises for (1)

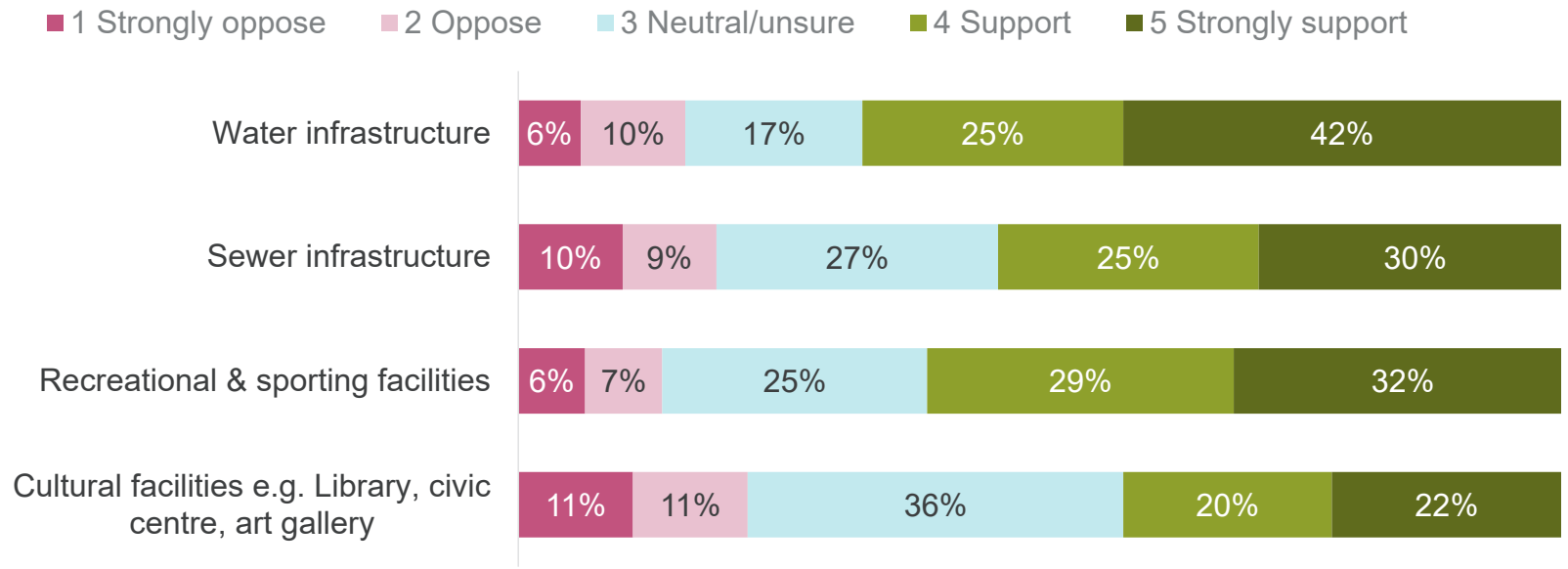
There was widespread support for rate rises to fund road improvements, and half or more supported increases to fund playgrounds and energy efficiency. (N.B. These figures cannot be compared to 2023 due to wording differences)



Q25. Thinking about areas Council can invest more money to improve over the next few years, to what extent would you support or oppose Council raising rates specifically for the following purposes? Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)

Support rate rises for (2)

There was majority support for rate rises to fund water and sewer infrastructure, and recreational/ sporting facilities. Four in ten supported rises related to cultural facilities while two in ten opposed



Q25. Thinking about areas Council can invest more money to improve over the next few years, to what extent would you support or oppose Council raising rates specifically for the following purposes? Base: All respondents 2026 (n=300)


Conclusions

KEY FINDINGS

The 2026 overall satisfaction mean score of 3.37 (on a 1-5 scale) was slightly higher than 2023 (3.32), and higher than the Taverner average of regional NSW councils (3.06)

Highest-rated

- Sewer services
- Regional Library
- Parks and gardens
- Regional Art Gallery
- Civic Centre

Lowest-rated

- Rural roads
- Town and village roads
- Parking
- Footpaths
- Aquatic Centre

- Of the 19 facilities and services that residents surveyed were asked to rate for their level of satisfaction, 17 received a mean rating at or higher than the “neutral” score of 3.0 out of 5
- Residents living in Cowra, and females, were more regularly satisfied with facilities and services than males and people living outside the town.
- Far and away the greatest Strength (high satisfaction and high perceived importance) of Cowra Council in 2026 was Sewer services. The Priorities for Council quadrant (high importance and low satisfaction) included Rural roads, Town/village roads, and The quality of water services

KEY FINDINGS

Customer Services	Satisfaction with customer services was higher in 2026 (mean 3.90 out of five) than in 2023 (3.73). Contacts regarding water and garbage/recycling were much higher in 2026 than 2023, and contacts regarding roads much lower
Engagement	• The rating for Council communications was down slightly in 2026 (3.39 out of five) compared to 2023 (3.43). The number of methods that residents preferred to be informed by was down markedly between 2023 and 2026 • The 2026 mean (3.13 out of five) for satisfaction with the level of engagement was significantly higher than 2023 (2.89). Mail was preferred for consultation much more in 2026 than 2023, social media and surveys less
CSP and support rate rises	• Perceived importance of strengthening the local economy and adequate transport were higher in 2026 than 2023, and of managing the environment was lower • Support of rate rises was highest for rural road maintenance (mean 4.16 out of five) and lowest for cultural facilities (mean 3.31 - still above the midpoint between agree and disagree)


Taverner
RESEARCH GROUP


The Research Society
Corporate Partner


ADIA
TRUST MARK MEMBER 2024-25
PRIVACY QUALITY ETHICS


ISO20252 CERTIFIED
ISO Audit Solutions

Cowra Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2026

Summary of CATI (telephone) vs. Opt-in online survey results

Sample sizes: CATI: n=300. Opt-in online: n=76

Note that for the CATI survey, questions prefaced S (Screening) or D (Demographic) are reported unweighted. The remaining CATI questions have been weighted by age and gender to reflect the adult population of the LGA at time of ABS Census 2021. Opt-in online results are unweighted as they are not representative of the Cowra LGA adult population, reflecting instead the views of those 76 residents who chose to take part.

Statistically significant differences between CATI and online respondents are highlighted in blue and red. A statistically significant difference is one which is outside the survey's sampling error, and is hence

S2 How long have you lived in the Cowra Council area? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
6 months to 1 year	1%	0%	5%	Online attracted more newer residents (22% lived in Cowra for <5 years, and 29% for <10 years, against just 2% and 8% respectively for CATI)
1-5 years	5%	2%	17%	
6-10 years	6%	6%	7%	
11-15 years	10%	9%	14%	
More than 15 years	78%	84%	57%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376

Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

S3 In which area of Cowra Council do you live? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Billimari	2%	3%	0%	(Statistically) similar
Cowra Township	76%	77%	70%	
Darbys Falls	2%	2%	5%	
Gooloogong	3%	3%	3%	
Morongla	2%	1%	4%	
Noonbinna	2%	1%	5%	
Wattamondara	2%	2%	0%	
Woodstock	9%	9%	9%	
Wyangala	1%	1%	0%	
Other (please specify)	2%	2%	4%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376

Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

S4 Gender by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Male	33%	36%	20%	Online survey more strongly skewed to females (74%, vs. 64% for CATI)
Female	66%	64%	74%	
Non-binary/Other	0%	0%	1%	
(Prefer not to say)	1%	0%	5%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376

Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

S5 Which age group do you fall into? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
18-34 years	9%	5%	24%	Online survey had a younger age skew: 52% aged under 55, against 31% for CATI
35-54 years	27%	26%	28%	
55-64 years	19%	17%	26%	
65+ years	46%	52%	21%	
(Prefer not to say)	0%	0%	1%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376

Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

D3 Do you identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Yes, Aboriginal	7%	7%	7%	(Statistically) similar
Yes, Torres Strait Islander	1%	1%	0%	
No, neither	93%	92%	93%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

D4 How many people including yourself live in your household? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
One	19%	21%	13%	(Statistically) similar
Two	48%	49%	45%	
Three	10%	10%	11%	
Four	11%	10%	16%	
More than four	11%	10%	16%	
(Prefer not to say)	0%	0%	0%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

D5 Do you identify as living with a disability? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Yes	16%	15%	21%	(Statistically) similar
No	83%	84%	79%	
(Prefer not to say)	0%	0%	0%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

D6 Tenure by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Owning your home through mortgage or outright	83%	87%	70%	Unable to meaningfully compare due to the high proportion of online respondents preferring not to answer this question
Renting	13%	13%	12%	
(Prefer not to say)	4%	1%	18%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

D7 Does your residence have fixed internet access? by BANNER1

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Yes	81%	84%	71%	Higher for CATI
No	18%	16%	29%	
(Prefer not to say)	1%	1%	0%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 376
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q1 Importance numeric (Service) by BANNER

Q1 Importance mean scores (on a 1-5 scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Condition of town and village road surfaces	4.44	4.45	4.39	(Statistically) similar
Condition of rural road surfaces	4.42	4.41	4.45	
Footpaths	4.05	4.05	4.07	
Parking	4.02	4.07	3.79	
Street or directional signage	3.90	3.92	3.82	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 288 (77%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q2 Satisfaction numeric (Service) by BANNER

Q2 Satisfaction mean scores (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Condition of town and village road surfaces	2.91	2.98	2.65	CATI respondents significantly more satisfied than those completing survey online for roads and street signage (and more satisfied generally across these
Condition of rural road surfaces	2.61	2.70	2.29	
Footpaths	3.14	3.18	2.96	
Parking	3.15	3.17	3.04	
Street or directional signage	3.75	3.80	3.55	
Column n	359	285	74	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 366 to 376; total n = 376; 10 missing; effective sample size = 291 (77%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q3 Usage (flattened) by BANNER

			sample source		Comment
	Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Civic Centre	1-5 times	48%	46%	57%	
	6-10 times	7%	7%	8%	
	More than 10 times	7%	6%	14%	
	Never	37%	41%	21%	
Regional Art Gallery	1-5 times	32%	31%	37%	
	6-10 times	3%	3%	5%	
	More than 10 times	2%	2%	4%	
	Never	62%	64%	54%	
Regional Library	1-5 times	25%	23%	30%	
	6-10 times	5%	4%	8%	
	More than 10 times	8%	7%	13%	
	Never	62%	65%	49%	
Aquatic Centre	1-5 times	19%	18%	24%	
	6-10 times	9%	9%	12%	
	More than 10 times	20%	18%	29%	
	Never	51%	56%	36%	Online respondents were more active users of Civic Centre and Aquatic Centre
Parks and gardens	1-5 times	36%	38%	29%	
	6-10 times	16%	15%	20%	
	More than 10 times	30%	27%	41%	
	Never	19%	21%	11%	
Sporting fields and sporting amenities	1-5 times	28%	29%	26%	
	6-10 times	11%	10%	13%	
	More than 10 times	29%	30%	25%	
	Never	32%	31%	36%	
Playgrounds	1-5 times	30%	29%	37%	
	6-10 times	8%	8%	5%	
	More than 10 times	17%	16%	22%	
	Never	45%	48%	36%	
Walking/Cycling paths	1-5 times	22%	22%	20%	
	6-10 times	8%	8%	12%	
	More than 10 times	34%	32%	42%	
	Never	36%	39%	26%	
Column n		376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 315 (84%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q4 Importance numeric (Facility) by BANNER

Q4 Importance mean scores (on a 1-5 scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Civic Centre	3.96	4.04	3.72	
Regional Art Gallery	3.38	3.37	3.40	
Regional Library	4.03	4.03	4.03	
Aquatic Centre	4.45	4.47	4.39	Sporting fields/amenities and playgrounds more important to CATI respondents. Otherwise statistically similar.
Parks and gardens	4.33	4.35	4.25	
Sporting fields and sporting amenities	4.26	4.35	3.90	
Playgrounds	4.12	4.23	3.76	
Walking/Cycling paths	4.31	4.38	4.07	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 151 to 301; total n = 376; 225 missing; effective sample size = 266 (88%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q5 Satisfaction numeric (Facility) by BANNER

Q5 Satisfaction mean scores (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Civic Centre	4.11	4.11	4.09	
Regional Art Gallery	4.09	4.12	4.00	
Regional Library	4.19	4.21	4.13	
Aquatic Centre	3.60	3.70	3.33	
Parks and gardens	4.10	4.14	3.97	
Sporting fields and sporting amenities	3.98	4.04	3.71	
Playgrounds	3.61	3.73	3.22	
Walking/Cycling paths	3.88	3.98	3.56	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 148 to 299; total n = 376; 228 missing; effective sample size = 241 (81%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

While CATI results are slightly higher across the board, none of the differences are considered statistically significant. (This is unusual!)

Q6 Importance numeric (Waste management) by BANNER

Q6 Importance mean scores (on a 1-5 scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
General household waste collection	4.31	4.34	4.17	
Recycling service	4.30	4.38	3.96	
Material Recycling Facility	4.25	4.33	3.92	
General litter control	4.43	4.49	4.22	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 281 (75%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

For three of the four measures, CATI respondents are significantly more satisfied than online respondents. The exception is

Q7 Satisfaction mean scores (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
General household waste collection	4.00	4.07	3.72	
Recycling service	3.92	3.99	3.63	
Material Recycling Facility	3.95	4.00	3.72	
General litter control	3.69	3.76	3.38	
Column n	329	260	69	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 348 to 367; total n = 376; 28 missing; effective sample size = 311 (85%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

CATI respondents significantly happier with their waste and litter service than those responding online (N.B. This is completely normal)

Q8 The NSW Government has instructed all Councils to implement a FOGO – or Food Organics, Garden Organics - collection service for households. This would see food scraps and garden waste diverted from general waste bins and collected separately by Councils to keep them out of landfill. Prior to this call, were you aware that Cowra will be adopting this FOGO system over the next few years?

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Yes	23%	20%	32%	
No	76%	79%	61%	
Unsure	2%	0%	8%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 355 (94%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Online respondents claiming higher awareness - though still relatively low at 32%

Q9 How willing are you to pay extra in your rates for the FOGO service? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Very willing	4%	5%	4%	
Quite willing	9%	10%	5%	
Undecided	25%	28%	14%	
Not very willing	20%	19%	21%	
Not willing at all	42%	39%	55%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 324 (86%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Online respondents less likely to support paying extra for FOGO (76% unwilling, against 58% for CATI). Maybe because they're more critical of/cynical about Council generally?

Q9 numeric - How willing are you to pay extra in your rates for the FOGO service? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Q9 numeric - How willing are you to pay extra in your rates for the FOGO service?	2.14	2.22	1.82	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 307 (82%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

As above

Q11 Importance numeric (Water & Sewage) by BANNER

Importance mean scores (on a 1-5 scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Quality of water services	4.8	4.85	4.46	Higher importance scores for CATI respondents
Sewer services	4.8	4.84	4.55	
Column n	209	170	39	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 210 to 294; total n = 376; 166 missing; effective sample size = 235 (80%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q12 Satisfaction numeric (Water & Sewage) by BANNER

Satisfaction mean scores (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale)		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Quality of water services	3.61	3.73	3.14	Higher satisfaction scores for CATI respondents
Sewer services	4.34	4.45	3.86	
Column n	206	170	36	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 207 to 291; total n = 376; 169 missing; effective sample size = 237 (82%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q13 In the past 12 months, have you had any contact with Council staff? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Yes	58%	54%	74%	Significantly higher proportion of online respondents had contact with Council staff: three in four.
No	39%	44%	18%	
Can't recall	3%	1%	8%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 335 (89%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q14 What was the most recent reason you contacted Council? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Water	23%	24%	23%	Relatively similar (However online figures should be treated with caution due to small sample size of n=56)
Garbage or recycling	18%	19%	16%	
Building/planning enquiry	14%	16%	11%	
Rates	13%	11%	20%	
Roads	11%	9%	18%	
Events/booking facilities	4%	4%		
Dogs/animals	6%	3%	14%	
Trees and vegetation	3%	3%		
Sports	3%	3%		
Community grants	2%	2%		
Cemetery	1%	1%		
Other (please specify)	13%	9%	27%	
Column n	161	161	56	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 161 to 217; total n = 376; 215 missing; effective sample size = 201 (93%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q15 How did you make your most recent contact with Council? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
On the phone	61%	62%	59%	(Statistically) similar
Council's customer service centre	13%	17%	4%	
Meeting with Council officer	7%	8%	4%	
Email	10%	7%	18%	
Onsite with Council officer	5%	4%	9%	
Speaking with elected Councillor	1%	1%	2%	
Online (via Council's website)	1%	0%	2%	
Letter	0%	0%	2%	
Other (please specify)	1%	1%	2%	
Column n	217	161	56	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 217; total n = 376; 159 missing; effective sample size = 215 (99%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q16 Still thinking about your most recent contact with Council, how would you rate your interaction with Council? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you were extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you were extremely satisfied. by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
1 Extremely dissatisfied	12%	10%	16%	CATI respondents significantly more satisfied with their most recent interaction: 67% vs. 50% for online. As with Q13 above, a poor customer service experience may
2 Dissatisfied	7%	3%	20%	
3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18%	20%	14%	
4 Satisfied	22%	20%	29%	
5 Extremely satisfied	40%	47%	21%	
Column n	217	161	56	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 217; total n = 376; 159 missing; effective sample size = 195 (90%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q16 numeric - Still thinking about your most recent contact with Council, how would you rate your interaction with Council? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you were extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you were extremely satisfied. by BANNER

		sample source			Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	Column1	
Q16 numeric - Still thinking about your most recent contact with Council, how would you rate your interaction with Council? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you were extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you were extremely satisfied.	3.72	3.90	3.20		As above
Column n	217	161	56		

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 217; total n = 376; 159 missing; effective sample size = 171 (79%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q17 How satisfied are you with the level and type of communication provided by Council? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you are extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied. by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
1 Extremely dissatisfied	10%	8%	14%	CATI respondents more satisfied with level and type of Council comms: 47% satisfied vs. 39% for online.
2 Dissatisfied	13%	12%	16%	
3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	32%	32%	30%	
4 Satisfied	27%	26%	30%	
5 Extremely satisfied	19%	21%	9%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 329 (87%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q17 numeric - How satisfied are you with the level and type of communication provided by Council? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you are extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied. by BANNER

		sample source			Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	Column1	
Q17 numeric - How satisfied are you with the level and type of communication provided by Council? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you are extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied.	3.32	3.39	3.04		As above
Column n	376	300	76		

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 300 (80%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q18 How would you like to be informed about Council services and activities? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Pamphlet or letterbox drop	44%	46%	33%	Preference for social media and Council website significantly higher among online respondents. This likely to arise from younger age breakdown, and existing habits (e.g. some/many may have seen the survey when they were visiting Council's website). Note, however, that noticeboard in local newspapers also more popular among online respondents.
Email	43%	45%	37%	
Social media (Facebook, X, Instagram)	33%	30%	46%	
Newsletter (digital format or hardcopy)	27%	26%	30%	
Local media (papers, radio, TV)	15%	13%	24%	
SMS/text	6%	6%		
Phone call	4%	4%		
Council 'Noticeboard' page in local newspapers	6%	4%	17%	
Council website	9%	3%	33%	
In person at Council Chambers + In person	1%	1%		
Do not have a preference	4%	3%	8%	
Signage/noticeboards	1%	1%		
Other (please specify)	1%	0%	3%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = from 299 to 376; total n = 376; 77 missing; effective sample size = 316 (84%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q19 How satisfied are you with the level of community engagement Council has with local residents? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you are extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied. by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
1 Extremely dissatisfied	12%	10%	17%	CATI respondents more satisfied with level of community engagement: 36% satisfied vs. 22% for online. Similarly 43% of online respondents were dissatisfied, vs.
2 Dissatisfied	16%	13%	26%	
3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	40%	41%	34%	
4 Satisfied	24%	25%	18%	
5 Extremely satisfied	9%	11%	4%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 333 (89%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q19 numeric - How satisfied are you with the level of community engagement Council has with local residents? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you are extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied. by BANNER

		sample source			Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	Column1	
Q19 numeric - How satisfied are you with the level of community engagement Council has with local residents? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means you are extremely dissatisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied.	3.03	3.13	2.66		As above
Column n	376	300	76		

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 322 (86%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q20 What is your preferred way to be consulted on important Council initiatives? by BANNER

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
Mail	42%	44%	34%	
Social media (Facebook, X)	20%	19%	25%	
Face to face forums	12%	14%	4%	
Community Pop up or drop in events	8%	8%	12%	Unsurprisingly, residents who choose to do opt-in surveys prefer to be consulted via surveys :)
Email	5%	7%	0%	
Surveys	8%	5%	21%	
I do not want to be consulted	2%	3%	1%	
Other (please specify)	2%	2%	3%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 331 (88%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q21 Given the answers you have just provided, how would you rate the overall performance of your Council in providing services to the community?

		sample source		Comment
Column %	Total	Phone	Online	
1 Extremely dissatisfied	6%	4%	13%	Once again, CATI respondents more satisfied with Council's overall performance: 47% satisfied vs. 34% for online. Meanwhile some 45% of online respondents were dissatisfied, vs. just 17% for
2 Dissatisfied	17%	13%	32%	
3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	32%	35%	21%	
4 Satisfied	36%	37%	29%	
5 Extremely satisfied	9%	10%	5%	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 331 (88%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q21 numeric - Given the answers you have just provided, how would you rate the overall performance of your Council in providing services to the community?

		sample source			Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	Column1	
Q21 numeric - Given the answers you have just provided, how would you rate the overall performance of your Council in providing services to the community? Again, using the scale from 1-5 where 1 means you are not at all satisfied and 5 means you are extremely satisfied	3.26	3.37	2.82		As above
Column n	376	300	76		

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 308 (82%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q24. Council has developed a set of strategies within the Community Strategic Plan to improve the quality of life for residents of the area. How important is...to you personally? (Measured on a 1-5 importance scale)

		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Advocating for access to adequate health care services and providing facilities supporting a healthy, active lifestyle	4.59	4.66	4.33	
Supporting lifelong learning within the community	4.02	4.15	3.49	
Developing and fostering a safe, vibrant community with clean, welcoming and attractive public places	4.47	4.55	4.13	Interestingly all eight statements were significantly more important to CATI respondents. Unsure why this would be the case?
Ensuring Council financial sustainability and providing community leadership	4.27	4.38	3.84	
Working to strengthen the local economy	4.51	4.60	4.14	
Ensuring we have access to adequate, connected transport infrastructure and networks	4.33	4.40	4.08	
Caring for and managing the environment in a changing climate	3.90	4.02	3.39	
Fostering reconciliation and inclusion within our community	3.62	3.75	3.08	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 286 (76%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

Q25. Thinking about areas Council can invest more money to improve over the next few years, to what extent would you support or oppose Council raising rates specifically for the following purposes? (Meaured on a 1-5 oppose/support scale)

		sample source		Comment
Average	Total	Phone	Online	
Rural road maintenance	4.09	4.16	3.83	
Town and village road maintenance	3.93	3.99	3.71	
Water infrastructure	3.80	3.88	3.49	
Recreational and sporting facilities	3.67	3.75	3.33	
Playgrounds	3.58	3.65	3.32	
Sewer infrastructure	3.48	3.56	3.20	
Energy efficiency and sustainability of Council operations	3.38	3.49	2.95	
Cultural facilities e.g. Library, civic centre, art gallery	3.23	3.31	2.91	
Column n	376	300	76	

Total sample; Weight: weight var v1; base n = 376; effective sample size = 311 (83%)
Multiple comparison correction: False Discovery Rate (FDR) (p = 0.05)

CATI respondents were significantly more likely to support rate rises for five of the eight items suggested. The exceptions were rural road maintenance, village and town road maintenance and playgrounds, where results were (statistically) similar. There were

5 DIRECTOR-CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

5.1 Local Government Remuneration Tribunal Report on Mayoral and Councillor Fees

File Number: D26/762

Author: Alan Dalton, Director - Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That Council note the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal's Annual Determination of 23 April 2026 which includes awarding a 3.7 per cent increase to mayors and councillors in each category.**
2. **That Council adopt from 1 July 2026, the maximum Mayoral and Councillor fees determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal, being:**
   a. **Councillor fee: $19,590.**
   b. **Additional Mayoral allowance: $42,030.**

INTRODUCTION

Under s.241 of the *Local Government Act 1993* the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal must make a determination by 1 May each year on fees payable to mayors and councillors. The Tribunal finalised its report on 23 April 2026, which awarded a 3.7 per cent increase.

BACKGROUND

The Tribunal, after considering a number of key economic indicators, has determined a general increase of 3.7% is appropriate, noting this reflects "changes in the cost of living, in the expectation that there will be further increases in these costs, driven by the consequences of the war in the Middle East, which is already having adverse impacts on the entire Australian community."

The Tribunal has categorised Cowra Shire Council as 'Rural Large', and did not make any adjustment from the general rate of increase for this category. Historical remuneration ranges for categories applicable to Council over time, are detailed in the following table.

	Councillor		Mayoral	
Category	Minimum $	Maximum $	Minimum $	Maximum $
Rural 57 2018-19	8,970	11,860	9,540	25,880
Rural 57 2019-20	9,190	12,160	9,780	26,530
Rural 57 2020-21	9,190	12,160	9,780	26,530
Rural 57 2021-22	9,370	12,400	9,980	27,060
Rural 57 2022-23	9,560	12,650	10,180	27,600
Rural Large 2023-24	9,850	17,680	15,735	37,925
Rural Large 2024-25	10,220	18,340	16,330	39,350
Rural Large 2025-26	10,530	18,890	16,820	40,530
Rural Large 2026-27	10,920	19,590	17,440	42,030

Council must determine its fees within the range set by the Tribunal, and it has been this Council's practice to pay the upper limit. Applying the 3.7 per cent indexation will increase an individual Councillor's fee from $18,890 to $19,590 and, in addition to that sum, the Mayoral allowance will increase from $40,530 to $42,030 effective on and from 1 July 2026.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Nil (the draft LTFP for 2026-27 includes a 4 per cent indexation of the Councillor fee and Mayoral allowance, which will be updated in advance of Council's consideration to adopt the LTFP).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Local Government Remuneration Tribunal Annual Determination - 23 April 2026 ⇩

Local Government Remuneration Tribunal

Annual Determination

Report and determination
under sections 239 and 241 of the
Local Government Act 1993

23 April 2026

NSW GOVERNMENT

Contents

Executive Summary 5
Functions of the Tribunal 5
Fees 6
Categories 8
2027 Annual Review 9
Section 1 – Introduction 11
Methodology 11
Summary of submissions 12
Section 2 – 2025 Determinations 15
2025 Annual Determination 15
2025 Special Determination 15
Section 3 – 2026 Review 17
The relevant history 17
2026 Annual Review process - Fees 21
Conclusions about general fee increase in 2026 26
Fees for Deputy Mayors 27
Setting of Fees by Councils 29
2026 Annual Review process – category review 29
Correction of an identified anomaly 33
Proposed renaming of "Principal CBD" as the "Principal City" 33
Proposed reclassification of City of Parramatta Council from Major CBD to Principal CBD 34
Proposed new Metropolitan Major – High Growth Category 37
Metropolitan Major 40
Metropolitan Large 41
Metropolitan Medium 43
Proposed new Metropolitan Small – Fast Growing category 44
Metropolitan Small 46
Major Regional City 46
The proposed change to the Major Strategic Area criteria 47
Regional Strategic Area 51
Regional Centre 53

Contents

Regional Rural 54
Rural Large 56
Rural 57
County Councils 57
County Councils – Water 60
County Councils – Other 60
Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review 62
Structure and fee considerations 62
The conduct of the 2027 Annual Review 65
Section 5 – Determinations 69
Determination No. 1 – Allocation of Councils into each of the categories as per section 239 of the Act effective 1 July 2026 69
General Purpose Councils – Metropolitan 69
General Purpose Councils - Non-Metropolitan 70
County Councils 72
Determination No. 2 - Fees for Councillors and Mayors as per section 241 of the Act effective from 1 July 2026 73
General Purpose Councils – Metropolitan 73
General Purpose Councils - Non-Metropolitan 74
County Councils 74
Determination No. 3 - Fees for appointed Councillors and Chairperson as per clause 12(c), Schedule 11 of the Act effective from 1 July 2026 76
Councils designated as 'rural and remote Councils' 76
Appendices 77
Appendix 1 Criteria that apply to categories 77
Principal CBD 77
Major CBD 78
Metropolitan Major 79
Metropolitan Large 79
Metropolitan Medium 80
Metropolitan Small 81
Major Regional City 82

Contents

Major Strategic Area 82
Regional Strategic Area 83
Regional Centre 84
Regional Rural 85
Rural Large 85
Rural 86
County Councils - Water 86
County Councils - Other 86

Executive Summary

Functions of the Tribunal

1. Section 241 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (**the Act**) requires the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (**the Tribunal**), by 1 May each year, to determine for each of the categories of Councils determined under s 239, the maximum and minimum fees to be paid to Mayors and Councillors in the following year. As well as those of Chairpersons and members of County Councils: s 400. The Tribunal may also amend a determination it has made for fees to be paid to the appointed Chairperson and appointed Councillors of a council designated as a Rural and Remote Council: c 12(c), sch 11.

2. Section 239(1) of the Act requires the Tribunal to determine the categories of Councils and mayoral offices at least once every three years. It must then also place each Council and mayoral office into one of those categories. There are presently 135 Councils in the State, including County Councils, which are allocated into 15 different categories, with Central Darling Council being the subject of a 2025 Special Determination.

3. The Tribunal must also report its determination to the Minister within seven days: s 244. The Tribunal's Annual Determination takes effect from 1 July each year.

4. All of the Tribunal's functions must be undertaken in accordance with the purposes of the Act, specified in s 7 to be:

   (a) to provide the legal framework for the system of local government for New South Wales,

   (b) to set out the responsibilities and powers of Councils, Councillors and other persons and bodies that constitute the system of local government,

   (c) to provide for governing bodies of Councils that are democratically elected, or for certain rural and remote Councils, part elected and part appointed,

Executive Summary

(d) to facilitate engagement with the local community by Councils, Councillors and other persons and bodies that constitute the system of local government,

(e) to provide for a system of local government that is accountable to the community and that is sustainable, flexible and effective.

Fees

5. For reasons explained below, the Tribunal has determined that from 1 July 2026 there must be a **3.7%** increase in the current minimum and maximum fees applicable to each category of Council, as well in the fees of the appointed Chairperson and appointed Councillors of Central Darling Shire Council. That reflecting increases in the cost of living. Relevant indicators since the 2025 adjustment, including:

- Consumer Price Index for the 12 months to February 2026 of 3.7%;
- Wage Price Index for the 12 months to December 2025 of 3.4%;
- Full-time average weekly ordinary time earnings for the 12 months to November 2025;
- NSW Public Sector Salaries increases for FY 2025/26 of 3%;
- Local Government State Award increases for FY 2025/26 of 3%;
- IPART Rate Peg Base Cost Change for FY 2025/26 of 3.6%;
- The 2025 Public Service Senior Executive remuneration determinations of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal; and
- The 2025 State Members of Parliament Basic Salary remuneration determination of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal.

6. The Tribunal has also taken note of the current war in the Middle East, which is likely having an adverse impact on the cost of living. But takes the view that its effects and their potential impact on fee adjustment, cannot reliably be determined at this point.

Executive Summary

7. What was advanced in submissions included that not only should there be a cost of living increase in 2026. But that there should be a much more significant increase in fees, to reflect that current fees no longer adequately reflect the challenging work which Mayors and Councillors must undertake in their important elected offices. With the result that fees should be increased to reflect those determined by the Tribunal for the Chairperson and appointed Councillors of the Central Darling Council in its 2025 Special Determination. As well as the remuneration and allowances paid to Mayors and Councillors in Queensland and Victoria.

8. The Tribunal accepts that it has the discretion to determine that fees should justly be increased, by more than a cost of living adjustment, as was urged. That permitting its consideration of the adequacy of current fees, given the work which Mayors and Councillors are elected to perform and how that has changed over time.

9. That is because while s 242A of the Act requires the Tribunal to give effect to the same policies on increases in remuneration as those that the Industrial Relations Commission is required to give effect to under s 146C of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* (NSW) when making or varying awards or orders relating to the conditions of employment of public sector employees. That section has now been repealed, that removing the prior fetter on the Tribunal's discretion to adjust fees in the way urged on this review.

10. The Tribunal also accepts that a greater increase than that which it has determined, may be warranted. But has concluded that the amount of any such increase requires further consideration in light of changes which have taken place over time. Not merely in the amount of the fees fixed by past Determinations, but also in the work Mayors and Councillors have to perform in their elected offices.

11. Understandably, some submissions sought to draw comparisons with the fees fixed by the 2025 Special Determination for the appointed Councillors and Chairperson for the Central Darling Shire Council and those fixed for other Mayors, as well as with payments made to Councillors and Mayors in other States.

Executive Summary

12. When such comparisons are drawn, consideration can not only be given to the amount of such fees and remuneration. It must also be given to matters such as the nature of the appointments, the work required and the hours and nature of the work performed as a result. As well as to how that compares to what is required of Mayors and Councillors of Local and County Councils in this State and the fees which they receive, as a result. That also requiring an understanding of the applicable statutory schemes and the reasons for the past fixation of the fees and remuneration relied on.

13. The Tribunal was provided with little information or submissions about such matters and so is unable to come to conclusions about whether increases based on the comparisons sought to be drawn, can be entertained.

14. Other submissions about desirable fee adjustment depend on the NSW Parliament amending the Act, to provide for Mayors and Councillors to receive remuneration or salary, rather than a fee for office.

15. Even if such comparisons are presently available to be made, the differences in the statutory regimes, which were not addressed, as well as similarities and differences in the work being compared, would have to be considered. Conclusions about such matters cannot rest merely on opinions advanced in submissions.

Categories

16. In its 2026 Annual Review, as it has done in past three yearly reviews, the Tribunal undertook a s 239 determination, having invited and received submissions about proposed changes. As a result, it has concluded that it is necessary to rectify a criteria anomaly identified in the Regional Strategic category established by the 2023 Annual Determination, as well as adjusting the population criteria for the Major Strategic Area category, from 300,000 to 200,000.

Executive Summary

17. The Tribunal also identified that Dungog Shire Council has met the population threshold and Councillor to population ratio criteria for Rural Large and will, as a result, be placed in the Rural Large category.

18. The Tribunal also concluded that in 2026 there should be no other change to the present categories, which will thus continue to be:

Metropolitan	Non-Metropolitan	County Councils
Principal CBD	Major Regional City	Water
Major CBD	Major Strategic Area	Other
Metropolitan Major	Regional Strategic Area	
Metropolitan Large	Regional Centre	
Metropolitan Medium	Regional Rural	
Metropolitan Small	Rural Large	
	Rural	

2027 Annual Review

19. For reasons explained further below, in the 2027 Annual Review the Tribunal will invite further submissions from every Council, Local Government NSW and the Minister, about the current categories, criteria and fee structure and whether they remain fit for their statutory purpose. That will provide an opportunity for reliable information and submissions to be provided about claimed changes and available comparisons.

20. The Tribunal will then give further consideration to the current structure of the categories by reference to which it must fix minimum and maximum fees. That consideration may also have an impact on further fee adjustment in 2027, given that the submissions advanced on this review have raised the question of whether the current system of categories and the criteria by which Councils are allocated to them, remain fit for their purpose.

Executive Summary

21. The new structure and criteria will reflect the requirements of the Act, as will the new criteria adopted and Councils' allocation to the revised categories. The Tribunal will also determine which criteria individual Councils satisfy, which they will have an opportunity to address, having been invited to provide the Tribunal with the relevant, reliable information.

Section 1 – Introduction

Methodology

22. The Tribunal's inquiries are regulated by s 243 of the Act, which permit it to make such inquiry as it thinks necessary, before making a determination.

23. Section 248 requires Councils to pay Councillors fees which are fixed by reference to the minimum and maximum fees determined by the Tribunal. Section 239 also requires the Tribunal, at least once every 3 years, to determine categories for Councils and mayoral office and to place Councils into those categories.

24. The Tribunal's 2026 Annual Review commenced in October 2025 with the assistance of its Secretariat, when all Councils and the Association were invited to provide submissions about fees and categorisation. Its invitation asked that submissions be endorsed by Councils. All submissions received from Councils were endorsed. The Tribunal also received a submission from some individual Councillors and the Association.

25. Some twenty-five submissions were received from Councils, only some of which addressed fee increases. In its submissions the Association addressed proposed fee increases, as well as problems with the Determination flowing from the operation of the Act, proposed alterations to Council categories and the criteria by which they are allocated.

26. The Tribunal later met with representatives of 19 Councils, seven Councillors and the Association, who addressed written submissions and, in some cases, provided further data to support the submissions advanced. Not all of that provided was sourced from publicly available sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics and its reliability was thus not able to be assessed.

27. The Tribunal also had regard to the other information referred to in this report.

Section 1 – Introduction

Summary of submissions

28. Most of the submissions received focused on the inadequacies of the fees and the statutory system which requires them to be fixed as they are. Issues raised including that:

- The remuneration which the fees generate being grossly inadequate, not adequately compensating for the skills, knowledge and responsibilities the Act requires Councillors and Mayors in urban, regional and rural contexts to have and exercise;
- There has been significant, increasing complexity in the work which has to be undertaken, as well as an increase in the time it requires, without a change in remuneration to compensate for these changes;
- That including as the result of changes to the Code of Meeting Practice which Councils have to observe, which has resulted in increased expenses having to be born, for which there is no compensation;
- There is a need for a Deputy Mayor fee to be implemented, to reflect what this role now requires;
- That the current fee structure and meeting requirements act as a barrier to desirable skilled representation in local government, as well as to desirable diversity in that representation;
- It has also driven the loss of able and experienced representatives;
- The existing differences in fees received by Councillors and Mayors in Metropolitan Councils, by comparison to those received by those in Regional and Rural Councils, did not reflect the similarities in their roles and responsibilities. Nor the additional responsibilities which have to be undertaken in Regional and Rural Councils;
- The Determination drives politicisation of Councils, by requiring them to set their own fees within the minimum and maximum set by the Tribunal, which also put them into an undesirable position of conflict: ss 239 and 248; and

Section 1 – Introduction

- Fees were out of step with those which are paid to Board members and those who accept appointments to advisory committees, with which comparisons were also sought to be drawn, but no concrete information was provided about.

29. On this review the Tribunal was urged to undertake a similar assessment of fees to that undertaken in 1995 and not to limit its consideration of what fee increase a cost of living adjustment would warrant. It was also urged to also consider the range of factors it has taken into account in the past, in determining what a cost of living adjustment should be.

30. Various submissions also urged the desirability of various other proposed legislative changes. For example:

- Introducing a new model of remuneration for Mayors and Councillors to replace the current fee based structure;
- Removing the Tribunal's obligations to fix maximum and minimum fees for Mayors and Councillors;
- Introducing a separate fixed fee for the Deputy Mayor position;
- Deputy Mayors receiving mayoral fees while acting as Mayor, but Mayors still continuing to be paid their Mayoral fees;
- Indexed pro rata remuneration; and
- Recognition that the work of Mayors and Councillors involves a full time job. As to which, it must be noted, no information provided to the Tribunal established this to be the case.

31. These matters are not within the Tribunal's control, but they will be drawn to the attention of the Minister.

32. The Tribunal accepting the importance of the various views raised by Councils, Councillors and the Association and as a result, will draw them to the attention of the Minister. But that

Section 1 – Introduction

it has power to act on some of them on this review, has not been established, given the current statutory scheme.

33. The Tribunal also notes that consideration of future expected developments when Councils are categorised was also urged by some submissions. While others expressed satisfaction with the Council's current categorisation, as the basis for fixing its fees, while not addressing whether it still satisfied the applicable criteria. This will have to be revisited in the 2027 Annual Review.

34. If further submissions are then advanced, which provide a basis for different conclusions being arrived at about any of the above matters, they will of course be considered by the Tribunal. And if the Act is amended in response to what has been urged, the Tribunal will then undertake whatever statutory tasks it is given.

Section 2 – 2025 Determinations

2025 Annual Determination

35. In 2025, the Tribunal received sixteen written submissions, which included two requests for re-categorisation. As a result, it reviewed population and other data relating to those Councils, to ensure categorisation was consistent with the applicable criteria.

36. The Tribunal found that the then current allocation of the Councils remained appropriate, with the exception of Mid Coast Council. As a result of it meeting the population benchmark, it was re-categorised from Regional Centre to Regional Strategic Area: 2025 Annual Determination report at [58]-[59].

37. The Tribunal also determined that the minimum and maximum fees applicable to each category would increase by 3% from 1 July 2025.

2025 Special Determination

38. The Tribunal also made a Special Determination in 2025, following the introduction of the *Local Government Amendment (Rural and Remote Councils) Act 2024* and the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Rural and Remote Councils) Regulation 2025*. Having on 6 June 2025 received a direction from the Minister for Local Government under s 242 of the Act, to determine the maximum and minimum fees for Appointed Councillors and the Chairperson for Central Darling Shire Council.

39. The effect of the legislation was to insert Schedule 11 into the Act, cl 3 permitting a Council to be designated as a Rural and Remote Council by regulation, as the Central Darling Shire Council was, when the Minister recommended that it met criteria specified by the regulation: cl 3(2). The Regulations now provide that a Council may be designated as a Rural and Remote Council if, at the time of designation, its area has a population of 5,000 persons or fewer as recorded in data series 1410.0–Data by Region published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics: r 413F.

Section 2 – 2025 Determinations

40. Central Darling Shire Council is designated as a Rural and Remote Council for 10 years: r 413G. With the result that it must have six Councillors, one elected from each ward, as well as three appointed by the Minister r 413G(3).

41. The Minister must also appoint an appointed Councillor as chairperson of the Council: cl 10(1) sch 11. The Tribunal's determinations under s 241 do not apply to appointed Councillors: cl 12(2)(a) sch 11. But it must determine their maximum and minimum fees and may at any time amend such a determination: cl 12(2)(b) and (c) sch 11.

42. In its Special Determination the Tribunal determined a minimum fee of $13,830 and a maximum of $13,930 for appointed Councillors and a minimum of $72,080 and a maximum of $72,180 for the appointed Chairperson.

43. This Determination was relied on in this review to advance the Association's submissions that the functions of the appointed chairperson of Central Darling Shire Council are substantially the same as those of Mayors of other Rural Councils. With the result that their fees should be increased to similar amounts. That was supported by submissions advanced by some Councils.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

The relevant history

44. The submissions advanced require not only a consideration of the current fees and what the statutory scheme provides for, but also of the history by which they have been arrived at. As well as the impact of changes which have occurred.

45. The history was not addressed by the submissions advanced.

46. Relevantly, it includes that in 1994 the Tribunal undertook wide ranging consultations to establish what was then involved in the roles and functions of elected representatives of local government, conducting public hearings to obtain a representative cross section across the State.

47. It then examined matters such as Councillors' backgrounds and experience; community activities engaged in before and after election; time spent on meetings as well as preparation time; Council's functions and the issues and problems they had to deal with. As well as remuneration levels and ratios between Councillors and Mayors. The Tribunal having received submissions from 66 Councils, 7 County Councils, associations and the public: at page 3 – 5 of the 1994 Determination.

48. The functions of Councils and the roles of their elected officials under the Act were explained, with contrasts drawn with the predecessor 1919 legislation. Under which members of Councils "*were regarded in effect, as performing honorary community roles, with some provision for recompense for prescribed incurred expenses*": at 11 of the 1995 Determination.

49. Existing fees were then found not to adequately recompense those elected for the performance of their duties at regular Council meetings, special community and committee meetings, communication with the community and representing Council at functions: at 11

Section 3 – 2026 Review

of the 1995 Determination. That requiring lengthy periods to be spent on Council business and associated interviewing, reading and preparation: at 12 of the 1995 Determination.

50. The Tribunal had regard to all such activities in setting fees under the 1993 Act, at a time when they were performed in addition to Mayors and Councillor's normal occupations: at 12 of the 1995 Determination. It then being the common experience that the substantial majority of Councillors and Mayors were involved in some other employment or engagement, either full-time or part-time.

51. The fees then fixed were based on an assumption that Councillors would also be recompensed for expenditure reasonably incurred in relation to their Council duties. That being a matter of discretion for each Council, according to the particular circumstances of that Council. That allowing them to determine the extent of any absorption of expenses in fees: at 16 of the 1995 Determination.

52. The minimum fees were determined on the basis that Councillors and Mayors were *"performing a community service in addition to their normal occupations"*: at 16 of the 1995 Determination. The usual practice being "*to programme the attendance of councillors and mayors outside normal business hours for meetings and other activities to accommodate their other time commitments. Their duties not requiring continuous attendance during the course of each working day."*: at 16 – 17 of the 1995 Determination.

53. And that *"The duties performed as mayor attract an additional fee for extra delegated duties and functions actually performed":* at 17 of the 1995 Determination. It was further explained at 19 of the 1995 Determination:

"The minimum fees determined provide the statutory minimum payment for councillors and mayors. They are based on an assessment of the average council in each category. As - with any averaging, the fees may be generous for some councils but modest for others. The maximum fees provide the necessary ambit of discretion to enable each council to assess its performance compared with other councils in its category. Such discretion

Section 3 – 2026 Review

enables each council to determine whether its performance as a whole compared with the other councils justifies a payment in excess of the minimum to its councillors and/or mayor. It is conceivable that because of significant delegations by a council to the mayor, this situation may warrant a fee greater than the minimum for the mayor, but not for councillors. The reverse situation could also apply."

54. What was then being evaluated by the Tribunal being *"the knowledge, skills and community interests of councillors and mayors"*: at 19 of the 1995 Annual Determination.

55. This Determination also explained, in detail, how the categories were then arrived at. With various distinctions drawn between Metropolitan and Non-metropolitan Councils, with consideration of matters such as their size, population, assets and expenditure, amongst other factors. Consideration also then being given to the unique position of the Council of the City of Sydney.

56. It also explained how this related to the fees determined, given the relevant history. Which included a change from the original position under the 1919 Act, that Local Government elected officials had traditionally been seen as civic minded citizens providing a voluntary service to the community, being born in mind. As well as what had been recognised when the *Local Government (Payment of Fees) Amendment Act 1993* (NSW) was introduced. It recognising payment of a fee for attending to Council business, i.e., meetings, inspections, etc, which did not involve the payment of salaries: at 64-66 of the 1995 Annual Determination.

57. Consideration was also given to the statutory roles and responsibilities of Councils in other States and overseas, as well as of comparisons then sought to be drawn with members of Parliament.

58. It was not then accepted that local government representation had progressed to the status of an independent career. Even though some elected officers chose to spend their time, full time, on Council duties: at 69-70 of the 1995 Determination.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

59. It was also explained that the minimum and maximum fee range fixed required Councils to each evaluate the functions and responsibilities which were actually performed by their Councillors: at 76 of the 1995 Determination.

60. After 1995, over time the fees fixed by the Determination have been increased by the Tribunal, to reflect changes it made to the categories of Councils which the Act required it to review regularly, in order to fix appropriate maximum and minimum fees.

61. In 2017 the Tribunal noted that what the Act required was "a categorisation model in which Councils with the largest number of features in common can be grouped together for remuneration purposes. This is not straightforward, as each Council has challenges and issues which are unique": at [16].

62. It then found that while the then existing criteria continued to provide an equitable and transparent model by which to differentiate Councils for the purposes of determining remuneration, there was some scope to refine the criteria to address a number of anomalies and to better reflect the composition of Councils after amalgamations: at [18] – [19] 2017 Annual Report.

63. It also sought to improve consistency and transparency in the allocation of Councils into categories, with the result that a number were either recategorised into an existing category, or a new category: at [19].

64. Fees were determined for the new categories, having regard to relativities between the existing groups: [54].

65. Fees were later increased to reflect not only cost of living increases, but also changes which the Tribunal made to Council categories and the applicable criteria. But for a time, the Tribunal's powers to increase fees were frozen and at other times available fee increases were capped, as the result of steps taken by Governments.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

66. These changes to its discretions were explained in the Tribunal's various Annual Determinations. They help explain the complaints received on this review about the current fees, which it must be accepted, as a result, do not reflect all increases in the cost of living over time.

67. On the Association's approach, this has resulted in fees which no longer accurately reflect what the Tribunal first assessed, independently, in 1995.

68. In 2020 the Tribunal considered recategorisation proposals it received in 2019, about which it sought and received submissions: at [13]-[19] 2020 Annual Report. Then creating the new category of Regional Centre; renaming Regional City to Major Regional City and also adopting some changed criteria. As well as reordering the Regional Strategic Area criteria, considering that it warranted further differentiation.

69. It also altered the criteria for Metropolitan Medium and Metropolitan Large categories, with resulting changes for other categories: at [23]-[30]. In some cases, additional criteria being significant enough to warrant some Councils' categorisation into a group with a higher population: at [30]. Fees were set to reflect resulting activities: at [69].

70. In 2023 the Tribunal sought to improve consistency of the criteria and also adopted non-resident population criteria for some categories, with resulting reclassification of some Councils: at [23]-[25] 2023 Annual Report. As well as creating two new categories, Rural Large and Metropolitan Major, to bridge identified gaps: [26]-[36].

2026 Annual Review process - Fees

71. As explained, this year's submissions pursued various concerns about the current fees. They not being considered to adequately compensate for the skills and knowledge Councillors and Mayors are required to exercise, or the time they have to spend in performing the duties of their offices, given considerable changes over time. In

Section 3 – 2026 Review

considerable part this having been driven by population increases and changes introduced by Governments.

72. The view repeatedly urged being that current fees result in a considerable barrier to desirable diversity in representation in local government, as well as problems in attracting and retaining suitably qualified people to stand for and remain in office, when elected.

73. The Tribunal accepts that there are such problems, given the information and submissions it has received.

74. There were various submissions that an increase was necessary, given the increased cost of living. But few submissions addressed the quantum of the increase. Narrabri Council urging a 10% increase and Lake Macquarie a 3-4% increase. Another that fees should be doubled. Other submissions urging that Mayoral fees be increased substantially to reflect the 2025 Special Determination. The Association and some Councils also seeking increases which resulted in fees similar to the remuneration paid in Queensland and Victoria.

75. The City of Sydney Council did not seek such increase in the fees payable to the Lord Mayor, but urged very substantial increases for Councillors. Some Councillors also providing, late, further information which the Tribunal did not have the opportunity to give adequate consideration to, given all they have raised and the time frame in which this review must be completed.

76. Some submissions also urged an increase in fees of rural and regional Councillors and Mayors, to assist in addressing low candidature numbers.

77. The Association also urged that a significant increase in fees was needed to:

"1. Ensure that Councillors and Mayors in New South Wales do not continue to experience fee erosion flowing from the former NSW Public Sector Wages Policy;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

2.Reflect the current economic climate in New South Wales and adjust fees according to recent and relevant economic data; and

3. Recognise the increasing demands and time commitment required of elected local government representatives."

78. The Association noting that the repeal of s 146C of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* (NSW) had the result that the Tribunal is no longer constrained by a cap when awarding fee increases. And urging that the Tribunal accept that current fees were manifestly inadequate, not properly reflecting as they needed to, the current responsibilities and role of elected Council officials. That preventing Councils' financial stability and also deterring quality candidates, of all backgrounds, pursuing civic office, which was not in the public interest.

79. It also submitting that fees should now be assessed on the basis that the work of elected officials was valued at more than 8 hours per week, at the rate of the national minimum wage. It also advanced economic and wage data to support these arguments

80. The submissions thus drew comparisons with:

- The salary paid to members of parliament under the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989* (NSW);
- Remuneration which Mayors and Councillors of Queensland Councils are paid under the *Local Government Act 2009* (QLD) and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (QLD); and
- Allowances which Victorian Mayors and Councillors receive, fixed by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under s 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (VIC).

Section 3 – 2026 Review

81. Specific examples were also relied on. Including, for example, that Councillors in Townsville are paid a maximum remuneration of $135,123, while those in Liverpool are paid a maximum fee of only $34,820. While in the case of Mayors the comparison was $225,206 to $136,290.

82. The difficulty with such comparisons is that the other legislative schemes relied on, do not provide for a fee based structure of the kind for with the Act provides for NSW Mayors and Councillors.

83. Parliamentarians in this State, for example, receive a basic salary and an electoral allowance payable as compensation in respect of all incidents of the performance of their parliamentary duties (other than those compensated or reimbursed by other additional entitlements): s 4 and 10(2B) of the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989* (NSW).

84. Still, some submissions relied on an observation in the 2024 Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Annual Report, where I, in my capacity as Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal, said at [28] that:

"Not only should Members of Parliament be fairly remunerated for their important and challenging work, within the State's means, but it must also be remembered that such remuneration and the other conditions and entitlements provided by the Determination play a real role in attracting people of high intellect, integrity and vigour to stand for election to the Parliament. People who have the necessary skills to perform such work well and who are prepared to devote their time to serving the public interest, rather than only their own interests. Appropriate salary and conditions also help to ensure that such people are also prepared to continue seeking re-election in order to continue performing the important work of their offices."

85. The view urged being that those observations also apply to NSW Councillors and Mayors, given the valuable, time consuming and challenging work which their roles now require them to perform.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

86. While the Tribunal was not provided with information which would provide a basis for the acceptance of these opinions, support for them can be found in s 232 of the Act, which explains the important roles which Councillors play. As well as in s 233A, which specifies the oath of office which they must take after election. By which they promise to undertake the duties of their office in the best interests of the people of their Council area and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out their functions, powers, authorities and discretions.

87. Despite this and no matter how earnestly held, it is not presently apparent how these views can be acted on by the Tribunal, given the current legislative scheme. All of them seeming to depend on the Parliament amending this State's Act, to provide for Mayors and Councillors to receive remuneration or salary, rather than a fee for office.

88. As has been explained in past Annual Determinations, that is not a matter within the Tribunal's control.

89. The 20 May 1993 Second Reading speech to the Act explains how its terms were arrived at. As the result of a lengthy bipartisan reform process, following enquiry into changes required to be made to the then frequently amended predecessor 1919 legislation: Hansard p 2414. The Tribunal's 1994 Determination explains the process by which it initially fixed fees and the subsequent Annual Determinations, how they have been increased over time.

90. Tribunal Determinations have thus explained that Mayors and Councillors are paid a fee for the services which they volunteer to provide when they are elected, not a salary. Section 241 still obliges the Tribunal to fix such a fee. It follows that it does not have the power to determine that they should be paid a salary, or remuneration.

91. Little Information was provided on this review to support the submissions which urged the view that the current statutory fee model is no longer appropriate. The significantly increased and more responsible work which it is widely considered now falls to Councils

Section 3 – 2026 Review

to perform and what that requires of its Mayor and Councillors, helps explain why it is also widely considered that legislative change is now desirable.

92. Such information is relevant to the determination of an increase in fees. But the Tribunal has no power to act on the view that the current statutory fee based model no longer remains appropriate. Nor to determine that a remuneration based model such as that contained in the Queensland and Victorian legislation should be adopted in this State. Nor what such remuneration should be.

Conclusions about general fee increase in 2026

93. The Tribunal has considered all it has received, together with the other matters referred to in this report, having been assisted by its two assessors: s 236. Meeting with them to consider their views about the submissions the Tribunal received and the exercise of its functions on this review.

94. The result is the Tribunal's conclusions that:

- All fees should be adjusted from 1 July 2026 by **3.7%** to reflect changes in the cost of living, in the expectation that there will be further increases in those costs, driven by the consequences of the war in the Middle East, which is already having adverse impacts on the entire Australian community;
- To make no other adjustments to fees on this review, but to invite the submissions further explained below, in the 2027 Annual Review. The Tribunal accepting that changes have occurred which ought to be reflected in the fees fixed by the Determination. But also considering that further information and consideration is required, before conclusions can be arrived at about how those changes can be fairly reflected by a further fee adjustment.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

95. The Tribunal thus accepts that it is time to undertake a review of the kind the Association proposed, but has concluded that it cannot be undertaken in this review. That explaining the process which the Tribunal proposes to undertake in 2027, explained in section 4.

The same fee structure for all Mayors and Councillors

96. Remuneration for a Mayor or Councillor not being based on geographical location was also urged by submissions advanced. A number contending that the role of a Mayor and Councillor was fundamentally the same, requiring the same skills, knowledge, experience and responsibilities regardless of location. With the result that the fees of Regional and Rural Mayors should be increased to that of their Metropolitan colleagues.

97. These submissions cannot be accepted. The Act requiring the Tribunal to fix appropriate categories of Council, having regard to specified criteria. The Determination's history and criteria helping to explain differences recognised by the categories. Which the Tribunal must reflect in the minimum and maximum fees fixed for each category.

98. These submissions did not pay necessary regard to these statutory requirements, which are not for the Tribunal to ignore or abandon.

99. The Act does not permit the Tribunal to fix the same fees for all Mayors and Councillors, irrespective of their category. If it were to be found that the fees for Mayors and Councillors of different categories ought to be completely the same, that would necessarily reflect that those Councils ought to fall within the same category.

Fees for Deputy Mayors

100. The Act also does not permit the Tribunal to fix a separate fee for Deputy Mayors. Despite which the issue of a distinct fee within the Determination for the role of Deputy Mayor was once again pressed, as it has been on past reviews. That being supported on this review

Section 3 – 2026 Review

by reports of Mayors being unable to perform the functions of their offices, which had to be taken on by Deputy Mayors, without receiving any resulting additional fees.

101. One submission was that Deputy Mayors undertake significant responsibilities, which the Act fails to adequately recognise or remunerate. Another that a Deputy Mayor must also step in to represent the Mayor when unavailable, chairs committees and plays a pivotal role in decision making and advocacy.

102. The submissions thus urged that the fee structure recognise the additional workload and responsibility that comes with the role of Deputy Mayor.

103. The issue of fees for the role of Deputy Mayor was explained in the 2024 Annual Determination at [53]-[55] and in the 2025 Annual Determination at [62]- [65]. What was there explained was not addressed in the submissions.

104. Section 249 (5) still permits a Council to "pay the Deputy Mayor (if there is one) a fee determined by the Council for such time as the Deputy Mayor acts in the office of the Mayor. The amount of the fee so paid must be deducted from the Mayor's annual fee." That requires a decision of Council and cannot be dictated by either the Mayor or a Deputy.

105. The submissions advanced reveal that some Councils have chosen not to exercise this power. With the result that the Deputy Mayor who took on functions the Mayor was unable to perform for a period, received no additional fees to reflect the increased duties taken on. That is an available outcome under the Act and remains a matter for each Council to determine. It is not within the control of Mayors.

106. Still, there having been no change to the Act which would permit the Tribunal to determine a distinct fee for the position of Deputy Mayor, must result in the submissions advanced being rejected. It will, however, draw the issues raised to the Minister's attention.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Setting of Fees by Councils

107. Concerns regarding the setting of minimum and maximum fees by Councils, still required by s 241, was also again raised by some submissions. A number calling on the Tribunal to set only one mandatory fee for each category. Another suggesting that the Tribunal could increase the minimum fees to the same amount as the maximum fee level. Another, advocating repeal of s 241 of the Act.

108. Such change was urged because it was considered that this would result in desirable equality of fees and remove the potential for politicisation of fee setting, and potential conflicts of interest. That also enhancing relationships with the community.

109. In the same way as the Court of Appeal recently explained in *Director of Public Prosecutions (NSW) v President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales* [2026] NSWCA 20 [57], the Tribunal is satisfied that it cannot do indirectly, what the Act does not permit it to do directly.

110. It follows that these submissions must also be rejected. But this issue will also be drawn to the Minister's attention.

111. In the 2027 Annual Review, submissions will be invited about the appropriate range between the minimum and maximum fees for the categories then determined.

2026 Annual Review process – category review

112. In determining Council categories, the Tribunal is required to have regard to the matters specified in s 240 of the Act, namely:

- The size of areas;
- The physical terrain of areas;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

- The population of areas and the distribution of the population;
- The nature and volume of business dealt with by each Council;
- The nature and extent of the development of areas;
- The diversity of communities served;
- The regional, national and international significance of the Council;
- Such matters as the Remuneration Tribunal considers relevant to the provision of efficient and effective local government; and
- Such other matters as may be prescribed by the regulations.

113. The categories of County Councils also require regard be paid to the functions of County Councils: s 240(2). They are specified in s 394 of the Act to be any one or more of the functions of a Council under the Act or any other Act, in accordance with a proclamation made for the purpose of Part 5 of the Act.

114. The Tribunal last reviewed the categories of Councils and mayoral offices in 2023. The current categories in 2026 attracting the increased minimum and maximum fees earlier explained. With the result that some of them continue to overlap considerably, others being but little different and some not readily able to be reconciled.

115. This helps explain why the Tribunal has concluded that limited change is warranted on this review, without the more extensive review of categories, criteria and resulting appropriate fees which will be undertaken in 2027. In order to ensure that the statutory intent is achieved by the Determination. On that review all Councils will be asked to provide reliable, comparable and publicly available data, on which the Tribunal's decisions can then fairly be made.

116. The purpose of the categories and the specified criteria is to enable the Tribunal to annually determine the maximum and minimum amounts of fees to be paid to Mayors and Councillors in each of the categories it determines: s 239.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

117. They having no other statutory purpose, it is difficult to see the reason for a number of current categories attracting overlapping fees; there being limited differences between the fees attracted by other categories, while fees for the Chairperson of the Darling Shire Council are very substantially higher than those paid to very many Mayors.

118. This and the submissions advanced also raise the question of whether the categories and criteria provided by the 2023 Annual Determination, adjusted in the limited way explained by this Determination, adequately reflect the requirements of the Act. As well as whether they continue to remain appropriate and fit for purpose or require further review.

119. The matters specified in s 240(1) driving the need to take into account relevant statistical and demographical data, such as that sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Office of the Local Government and Planning NSW, to which regard has been paid in the past. As well as to data provided by Councils about their particular areas and operations, which also have to be taken into account.

120. One of the difficulties on this review was that the Tribunal had no up to date data about the position of the majority of Councils, which would enable it to determine whether the current category and criteria continue to be fit for purpose, given the requirements of s 240. As well as whether the categories into which Councils are currently placed, remain appropriate.

121. The history of the categories established by past Determinations began in 1994, when there were more Councils in existence and fees were fixed having regard to past history. In 1995, 5 categories were established, with three special categories then also continuing, S1 – Sydney City Council, S2 Newcastle and Wollongong City Councils and S3 – County Councils.

122. In the Tribunal's ongoing 3 yearly reviews since then, categories have been altered, merged and increased for various reasons, including to reflect Council mergers. A new model being adopted in 2017 when the number of Councils was reduced to 128. That

Section 3 – 2026 Review

having established 5 Metropolitan categories and 4 Non Metropolitan categories. In 2020 criteria for some categories were altered, two new categories created and one renamed.

123. In 2023 a further two new categories were created, three Councils which met the criteria thresholds for existing categories were reclassified and criteria consistency improved by the inclusion of the non-resident population, for a number of categories. A consideration permitted by s 240(1), which enables the Tribunal to have regard to such matters as it considers relevant to the provision of efficient and effective local government. The County Council categories remaining unchanged.

124. Submissions advanced in 2026:

- Sought the creation of 2 new categories;
- Proposed recategorisation of 7 Councils - Parramatta, Lake Macquarie, Murray River, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Randwick, Shellharbour and Willoughby Councils;
- Sought that one category revert to a previous name;
- questioned the suitability of current criteria; and
- Urged the Tribunal to take into account other matters which Council now consider to be relevant to the determination of categories and their categorisation. Visitor numbers, being the best example.

125. If accepted, these submissions require consideration of how these aims could properly be reflected in the category criteria, which the submissions did not address.

126. It also appears that there may, in 2026, be further Council demergers, which will also necessitate consideration of the categories and Council allocations, in order that appropriate fees are fixed for their Councillors and Mayors in 2027.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

127. This all helped drive the Tribunal's conclusion that further change is required to current categories and criteria. But that the submissions and information it has received on this review, did not enable final views to be formed about what those changes should justly be. That will be revisited in the 2027 Annual Review.

Correction of an identified anomaly

128. The current category allocations and criteria appear in the 2025 Annual Determination at Section 5 and Appendix 1 respectively.

129. One required change which has been identified results from an anomaly. The criteria for the category Regional Strategic contains the following sentence:

Currently, only Lake Macquarie Council meets the criteria to be categorised as a Regional Strategic Area. Its population and overall scale of Council operations will be greater than Regional Centre Councils.

130. This is incorrect. There currently being 5 Councils classified as Regional Strategic: Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Mid-Coast, Shoalhaven, and Tweed. As a result, this erroneous statement has been removed from Appendix 1 of the 2026 Annual Determination.

Proposed renaming of "Principal CBD" as the "Principal City"

131. This change in name was urged in order to revert to a prior category name, the Council submitting that this would properly recognise its regional, national and international significance, which extended beyond the Sydney CBD. As well as reflecting significant increases in the roles and responsibilities of its Councillors, in Australia's only global city and to ensure that fees they receive appropriately reflect their responsibilities.

132. The submission explained alterations, over time, to the area which the Council covers. It now having eight distinct economic precincts, as the result of the area added to the City in

Section 3 – 2026 Review

2004: the Harbour, City North, Pyrmont, City South, Eastern Creative, Tech Centre West, Entertainment and Recreation and Southern Enterprise. That having had an impact on representation and other matters relied on to advance a proposed significant increase in Councillors' fees.

133. It was in 2017 that the name change from Principal City to Principal CBD was introduced as part of a restructure which reflected the evolving shape of local government in the State. That retaining the Council of the City of Sydney in its own category, while recognising the emergence of the second CBD in Sydney at Parramatta.

134. The Tribunal can see no disadvantage from the proposed name change. But is still not persuaded that it should now be adopted, without consideration being given to such a change within the wider review proposed for 2027.

135. No change having been proposed to either the criteria which apply to this category, or to the Major CBD category into which only the Council of the City of Parramatta falls. It recognising Parramatta to be the secondary CBD, which some submissions urged was no longer appropriate.

Proposed reclassification of City of Parramatta Council from Major CBD to Principal CBD

136. Council sought to be recategorised from the Major CBD to Principal CBD category, to better reflect its size, rate of growth, economic influence, operational budget and strategic and geographical importance.

137. Council also submitting that it plays a leading role in Greater Sydney's advancement. With factors relied on including:

- 30% of Australia's top 500 companies have offices located in Paramatta;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

- The city is accessible to 2.3 million people within 45 minutes, by car or public transport;
- Creative and cultural institutions such as Riverside Theatre, Olympic Park and the upcoming Powerhouse Parramatta museum are located there;
- As is a large Health and research precinct which includes six (6) universities and Westmead Hospital;
- The Engineering and Innovation Hub, as well as Western Sydney Startup Hub also being located within the LGA; and
- It having the second largest economy, which generates a gross regional product of $32.88 billion, and 33,000 businesses with over 202,000 jobs.

138. What was advanced did not accord with submissions advanced by some other Councils.

139. The Tribunal is not persuaded that the City of Parramatta Council is incorrectly categorised or satisfies the criteria of Principal CBD, which reflect the unique position of the Council of the City of Sydney. Nor did it advance any changed criteria which would fairly capture both its position and that of the Council of the City of Sydney. That the two can fairly be equated, has also not been established.

140. The Determination has long recognised the distinct role which the Council of the City of Sydney plays, with the result the higher fees its Mayor and Councillors receive, which is reflected in the current criteria:

The Council of the City of Sydney (the City of Sydney) is the principal central business district (CBD) in the Sydney Metropolitan area. The City of Sydney is home to Sydney's primary commercial office district with the largest concentration of businesses and retailers in Sydney. The City of Sydney's sphere of economic influence is the greatest of any local government area in Australia.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

The CBD is also host to some of the city's most significant transport infrastructure including Central Station, Circular Quay and International Overseas Passenger Terminal. Sydney is recognised globally with its iconic harbour setting and the City of Sydney is host to the city's historical, cultural and ceremonial precincts. The City of Sydney attracts significant visitor numbers and is home to 60 per cent of Metropolitan Sydney's hotels.

The role of Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney has significant prominence reflecting the CBD's importance as home to the country's major business centres and public facilities of state and national importance. The Lord Mayor's responsibilities in developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, including other Councils, state and federal governments, community and business groups, and the media are considered greater than other mayoral roles in NSW.

141. The submission and data advanced did not establish that Parramatta satisfies these criteria. Nor a basis for the conclusion that its Mayor and Councillors should receive the same fees as those received by the Mayor and Councillors of the City of Sydney.

142. The criteria which apply to its category, Major CBD, being:

The Council of the City of Parramatta (City of Parramatta) is the economic capital of Greater Western Sydney and the geographic and demographic centre of Greater Sydney. Parramatta is the second largest economy in NSW (after Sydney CBD) and the sixth largest in Australia.

As a secondary CBD to Metropolitan Sydney the Parramatta local government area is a major provider of business and government services with a significant number of organisations relocating their head offices to Parramatta. Public administration and safety have been a growth sector for Parramatta as the State Government has promoted a policy of moving government agencies westward to support economic development beyond the Sydney CBD.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

The City of Parramatta provides a broad range of regional services across the Sydney Metropolitan area with a significant transport hub and hospital and educational facilities. The City of Parramatta is home to the Westmead Health and Medical Research precinct which represents the largest concentration of hospital and health services in Australia, servicing Western Sydney and providing other specialised services for the rest of NSW.

The City of Parramatta is also home to a significant number of cultural and sporting facilities (including Sydney Olympic Park) which draw significant domestic and international visitors to the region.

143. The assumptions reflected in these criteria were challenged by other Councils as no longer being correct. Blacktown Council relying, for example, on data which showed that its residential population in 2024 was considerably greater than that of Parramatta, 274,956 to 438, 843. As was its total population, including workers not residing within its area.

144. The data received helped drive the conclusion that the current criteria may no longer be fit for purpose. And that further consideration needs to be given to what appropriate categories now are and what criteria should apply to them.

145. But the reclassification proposed on this review, cannot be accepted.

Proposed new Metropolitan Major – High Growth Category

146. Blacktown City Council sought the creation of a new category, Metropolitan Major – High Growth, for which it did not advance either criteria, or proposed fees.

147. It is now classified as a Metropolitan Major Council, together with Canterbury Bankstown. They having both last been assessed as falling below the Major CBD category, into which only the City of Parramatta falls. The current criteria for the Metropolitan Major category are:

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Councils categorised Metropolitan Major will typically have a minimum residential population of 400,000.

Councils may also be categorised Metropolitan Major if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 400,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- *total operating revenue exceeding $300M per annum*
- *the provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities*
- *significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors*
- *high population growth.*

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Major will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

148. Blacktown contended that the proposed new category would recognise larger, more complex Councils which exceed the criteria of Metropolitan Major. It being relevant that it would continue to outstrip Parramatta in various respects, given its current and expected ongoing growth. This new category thus facilitating fair and appropriate adjustments to the remuneration payable to Mayors and Councillors.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

149. The Council relying on data such as population, budget and asset growth, as well as 'transformational' projects and ongoing developments which had driven further change and challenges for it and its officers, reflective of its strategic planning and economic sphere of influence. It claiming now to be the fourth largest economy in NSW, with significant plans for further growth to 2041.

150. It also relied on comparisons which it sought to draw with Canterbury-Bankstown, from which it said it is now differentiated by a range of factors, which it is not necessary to explain.

151. What was not advanced was either proposed criteria for the new category sought, nor fees which might fairly attach to it. The Council placing reliance on what parliamentarians are paid in NSW, a reliance which I have explained is not available under the current statutory scheme.

152. The difficulty with what was proposed is also revealed by the limited difference between the maximum and minimum fees for the existing categories, which reflects an assessment that the work involved cannot be significantly differentiated.

153. Nor can it be accepted that it is appropriate for criteria to be based on anticipated growth in population, infrastructure, assets or budgets, as this and some other submissions urged. That is not embraced by s 240 of the Act. Nor can anticipated developments be accepted to be a reliable basis on which decisions can fairly be made about categories or criteria, depending as they do on assumptions.

154. The basis of what is anticipated at a particular point in time being unlikely to be able to be established by independent, reliable and publicly available data, which will allow relevant comparisons to be drawn. And the adoption of such criteria giving rise to the difficulties which will result, if what is anticipated, does not come to pass.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

155. It may also not be overlooked that when the submissions were received, Major CBD Mayoral fees ranged from $44,840 to $126,320, while those in Metropolitan Major Councils ranged from $44,840 to $114,300. This helps explain why the view has to be taken that there is little purpose to be served by the adoption of the proposed new category, which would sit between the existing categories.

156. Particularly without identification of criteria which reflect its true differentiation from the existing categories. That such differentiation does not exist, is reflected in the current small differences in fees for the existing categories.

157. The result is that the Tribunal has not been persuaded that the proposed new category can be established.

158. If in the 2027 review the establishment of new categories is pursued, the Tribunal should be provided with a proposal which addresses not only the name of the proposed category, but also appropriate criteria, together with the maximum and minimum fees which are proposed. They will have to have appropriate relationships with other categories, which will also have to be explained by the submission.

159. As will the consequences of their adoption for other Councils which may be affected. Such Councils will also have to be given an opportunity to be heard, before the Tribunal comes to any conclusions about proposed new categories. That will be achieved by service of the proposed change on other affected Councils.

Metropolitan Major

160. No Council sought any alteration to the criteria or recategorisation to this category.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Metropolitan Large

161. Both Randwick and Willoughby Councils sought to be recategorised as Metropolitan Large Councils, currently being categorised as Metropolitan Medium. Despite neither satisfying the population threshold, although Randwick does satisfy the revenue criteria. Their total populations as at 1 July 2025 being, 176,656 and 133,052 respectively, including non-resident workers.

162. Randwick City Council sought to be reclassified from Metropolitan Medium to Metropolitan relying on:

- Population estimates as at 1 July of 201,000, comprising of 156,000 residents and 45,000 non- resident working population;
- A high population growth that regularly exceeds the Sydney average;
- An operating revenue of $221 million;
- A Gross Regional Product of $10.55 billion for the year ending June 2024;
- The provision of reginal services, including major education, health, sporting, recreation and cultural facilities; and
- Significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors.

163. Willoughby City Council contending that it exceeded the functions of a typical Metropolitan Medium Council, relying on:

- A population as at 30 June 2024 of 79,634 with a growth rate of 5.47% between 2022 and 2024;
- A forecast for continued population growth due to the planned construction of additional dwellings, the likely impact being an increase of 15,000 to 20,000 people in coming years;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

- A high daily visitation rate driven by the employment and commercial hub of Chatswood with opal data showing in excess of 50,000 entries and exits per day at Chatswood station;
- Total revenue of $187.9 million for the 2025/2026 financial year;
- A Gross Regional Product of $13.11 billion for the year ending June 2024; and
- The provision of regional services in health, education, culture, transport and two (2) large retail precincts.

164. The current criteria are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will typically have a minimum residential population of 200,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Large if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 200,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

• total operating revenue exceeding $200M per annum

• the provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities

• significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors

• high population growth.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

165. It follows that the recategorisation sought by Randwick and Willoughby Councils cannot be accepted, given the current population requirements.

166. The data also suggested that the Inner West Council may no longer satisfy the applicable criteria, it having been reclassified in 2020 from Metropolitan Medium, but having in 2024 non-resident workers of only 43,100 and a residential population of 193,125. In the 2027 review this Council will thus be invited to establish which criteria it then satisfies.

167. The data also shows that Campbelltown Council has a total population over the threshold for the Metropolitan Large category, but that it does not satisfy the non-resident working population criteria and so it also cannot be reclassified.

Metropolitan Medium

168. No changes were sought to the criteria, which are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Medium will typically have a minimum residential population of 100,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Medium if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- *total operating revenue exceeding $100M per annum*

Section 3 – 2026 Review

• services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities

• industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors • high population growth.

The sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Large Councils.

169. Canada Bay, a Metropolitan Small Council, does satisfy the revenue criteria and has a total population of over 100,000, but it does not satisfy the non-resident working population criteria and so also cannot be recategorised.

Proposed new Metropolitan Small – Fast Growing category

170. Burwood Council, categorised as a Metropolitan Small Council, proposed the creation of this new category, in which it sought to be included. It proposing that it be 'aligned' to the Metropolitan Medium category, to recognise its scope, scale and strategic importance, given the challenges of rapid population growth and increasing service demands it faced.

171. The criteria for the Metropolitan Small Council are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Small will typically have a residential population less than 100,000.

Other features which distinguish them from other Metropolitan Councils include:

• total operating revenue less than $150M per annum.

While these Councils may include some of the facilities and characteristics of both Metropolitan Large and Metropolitan Medium Councils the overall sphere of economic

Section 3 – 2026 Review

influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Medium Councils.

172. Burwood Council pointed to the criteria for Metropolitan Major, Large and Medium categories, which were considered to have regard to population growth, economic influence and impact of services, as well as considerations such as strategic importance. While Metropolitan Small criteria were confined to population size and operating revenue. It contending that its inclusion in the proposed new category was warranted due to:

- Its recognition by the NSW Government as a designated strategic centre;
- Increased complexity in planning, service delivery, and intergovernmental coordination;
- A population that is expected to double in the next 10 years due to major developments in the town centre and in close proximity to the new metro station; and
- Its economic growth and influence across Greater Sydney, specifically its night time economic initiatives.

173. The Tribunal has not concluded that the creation of this proposed new category is warranted, given the existing criteria and the resulting fees which the current categories attract.

174. Given the existing overlap in the fees of the Metropolitan Small and Medium categories and how their criteria are structured, the Tribunal is not persuaded that an intervening category is needed.

175. These submissions did help shed light on the inherent difficulties of the existing fee structures. Which has to be considered in light of the overlaps and small differences in the fee ranges between the differing categories. But that still precludes the adoption of this proposed new category.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Metropolitan Small

176. No change to the criteria was proposed. They are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Small will typically have a residential population less than 100,000.

Other features which distinguish them from other Metropolitan Councils include:

- *total operating revenue less than $150M per annum.*

While these Councils may include some of the facilities and characteristics of both Metropolitan Large and Metropolitan Medium Councils the overall sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Medium Councils.

Major Regional City

177. This category applies to Newcastle and Wollongong, and no change was sought to the criteria, which are:

Newcastle City Council and Wollongong City Councils are categorised as Major Regional City. These Councils:

- *are metropolitan in nature with major residential, commercial and industrial areas*
- *typically host government departments, major tertiary education and health facilities and incorporate high density commercial and residential development.*

Section 3 – 2026 Review

• provide a full range of higher order services and activities along with arts, culture, recreation, sporting and entertainment facilities to service the wider community and broader region

• have significant transport and freight infrastructure servicing international markets, the capital city and regional areas

• have significant natural and man-made assets to support diverse economic activity, trade and future investment

• typically contain ventures which have a broader State and national focus which impact upon the operations of the Council.

The proposed change to the Major Strategic Area criteria

178. Lake Macquarie Council proposed a change to the criteria of this category, which would result in its reclassification from Regional Strategic Area to the Major Strategic Area category. By reducing the population threshold from 300,000 to 200,000. That proposal not impacting any other Council.

179. The submissions it advanced were one of the few which directed required attention to matters which have to be considered by the Tribunal, when considering change to categories and criteria. Including the relevant history, the consequences of changes earlier made, relevant comparisons between positions of Councils in the affected category and the consequences of the proposed further change.

180. The current criteria for the two categories are:

Major Strategic Area

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Councils categorised as Major Strategic Area will have a minimum population of 300,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included. Other features may include:

- *health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*
- *a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres*
- *total operating revenue exceeding $250M per annum*
- *significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention*
- *a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.*

Currently, only Central Coast Council meets the criteria to be categorised as a Major Strategic Area. Its population, predicted population growth, and scale of the Council's operations warrant that it be differentiated from other Non-metropolitan Councils. Central Coast Council is also a significant contributor to the regional economy associated with proximity to and connections with Sydney and the Hunter Region.

Regional Strategic Area

Councils categorised as Regional Strategic Area are differentiated from Councils in the Regional Centre category on the basis of their significant population and will typically have a residential population above 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included. Other features may include:

Section 3 – 2026 Review

• health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community

• a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres

• total operating revenue exceeding $250M per annum

• significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention

• a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Currently, only Lake Macquarie Council meets the criteria to be categorised as a Regional Strategic Area. Its population and overall scale of Council operations will be greater than Regional Centre Councils.

181. In 2023 the Tribunal determined that the population criteria threshold for the Regional Strategic Area had to be adjusted from 200,000 down to 100,000, that resulting in Lake Macquarie Council no longer being the only Council in this category. Council reiterated its views, urged in 2024 and 2025, that this change had distorted the distinction between the Major Strategic Area and Regional Strategic Area categories, given the other Councils which now also fell into the Regional Strategic category.

182. The Council's population statistics in 2024 were of 221,859 residents, plus a non-resident working population of 23,769, totalling 246,095. It drew a comparison with that of the Central Coast Council, which has 354,803 residents, plus a non-resident working population of 11,043, totalling 365,846. While of the four other Councils categorised as Regional Strategic Areas, the greatest total population was Shoalhaven, which has 115,435.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

183. The Council also relied on it having similar gross regional product to Wollongong Council, a Major Regional City. As well as more than double that of the other Councils now in the Regional Strategic category. Its case that the population threshold for Major Strategic Area should be revised from 300,000 down to 200,000 also being supported by:

- Its population, now making it the second largest Non-metropolitan Council after Central Coast with proximity to Sydney and tourist numbers similar to that Council;
- Its density of some 338/sqm, being considerably more than Maitland at 245, Tweed and 76 and Shoalhaven only 24, while Central Coast was 211 and even Wollongong 324;
- Its predicted population growth to 2046, with resulting ongoing building demand;
- The impact of major NSW Government projects within its LGA, including the Low and Mid-rise Housing reform announced in February 2025;
- The Renewable energy zone and Transport Oriented Development Program;
- An annual economic output of $30.03 billion, (approximately 20% of the Hunter economy);
- 14,768 active businesses;
- A Gross Regional Product of $17.39 billion;
- A tourism industry that sees 1.65 million tourists per year; and
- University, shopping, airport and art facilities, as well as Australia's largest power station.

184. The Council thus urged acceptance that its output and scale of operations were now significantly greater than that of other Councils in its category and more akin to Central Coast Council, with the result that the population threshold for the Major Strategic Area category should be reviewed.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

185. The Tribunal has concluded that the Council's submissions should be accepted. The 2023 changes having had unintended consequences, which ought now to be addressed, rather than awaiting the 2027 further review.

186. The submissions which this Council and some others made, also drew attention to the considerable impact of significant daily visitor numbers, not taken into account by the criteria. This is a matter which should be addressed in the 2027 Annual Review, so that the Tribunal can consider whether and how that might sensibly be reflected in category criteria.

Regional Strategic Area

187. No change to the criteria was proposed.

188. Port Macquarie-Hastings and Shellharbour sought to be recategorised as Regional Strategic Areas, but neither satisfy the population criteria. Having populations in 2024 respectively of only 92,772 and 89,967 respectively, including non-resident workers. They both still satisfying the criteria for their current category, Regional Centre, which are:

Councils categorised as Regional Centre will typically have a minimum residential population of 40,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- *a large city or town providing a significant proportion of the region's housing and employment*
- *health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*

Section 3 – 2026 Review

• a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres

• total operating revenue exceeding $100M per annum • the highest rates of population growth in regional NSW

• significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention

• a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Councils in the category of Regional Centre are often considered the geographic centre of the region providing services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

189. Port Macquarie-Hastings Council contended that it met the criteria for Regional Strategic Area, relying on:

- An expectation that Council did exceed the population threshold when non-resident working population was included;
- A projected total operating revenue of $276 million in 2025/26;
- Gross Regional Product of $13.287 million;
- An economic output this is underpinned by healthcare, retail, construction, education and training, tourism, professional and technical services;
- Tier 1 regional health services that services a catchment area beyond their LGA boundary;
- Four (4) tertiary education institutions;
- The Council operated Port Macquarie regional airport that services Sydney, Brisbane and Lord Howe Island and a total of 5,013 flights annually;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

- A tourism industry that attracts over 1.7 million visitors per annum and contributing $540 million to the economy; and
- Regional commercial and cultural services that include a performing arts theatre, an art gallery, courthouse and major hospitality, entertainment and conference venues.

190. Shellharbour City Council's proposal relied on:

- A residential and non-residential working population in 2024 of approximately 90,000, with expectations that the residential population will hit 100,000 by 2035;
- An annual population growth rate in excess of 1.8%;
- An expected operating revenue of $262 million in 2025/26;
- A Council owned and operated regional airport;
- A Council owned marina;
- A Tertiary training campus; and
- Construction of the new Shellharbour Hospital which will deliver improved health facilities for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

191. The criteria do not encompass categories being allocated on the basis of anticipated growth in population and revenues and so the recategorisations sought must be refused.

192. It also appears that Armidale Council does not meet the population threshold, but in earlier reviews the Tribunal concluded that it should remain in this category, for specified reasons. In the 2027 Annual Review it will be invited to make a submission about its appropriate categorisation, given the criteria which it then satisfies.

Regional Centre

193. No change to the criteria was proposed. They are:

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Councils categorised as Regional Centre will typically have a minimum residential population of 40,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- *a large city or town providing a significant proportion of the region's housing and employment*
- *health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*
- *a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres*
- *total operating revenue exceeding $100M per annum*
- *the highest rates of population growth in regional NSW*
- *significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention*
- *a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.*

Councils in the category of Regional Centre are often considered the geographic centre of the region providing services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

Regional Rural

194. Broken Hill Council also no longer satisfies the criteria of this category, which it submitted it should maintain, its population in 2024 only being 17,839. In the 2027 Annual Review it

Section 3 – 2026 Review

will be invited to address its appropriate categorisation, to ensure that it is then placed into the appropriate category, given the criteria which it then satisfies.

195. The applicable criteria for this category being:

Councils categorised as Regional Rural will typically have a minimum residential population of 20,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

• a large urban population existing alongside a traditional farming sector, and are surrounded by smaller towns and villages

• health services, tertiary education services and regional airports which service a regional community

• a broad range of industries including agricultural, educational, health, professional, government and retail services

• large visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and events.

196. Murray River Council sought to be recategorised as Regional Rural, it being currently classified as Rural Large, despite not satisfying the population criteria, its population in 2025 still only totalling 16,042. It relied on large visitor numbers to support its submissions, which had increased over time, as well as other changes. Referring to matters such as:

- An annual population growth rate of 8-11% in the main centre of Moama, with predicted population numbers reaching over 18,000 by 2046;
- A growing tourism, accommodation and food industry that supports 14.1% of the employment figures in their LGA;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

- Tourist visitation growing on average by 10% per annum, with the average number of visitors in 2023 and 2024 of 481,595; and
- Significant growth in education, training, health and retail service employment categories.

197. Despite this, the Tribunal has concluded that this submission cannot be accepted. Population is an important aspect of the categorisation system which cannot routinely be overlooked when Councils are categorised. The Act not contemplating subjective categorisation.

Rural Large

198. No changes were proposed to the criteria, which are:

Councils categorised as Rural Large will have a residential population greater than 10,000, and a Councillor to resident ratio of at least 1 to 1200.

Other features may include:

• one or two significant townships combined with a considerable dispersed population spread over a large area and a long distance from a major regional centre

• a limited range of services, facilities and employment opportunities compared to Regional Rural Councils

• local economies based on agricultural/resource industries.

199. The Tribunal has identified that Dungog Shire Council now has a residential population greater than 10,000 and a Councillor to resident ratio greater than 1 to 1,200. As a result,

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Dungog Shire Council will be classified as a Rural Large Council in the 2026 Annual Determination.

Rural

200. No changes were proposed to these criteria, which are limited to "Councils categorised as Rural will typically have a residential population less than 10,000".

201. Although Glenn Innes Severn Council observed that this review provided an opportunity to "recalibrate the remuneration and categorisation system to ensure its contemporary, fair, capable of supporting the expectation and responsibilities placed on elected representatives."

County Councils

202. A summary of County Council functions produced by the Tribunal Secretariat is:

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council

A local government authority for weed management control in the Walgett, Coonamble, Waren, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shire Council areas.

Central Tablelands Water

Central Tablelands Water is the trading name adopted by Central Tablelands County Council, a water supply authority constituted under NSW Local Government Legislation.

Central Tablelands County Council was first proclaimed in 1944. The county area embraces the Shires of Blayney, Cabonne and Weddin. Bulk water is also supplied to Cowra Shire Council to service rural consumers and the villages of Woodstock and Gooloogong.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

Goldenfields Water

It is responsible for water supply functions within the local government areas of Bland, Coolamon, Junee, Temora, and parts of Cootamundra-Gundagai, Hilltops and Narrandera.

It also supplies water in bulk to Hilltops and Cootamundra-Gundagai Councils, which distribute the water directly to residents in parts of their local government area.

Approximately 11, 974 properties are connected directly to its drinking water supply network in Bland, Coolamon, Junee, Temora and parts of Cootamundra-Gundagai and Narrandera.

The facilities it owns and operate include:

- *34 water pumping stations (including river extraction and Jugiong Water Treatment Plant Pumping Station)*
- *72 water supply reservoir sites with approximately 115 reservoirs*
- *Eight bores*
- *Six re-chlorination stations*
- *2100 km of water mains*

Western Sydney Weeds Authority (formerly Hawkesbury River County Council)

Western Sydney Weeds Authority (formally Hawkesbury River County Council) is a special purpose Council, its goal being to administer the Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW) throughout our Council areas of Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Penrith and the Hills Shire. That involving

Section 3 – 2026 Review

weed management, detection of new incursions and containment of high-risk plant species that impact on biodiversity, agriculture, and property.

Riverina Water County Council

It is responsible for the provision of safe, reliable water at the lowest sustainable cost. over an area of approximately 15,400 square kilometres with a population of more than 77,000 people.

Rous County Council

Its experts and advisors supply the Northern Rivers with water, weed biosecurity, and rural flood mitigation. It sources, stores, treats and supplies water to the Ballina, Byron, Lismore and Richmond Valley Councils, which on-sell water to their communities.

Protecting the region's biodiversity by managing and eradicating high-risk weed species. Working closely with communities and Councils in Ballina, Byron, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Kyogle and Tweed Shire regions.

And also managing the rural flood mitigation for the Richmond River floodplain. Including monitoring and managing an 80km network of levees, 750 floodgates, and 180km of drains to reduce inundation and divert flood waters.

Upper Hunter County Council

It is the registered trading name of Upper Hunter County Council a single purpose Council which is a Local Control Authority for invasive plants under the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015 (NSW).

Its present area of operation is the local government areas of Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton located at the northern end of the Hunter Valley, New South Wales.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

It provides weed management systems utilizing technology to prevent, contain or reduce the biosecurity risk of invasive plants to the environment, economy and community within the area of operation of the County Council.

Upper Macquarie County Council

It is a local control authority for the Biosecurity Act 2015. Two Councillors are delegated from each of four constituent Councils to form an eight Member Central Tablelands Weeds Authority Council. Its core function being to detect priority weeds and actively encourage landholders to correctly manage the identified priority weed in accordance with the Central Tablelands Local Lands Services Strategic Weed Management Plan.

It carries out its functions across Bathurst Regional Council, City of Lithgow Council, Blayney Shire Council and Oberon Council.

County Councils – Water

203. No change was proposed for the criteria, which are "County Councils that provide water and/or sewerage functions with a joint approach in planning and installing large water reticulation and sewerage systems."

204. The current list of these Councils is accurate.

County Councils – Other

205. No change was proposed for the criteria which are "*County Councils that administer, control and eradicate declared noxious weeds as a specified Local Control Authority under the Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)*."

206. Two County Councils – Other have been removed from the 2026 Annual Determination, being the Central Murray and the New England Tableland County Councils. The New

Section 3 – 2026 Review

England Tableland County Council was dissolved on 16 June 2025, by the *Local Government (Dissolution of New England County Council) Proclamation 2025*. The Central Murray County Council was dissolved on 1 July 2019, by a proclamation made under s 397 of the *Local Government Act*, as noted in NSW Government Gazette No 65-2205 of 27 June 2019.

207. The result is that only four Councils now fall into this classification.

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

Structure and fee considerations

208. In the 2026 Annual Review, it has come to light that:

- There has been considerable change which has affected the work of those elected or appointed to Council offices, in part driven by Government decisions which have affected Councils over time. Including in the case of Metropolitan Councils those explained in the Governments draft 2026 Sydney Plan and in the case of Non-metropolitan Councils, by various regional plans;
- They and submissions advanced raise for consideration whether the current number of categories remain necessary. Reliance having been placed on Victoria, for example, where there are only 4 categories;
- The current criteria, first fixed in 2017 and amended since then in various Annual Determinations, do not accord entirely with the requirements of s 240, which specifies the matters by which the Tribunal **must** determine the categories of Councils and Mayors;
- Some of the current criteria could better assist transparent classification of Councils into categories;
- There has not for some time been an overall assessment of whether Councils continue to satisfy the criteria of the categories into which they have been placed over time;
- Changes in the fee structure, over time, have resulted in a considerable overlap between the maximum and minimum fees payable in various categories, which may no longer be appropriate, given submissions advanced;
- Some light on which was also shed by the conclusions arrived at in the 2025 Special Determination, in relation to the Central Darling Shire Council, on which reliance has been placed.

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

209. The results are best explained by the following snapshot of the current categories, fees, overlaps and ratios. It having to be understood that Mayors and Chairpersons are paid both the Councillor fee, as well as the separate fee fixed for their offices. This also helps explain the Tribunal's decision to undertake the further review in 2027.

Table 1 – Table of Councillor and Mayoral fees, by Council categories

	Mayoral/Chairperson Additional Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Councillor Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Ratio (Mayor: Councillor)	
Category	**Min**	**Max**	**Min**	**Max**	**Min**	**Max**
Principal CBD	$193,650	$254,810	$31,640	$46,420	6.1:1	5.5:1
Central Darling Shire Council - Appointed Chairperson	$72,080	$72,180	$13,830	$13,930	5.2:1	5.2:1
Major CBD	$44,840	$126,320	$21,120	$39,100	2.1:1	3.2:1
Metropolitan Major	$44,840	$114,300	$21,120	$36,970	2.1:1	3.1:1
Major Regional City	$44,840	$114,300	$21,120	$36,690	2.1:1	3.1:1
Major Strategic Area	$44,840	$114,300	$21,120	$36,690	2.1:1	3.1:1
Metropolitan Large	$44,840	$101,470	$21,120	$34,820	2.1:1	2.9:1

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

	Mayoral/Chairperson Additional Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Councillor Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Ratio (Mayor: Councillor)	
Regional Strategic Area	$44,840	$101,470	$21,120	$34,820	2.1:1	2.9:1
Metropolitan Medium	$33,630	$78,480	$15,830	$29,550	2.1:1	2.7:1
Regional Centre	$32,940	$68,800	$15,830	$27,860	2.1:1	2.5:1
Regional Rural	$22,420	$50,680	$10,530	$23,220	2.1:1	2.2:1
Metropolitan Small	$22,420	$50,650	$10,530	$23,220	2.1:1	2.2:1
Rural Large	$16,820	$40,530	$10,530	$18,890	1.6:1	2.1:1
Rural	$11,210	$30,390	$10,530	$13,930	1.1:1	2.2:1
Water	$4,490	$19,080	$2,090	$11,620	2.1:1	1.6:1
Other	$4,490	$12,670	$2,090	$6,930	2.1:1	1.8:1

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

The conduct of the 2027 Annual Review

210. In 2027, the Tribunal intends to commence its review earlier than usual, in order to accommodate the detailed review of the Determination's categories which it has concluded it is necessary to pursue. Together with a consideration of appropriate criteria which reflect the requirements of s 240 of the Act. In order to facilitate the adoption of fees appropriate for the revised structure, also having regard to demonstrated change over time, as well as current responsibilities of Mayors and Councillors.

211. That will also require a review of the category into which each Council should then be placed, which s 239 of the Act requires must be undertaken at least once every three years.

212. Submissions will thus be invited in a two stage process.

213. The first, to determine how the Determination should be amended to achieve the category and criteria structure which the Act envisages, as well as the appropriate maximum and minimum fees. That, it must be observed, will not necessarily result in the current number of categories being retained.

214. In the second stage submissions about Councils' placement into the new structure will be sought.

215. The Tribunal will then ask Councils to provide reliable data to support their submissions about which category they fall into. Addressing each of the applicable criteria adopted, as well as relevant comparisons which they seek to draw with other Councils.

216. Categorisation having to be as transparent and fair as possible, the Tribunal intends to rest its decisions on reliable data such as that available from ABS statistics and budgets which Councils adopt year to year. The Tribunal will thus invite those who make submissions to provide reliable data and information, on which its decisions can be made. Not merely the expression of unsupported opinions.

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

217. As it has in the past, the Tribunal will thus also ask Councils, when inviting submissions, to confirm that the information and submissions advanced have been endorsed by a Council vote.

218. It will thus invite submissions and information which will enable it to examine and determine whether the current categories and criteria remain fit for purpose. Given the requirements of the Act, the data on which the Tribunal's decisions must be based and the problems to which this report has drawn attention, which it will seek to address.

219. If it is considered that categories require adjustment, submissions should address what form the new categories and criteria should take, to reflect the statutory purpose of the categories of Councils and mayoral offices and their role in the fair determination of fees. As well as addressing proposed criteria which adhere to the requirements of s 240(1) of the Act, which will help the Tribunal to determine the maximum and minimum fees appropriate for the new structure, which should thus also be addressed.

220. At the first stage of this process, Councils will be asked to serve proposals which will affect other Councils, on all affected Councils, so that they may have a fair opportunity to address such proposals in their submissions.

221. What is proposed in order to adjust fees to reflect cost of living increases should also be identified at the first stage. As well as the final fees proposed. The submissions should also address changes relied on to warrant their adoption. With reliable information which supports the claimed changes, also being provided.

222. An example of potential revised criteria for the current Metropolitan Major category, which has regard to all of the requirements of s 240 of the Act, as well as to matters which the Tribunal has in the past identified to be relevant to the determination of the category into which Councils follows.

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

223. What the Tribunal envisages in the 2027 review including the adoption of a structure which, if dollar figures are specified, may have to be adjusted over time, in order to reflect changes over time. As may specified population sizes.

224. A revised category for Metropolitan Major Councils, if it is retained, which has regard to the s 240 requirements, could thus provide:

Metropolitan Major

Councils categorised Metropolitan Major;

(1) must have a minimum residential population, or a combined residential and non-resident working population (of at least 50,000), which exceeds 400,000.

(2) will typically serve:

(a) a dense population occupying a built up physical terrain;

(b) a widely diverse community

(c) an area at least as large as those of Metropolitan Large Councils of ?,

(d) industrial, commercial and residential development which is both at least as significant and as extensive as that of Metropolitan Large Councils, with established development corridors;

(3) will also have:

(a) to manage a significant volume of business, consistent with its assets and budgets, which is at least as significant and varied as that of Metropolitan Large Councils;

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

(b) operating revenue exceeding, for example, $394,617,030 per annum, that being $300 million adjusted by December CPI since December 2016;

(c) a sphere of economic influence and significance beyond the Council area, nationally as well as regionally, reflective of their service of:

(i) natural and/or developed attractions within the Council area, including sport, recreational and cultural facilities, which daily attracts significant tourism and/or visitors from outside the Council area; and

(ii) major health, education and other facilities which support the greater Sydney population; and

(d) a continuing high rate of population growth and development for which the Council is planning, evidenced by ?.

225. After submissions have been received in the second stage, the Tribunal will make its 2027 Annual Determination, which will include the new categories, criteria and increased fees the Tribunal has determined will take effect from 1 July 2027. As well as identifying the category into which each Council will then be placed.

Local Government Remuneration Tribunal



The Hon Acting Justice M Schmidt
Dated: 23 April 2026

Section 5 – Determinations

Determination No. 1 – Allocation of Councils into each of the categories as per section 239 of the Act effective 1 July 2026

General Purpose Councils – Metropolitan

Principal City (1)

- Sydney

Major CBD (1)

- Parramatta

Metropolitan Major (2)

- Blacktown
- Canterbury-Bankstown

Metropolitan Large (10)

- Bayside
- Cumberland
- Fairfield
- Inner West
- Liverpool
- Northern Beaches
- Penrith
- Ryde
- Sutherland
- The Hills

Metropolitan Medium (8)

- Campbelltown
- Camden
- Georges River
- Hornsby
- Ku-ring-gai
- North Sydney
- Randwick
- Willoughby

Metropolitan Small (8)

- Burwood
- Canada Bay
- Hunters Hill
- Lane Cove
- Mosman
- Strathfield
- Waverley
- Woollahra

Section 5 – Determinations

General Purpose Councils - Non-Metropolitan

Major Regional City (2)

- Newcastle
- Wollongong

Major Strategic Area (2)

- Central Coast
- Lake Macquarie

Regional Strategic Area (4)

- Maitland
- Mid-Coast
- Shoalhaven
- Tweed

Regional Centre (22)

- Albury
- Armidale
- Ballina
- Bathurst
- Blue Mountains
- Byron
- Cessnock
- Clarence Valley
- Coffs Harbour
- Dubbo
- Eurobodella
- Hawkesbury
- Lismore
- Orange
- Port Macquarie-Hastings
- Port Stephens
- Queanbeyan-Palerang
- Shellharbour
- Tamworth
- Wagga Wagga
- Wingecarribee
- Wollondilly

Regional Rural (14)

- Bega
- Broken Hill
- Goulburn Mulwaree
- Griffith
- Hilltops
- Kempsey

Section 5 – Determinations

- Kiama
- Lithgow
- Mid-Western
- Muswellbrook
- Nambucca
- Richmond Valleys
- Singleton
- Snowy Monaro

Rural Large (17)

- Bellingen
- Cabonne
- Cootamundra-Gundagai
- Cowra
- Dungog
- Federation
- Greater Hume
- Gunnedah
- Inverell
- Leeton
- Moree Plains
- Murray River
- Narrabri
- Parkes
- Snowy Valleys
- Upper Hunter
- Yass

Rural (37)

- Balranald
- Berrigan
- Bland
- Blayney
- Bogan
- Bourke
- Brewarrina
- Carrathool
- Central Darling*
- Cobar
- Coolamon
- Coonamble
- Edward River
- Forbes
- Gilgandra
- Glen Innes Severn
- Gwydir
- Hay
- Junee
- Kyogle
- Lachlan
- Liverpool Plains
- Lockhart
- Murrumbidgee

Section 5 – Determinations

- Narrandera
- Narromine
- Oberon
- Temora
- Tenterfield
- Upper Lachlan
- Uralla
- Walcha
- Walgett
- Warren
- Warrumbungle
- Weddin
- Wentworth

* Designated as a Rural and Remote Council by the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*

County Councils

Water (4)

- Central Tablelands
- Goldenfields Water
- Riverina Water
- Rous

Other (4)

- Castlereagh-Macquarie
- Upper Hunter
- Upper Macquarie
- Western Sydney Weeds Authority (formerly Hawkesbury River)

Section 5 – Determinations

Determination No. 2 - Fees for Councillors and Mayors as per section 241 of the Act effective from 1 July 2026

The annual fees to be paid in each of the categories to Councillors, Mayors, Members, and Chairpersons of County Councils effective on and from 1 July 2026 as per section 241 of the *Local Government Act 1993* are determined as follows:

Table 1: Fees for General Purpose and County Councils

General Purpose Councils – Metropolitan

Councillor/Member Annual Fee ($) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Principal City	32,810	48,140
Major CBD	21,900	40,550
Metropolitan Major	21,900	38,340
Metropolitan Large	21,900	36,110
Metropolitan Medium	16,420	30,640
Metropolitan Small	10,920	24,080

Mayor/Chairperson Additional Fee* ($) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Principal City	200,820	264,240
Major CBD	46,500	130,990
Metropolitan Major	46,500	118,530
Metropolitan Large	46,500	105,220
Metropolitan Medium	34,870	81,380
Metropolitan Small	23,250	52,520

Section 5 – Determinations

General Purpose Councils - Non-Metropolitan

Councillor/Member Annual Fee ($) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Major Regional City	21,900	38,050
Major Strategic Area	21,900	38,050
Regional Strategic Area	21,900	36,110
Regional Centre	16,420	28,890
Regional Rural	10,920	24,080
Rural Large	10,920	19,590
Rural	10,920	14,450

Mayor/Chairperson Additional Fee* ($) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Major Regional City	46,500	118,530
Major Strategic Area	46,500	118,530
Regional Strategic Area	46,500	105,220
Regional Centre	34,160	71,350
Regional Rural	23,250	52,560
Rural Large	17,440	42,030
Rural	11,620	31,510

County Councils

Councillor/Member Annual Fee ($) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Water	2,170	12,050
Other	2,170	7,190

Section 5 – Determinations

Mayor/Chairperson Additional Fee* ($) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Water	4,660	19,790
Other	4,660	13,140

*This fee must be paid in addition to the fee paid to the Mayor/Chairperson as a Councillor/Member (s.249(2)).

Section 5 – Determinations

Determination No. 3 - Fees for appointed Councillors and Chairperson as per clause 12(c), Schedule 11 of the Act effective from 1 July 2026

Councils designated as 'rural and remote Councils'

The annual fees to be paid to appointed Councillors and the Chairperson of councils designated as a rural and remote Council on and from 1 July 2026, as per clause 12(c), schedule 11 of the *Local Government Act 1993* are determined as follows:

Table 2: Fees for appointed Councillors and Chairpersons of rural and remote Councils

Appointed Councillor Annual Fee ($) effective 1 July 2026

Council	Minimum	Maximum
Central Darling Shire Council	14,340	14,450

Appointed Chairperson Additional Fee ($) effective 1 July 2026**

Council	Minimum	Maximum
Central Darling Shire Council	74,750	74,850

**This fee must be paid in addition to the fee paid to the Chairperson as an appointed Councillor (s.249(2)).

Local Government Remuneration Tribunal



The Hon Acting Justice M Schmidt

Dated: 23 April 2026

Appendices

Appendix 1 Criteria that apply to categories

Principal CBD

The Council of the City of Sydney (the City of Sydney) is the principal central business district (CBD) in the Sydney Metropolitan area. The City of Sydney is home to Sydney's primary commercial office district with the largest concentration of businesses and retailers in Sydney. The City of Sydney's sphere of economic influence is the greatest of any local government area in Australia.

The CBD is also host to some of the city's most significant transport infrastructure including Central Station, Circular Quay and International Overseas Passenger Terminal. Sydney is recognised globally with its iconic harbour setting and the City of Sydney is host to the city's historical, cultural and ceremonial precincts. The City of Sydney attracts significant visitor numbers and is home to 60 per cent of Metropolitan Sydney's hotels.

The role of Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney has significant prominence reflecting the CBD's importance as home to the country's major business centres and public facilities of state and national importance. The Lord Mayor's responsibilities in developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, including other Councils, state and federal governments, community and business groups, and the media are considered greater than other mayoral roles in NSW.

Appendices

Major CBD

The Council of the City of Parramatta (City of Parramatta) is the economic capital of Greater Western Sydney and the geographic and demographic centre of Greater Sydney. Parramatta is the second largest economy in NSW (after Sydney CBD) and the sixth largest in Australia.

As a secondary CBD to Metropolitan Sydney the Parramatta local government area is a major provider of business and government services with a significant number of organisations relocating their head offices to Parramatta. Public administration and safety have been a growth sector for Parramatta as the State Government has promoted a policy of moving government agencies westward to support economic development beyond the Sydney CBD.

The City of Parramatta provides a broad range of regional services across the Sydney Metropolitan area with a significant transport hub and hospital and educational facilities. The City of Parramatta is home to the Westmead Health and Medical Research precinct which represents the largest concentration of hospital and health services in Australia, servicing Western Sydney and providing other specialised services for the rest of NSW.

The City of Parramatta is also home to a significant number of cultural and sporting facilities (including Sydney Olympic Park) which draw significant domestic and international visitors to the region.

Appendices

Metropolitan Major

Councils categorised Metropolitan Major will typically have a minimum residential population of 400,000.

Councils may also be categorised Metropolitan Major if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 400,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- Total operating revenue exceeding $300M per annum
- The provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities
- Significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors
- High population growth.

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Major will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

Metropolitan Large

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will typically have a minimum residential population of 200,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Large if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 200,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- Total operating revenue exceeding $200M per annum

Appendices

- The provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities
- Significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors
- High population growth.

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

Metropolitan Medium

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Medium will typically have a minimum residential population of 100,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Medium if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- Total operating revenue exceeding $100M per annum
- Services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities
- Industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors
- High population growth.

The sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Large Councils.

Appendices

Metropolitan Small

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Small will typically have a residential population less than 100,000.

Other features which distinguish them from other Metropolitan Councils include:

- Total operating revenue less than $150M per annum.

While these Councils may include some of the facilities and characteristics of both Metropolitan Large and Metropolitan Medium Councils the overall sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Medium Councils.

Appendices

Major Regional City

Newcastle City Council and Wollongong City Councils are categorised as Major Regional City. These Councils:

- Are metropolitan in nature with major residential, commercial and industrial areas
- Typically host government departments, major tertiary education and health facilities and incorporate high density commercial and residential development
- Provide a full range of higher order services and activities along with arts, culture, recreation, sporting and entertainment facilities to service the wider community and broader region
- Have significant transport and freight infrastructure servicing international markets, the capital city and regional areas
- Have significant natural and man-made assets to support diverse economic activity, trade and future investment
- Typically contain ventures which have a broader State and national focus which impact upon the operations of the Council.

Major Strategic Area

Councils categorised as Major Strategic Area will have a minimum population of 200,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- Health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community
- A full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres

Appendices

- Total operating revenue exceeding $250M per annum
- Significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention
- A proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Regional Strategic Area

Councils categorised as Regional Strategic Area are differentiated from Councils in the Regional Centre category on the basis of their significant population and will typically have a residential population above 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- Health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community
- A full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres
- Total operating revenue exceeding $250M per annum
- Significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention
- A proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Appendices

Regional Centre

Councils categorised as Regional Centre will typically have a minimum residential population of 40,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- A large city or town providing a significant proportion of the region's housing and employment
- Health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community
- A full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres
- Total operating revenue exceeding $100M per annum
- The highest rates of population growth in regional NSW
- Significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention
- A proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Councils in the category of Regional Centre are often considered the geographic centre of the region providing services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

Appendices

Regional Rural

Councils categorised as Regional Rural will typically have a minimum residential population of 20,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- A large urban population existing alongside a traditional farming sector, and are surrounded by smaller towns and villages
- Health services, tertiary education services and regional airports which service a regional community
- A broad range of industries including agricultural, educational, health, professional, government and retail services
- Large visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and events.

Councils in the category of Regional Rural provide a degree of regional servicing below that of a Regional Centre.

Rural Large

Councils categorised as Rural Large will have a residential population greater than 10,000, and a Councillor to resident ratio of at least 1 to 1200.

Other features may include:

- One or two significant townships combined with a considerable dispersed population spread over a large area and a long distance from a major regional centre
- A limited range of services, facilities and employment opportunities compared to Regional Rural Councils
- Local economies based on agricultural/resource industries.

Appendices

Rural

Councils categorised as Rural will typically have a residential population less than 10,000.

County Councils - Water

County Councils that provide water and/or sewerage functions with a joint approach in planning and installing large water reticulation and sewerage systems.

County Councils - Other

County Councils that administer, control and eradicate declared noxious weeds as a specified Local Control Authority under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

5.2 Donation Request - Mstr Panha Hun Attendance at Barca Academy

File Number: D26/755

Author: Alan Dalton, Director - Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council provide a donation of $800 from the Section 356 Donations - General budget to assist Mstr Panha Hun to attend the Barca Academy Clinic in Barcelona, Spain, scheduled for December 2026.

INTRODUCTION

Ms Nikiya Moss has contacted Council on behalf of her son, Mstr Panha Han, requesting $800 to assist with the estimated $15,000 cost of attending attend the Barca Academy Clinic in Barcelona, in December 2026. The request follows an $800 Council donation approved on 27 January 2026 towards the cost of Mstr Safallah Blazely to attend the Barca Academy Clinic (since rescheduled from March to December 2026 due international travel issues arising from conflict in the Middle East).

BACKGROUND

The Barca Academy is the official football (soccer) training school of FC Barcelona, one of the premier professional football clubs worldwide. Barca Academy operates over 30 academies in 34 countries, offering various programs including year-round training, international camps, clinics and 'experiences' that include trips to FC Barcelona's facilities in Spain.

Mstr Han was invited to attend the Barca Academy Clinic in Barcelona on the basis of his skills and values, and following a competitive tryout in Sydney.

Eligibility requirements of Council's Donations Policy include *'To assist an individual's, group's or team's sporting, cultural or academic participation at a significant and recognised level.'*

While an invitation to attend the Barcelona clinic is clearly a personal development opportunity, it is selective and requires a demonstrably high standard of achievement in the Australian program. As such, this international training opportunity is considered both significant and recognisable at an international level due to the scope and prestige of FC Barcelona.

The applicant advises that participation at the Academy is fully self-funded, and that the total cost to attend is $15,000 and that the family working towards the cost through monthly payments. Since submitting their request for donation, the applicant has advised that a $500 contribution has been pledged by Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Approving this donation of $800 will reduce the uncommitted balance of the 2025–26 Section 356 Donations – General budget to $3,214 (not accounting for another donation request of $550, to be considered by this meeting).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Panha Hun Donation Request 5 May 2026 ⇩

2026/16277

Cowra Council

COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL
5 MAY 2026
A:

Cowra Shire Council
Private Bag 342
Cowra NSW 2794
Phone: 02 6340 2000
council@cowra.nsw.gov.au
www.cowracouncil.com.au

Application for Financial Assistance/Donation

Section 1 – Applicant Details

Proposed recipient	Panha Hun
Organisation legal status (*tick where applicable*)	Non-for-profit ☑ Charity ☐ Incorporated ☐ Business ☐ N/A ☐
Contact Details	Name: Nikya Moss Mobile: [redacted] Email: [redacted] Mailing Address: [redacted]

Section 2 – Details of Event/Activity

Name	
Responsible Organisation	Barca Academy
Date	December 5th - December 14th 2026
Location	Barcelona, Spain
General description of the event/activity	Soccer training Camp

Section 3 – Financial Details

Type of support requested	Financial ☑	In-kind support ☐	
Value of assistance sought		Total cost to the recipient	
Current funds available			
Is support provided by other organisations?	Yes ☐ No ☑	If yes, what amount?	
What would be the effect if Council did not provide a donation?	Panha would miss out on the opportunity.		
Will the event/activity support charities?	Yes ☐ No ☑	If yes, what amount?	
Has Council previously financially assisted the proposed recipient?	Yes ☐ No ☑	If yes, when?	

2026/16277

Section 4 – Eligibility

An application for a donation must fit one of the following categories.

- ☐ Community development projects – projects that meet an identified community need, have been developed in consultation with the community and encourage participation in the development of the project.
- ☐ Festivals and special events which enhance community spirit.
- ☐ Support for a locally based voluntary community service or program where the majority of its income is fundraising.
- ☐ Local community, charity and not for profit activities or events that may be conducted outside the shire, but provide a meaningful benefit to the shire's residents.
- ☑ To assist an individual's, group's or team's sporting, cultural or academic participation at a significant and recognised level.
- ☐ Community, charity and not-for-profit organisation's use of Council owned and controlled facilities including halls, sporting grounds and other venues.

Section 5 – Objectives

To ensure your application is in accordance with the purpose of Council's Donation Policy, please provide responses to the following objectives:

Objective 1: To assist local service, cultural, sporting, charitable or not-for-profit organisations and comparable organisations from beyond the shire providing services that benefit shire residents.
Objective 2: To assist organisations to conduct quality cultural, sporting and community service programs or events which cannot attract sufficient funds from other sources.

2026/16277

Objective 3: To contribute towards the achievement of Cowra Shire Council objectives under Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, including ensuring inclusive access to community resources, services and facilities, and promoting equitable opportunities for people with disabilities.
Objective 4: To encourage and facilitate broad community participation in cultural, sporting and community service programs and events.

Section 6 – Sporting, Cultural and Academic Applications

(only complete this section if your application is for an individual person seeking support for sporting representation or cultural or academic pursuits)

Please indicate the category your event/activity:

☐ Australian event (up to $550)

☑ International/overseas event (up to $800)

Please attach the following:

☐ A letter of support from the relevant local organisation of which the person is a member.

☐ Should the event be hosted or sponsored by a state or national body, written confirmation from that body (or, for overseas events, the Australian equivalent) that the person is registered to attend as a participant.

I have read and agree that this application will comply with requirements of Council's Donation Policy, and confirm the details provided in this application are complete and correct. I acknowledge that if my application is successful, I will provide further banking details to facilitate timely payment, as requested by Council.

Signed: [redacted]

Print Name: Nikiya Moss

Position in organisation (if relevant):

Date: 28/4/2026

Council's Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Donations Policy can be found on our website: www.cowracouncil.com.au

2026/16277

BARÇA Academy

Dear Panha,

We are delighted to inform you that you have been selected as one of the exceptional players to attend the prestigious Barça Academy Clinic in Barcelona, Spain, this coming December 2026.

This is a testament to your dedication, hard work, and outstanding behaviour during your time with the Barça Academy Australia. We believe that your skills and conduct align perfectly with the values and philosophy of FC Barcelona.

The Barça Academy Clinic in Barcelona will offer you a unique and invaluable experience to further develop your football abilities. You will have the opportunity to train under the guidance of top-notch coaches, interact with fellow passionate players, and immerse yourself in the rich culture that Barcelona has to offer.

Once again, **CONGRATULATIONS** on this remarkable achievement. We have no doubt that you will represent Barça Academy Australia with pride and distinction. This journey will not only enhance your football skills but also provide you with memories that will last a lifetime.

We look forward to witnessing your growth and success during the Barça Academy Clinic in Barcelona.

Sincerely,

Enric Farreny
Barça Academy Australia
Sports Director

A WAY TO PLAY.
A WAY TO GROW.

5.3 Donation Request - Jyedon Memorial Team

File Number: D26/694

Author: Alan Dalton, Director - Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve a donation of $550 from the Section 356 Donations – General budget to assist the Jyedon Memorial Team to participate in the Blacktown Knockout to be held on 19 September 2026 in Blacktown, NSW.

INTRODUCTION

Council received a $550 donation request from Ms Takisha Pollard towards the establishment and participation of the Jyedon Memorial Team in the Blacktown Knockout. The team is being formed in memory of the applicant's late son, Jyedon, and will provide Cowra players an opportunity to participate in, and maintain local representation at, a significant and recognised sporting event.

Consideration of this request was deferred by Council on 25 May 2026, to await further information about the value of donations received from other sources.

BACKGROUND

The Blacktown Knockout is a recognised community sporting event. The Jyedon Memorial Team is a newly formed local initiative intended to provide Cowra-based players with the opportunity to participate in the event on 19 September 2026 at Blacktown. The applicant advises the Team is expected to comprise approximately 50-60 players and cost about $12,000 to establish.

The Team is being formed in memory of Jyedon, a young Indigenous boy who died in tragic circumstances, and to provide a positive sporting initiative for the community. As a new Team, the application states there are limited funds available ($150) and that donations are sought towards further costs. If approved, Council's donation would support procurement of water bottles, gym bags and team equipment.

The request is consistent with Council's Donation Policy objectives as it supports local sporting participation and community connection, assists a team with limited capacity to fund participation costs, and encourages broader community participation through a recognised sporting event.

Additional Information Provided Following Deferral

The applicant has advised that financial contributions have been pledged by:

- CINC: $2,500
- Club Cowra: $1,000
- The Lachie Café: $500
  (Total: $4,000)

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Approving this donation of $550 will reduce the uncommitted balance of the 2025–26 Section 356 Donations – General budget to $3,464 (not accounting for another donation request of $550, to be considered by this meeting).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Takisha Pollard Donation Request 29 April 2026 ⇩

Cowra Council

Cowra Shire Council
Private Bag 342
Cowra NSW 2794
Phone: 02 6340 2000
council@cowra.nsw.gov.au
www.cowracouncil.com.au

Application for Financial Assistance/Donation

Section 1 – Applicant Details

Proposed recipient	
Organisation legal status (*tick where applicable*)	Non-for-profit ☐ Charity ☐ Incorporated ☐ Business ☐ N/A ☒
Contact Details	Name: Takisha Pollard Mobile: [redacted] Email: [redacted] Mailing Address [redacted]

Section 2 – Details of Event/Activity

Name	Jyedon Memorial Team
Responsible Organisation	Blacktown Red Belly Warriors Knockout
Date	19 September 2026
Location	Blacktown, NSW
General description of the event/activity	The Jyedon Memorial Team has been established to enable Cowra players to participate in the Blacktown Knockout in September 2026. The team has been formed in memory of a young Indigenous boy who tragically died at just 2 years of age and aims to bring the community together through sport while honouring his memory in a respectful and positive way. This initiative ensures local representation continues this year, particularly as the Erambie All Blacks are not entering a team. It provides an opportunity for local players to remain involved, connected and supported through participation in a recognised community sporting event.

Section 3 – Financial Details

Type of support requested	Financial ☒ In-kind support ☐		
Value of assistance sought	$550	Total cost to the recipient	
Current funds available	$150		
Is support provided by other organisations?	Yes ☒ No ☐	If yes, what amount? CINC, Club Cowra, The Lachie Café	

	in the form of uniforms and other material contributions.
What would be the effect if Council did not provide a donation?	Without Council support, the team will have limited capacity to cover essential participation costs such as uniforms, registration and equipment. This will place additional pressure on players and organisers and may impact the team's ability to effectively participate and represent Cowra at the event.
Will the event/activity support charities?	Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, what amount?
Has Council previously financially assisted the proposed recipient?	Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, when?

Section 4 – Eligibility

An application for a donation must fit one of the following categories.

☐ Community development projects – projects that meet an identified community need, have been developed in consultation with the community and encourage participation in the development of the project.

☐ Festivals and special events which enhance community spirit.

☐ Support for a locally based voluntary community service or program where the majority of its income is fundraising.

☒ Local community, charity and not for profit activities or events that may be conducted outside the shire, but provide a meaningful benefit to the shire's residents.

☒ To assist an individual's, group's or team's sporting, cultural or academic participation at a significant and recognised level.

☐ Community, charity and not-for-profit organisation's use of Council owned and controlled facilities including halls, sporting grounds and other venues.

Section 5 – Objectives

To ensure your application is in accordance with the purpose of Council's Donation Policy, please provide responses to the following objectives:

Objective 1: To assist local service, cultural, sporting, charitable or not-for-profit organisations and comparable organisations from beyond the shire providing services that benefit shire residents.
This application supports the establishment of the Jyedon Memorial Team, a local sporting initiative that provides Cowra players with the opportunity to participate in the Blacktown Knockout. With the Erambee All Blacks not entering a team this year, their players have joined this initiative, ensuring local representation continues. This benefits the Cowra community by keeping players engaged and connected through sport.

Objective 2: To assist organisations to conduct quality cultural, sporting and community service programs or events which cannot attract sufficient funds from other sources.
The team requires funding to cover essential costs such as registration, travel and uniforms. As a newly formed team, available funds are limited and only small amounts of local support have been secured. Council's contribution will help cover these core expenses and ensure the team can participate.

Objective 3: To contribute towards the achievement of Cowra Shire Council objectives under Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, including ensuring inclusive access to community resources, services and facilities, and promoting equitable opportunities for people with disabilities.
This initiative supports Council's objectives by encouraging inclusive community participation in sport. It provides an opportunity for local players who might otherwise miss out this year, promoting community connection, teamwork and overall wellbeing.
Objective 4: To encourage and facilitate broad community participation in cultural, sporting and community service programs and events.
The Jyedon Memorial Team encourages strong community participation by bringing together players from different groups, including Erambee All Blacks players, along with local supporters and businesses. This strengthens community spirit and promotes ongoing engagement in positive sporting activities.

Signed: [redacted]

Print Name: Takisha Pollard

Position in organisation (if relevant): N/A

Date: 29/04/2026

Council's Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Donations Policy can be found on our website: www.cowracouncil.com.au

6 DIRECTOR-INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS REPORT

6.1 Household Kerbside Bin System Audit 2026

File Number: D26/803

Author: Dirk Wymer, Director-Infrastructure & Operations

RECOMMENDATION

That the report on the results of the Household Kerbside Bin System Audit 2026 be received and noted.

INTRODUCTION

Council engaged EC Sustainable to undertake a composition audit of the kerbside residential waste and recycling bin contents. The audit was undertaken to inform the implementation of a Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) service by 2030. The audit was completed with the objectives of:

- Identifying the amount of FOGO material in current waste and recycling bins
- Providing data indicators including generation rates, resources in the waste bin, contamination rates and type in the recycling bin, kerbside recovery and diversion rates and container deposit eligible containers within the bins.

The audit was part of a joint procurement project funded from the NSW EPA to investigate the joint procurement of FOGO services with Weddin and Hilltops Councils.

BACKGROUND

This report summarises the information from the audit and provides a snapshot of the composition of Cowra Council's kerbside waste and recycling bin contents.

The audit targeted a representative sample from 160 households within the Cowra LGA. A visual survey was undertaken, and material was bagged and taken to Cowra's Glenlogan Road Landfill and Material Recycling Facility (MRF) for sorting. A total of 109 material sorting categories were included, plus some additional categories to assist with contamination, resource recovery and diversion rates for reporting purposes.

A summary of the audit of bin contents follows:

- Households generated on average:
  - 11.50kg of waste bin contents per week.
  - 2.84kg of recycling bin contents per week, which comprised of 19.8% contamination, material which should be placed into the waste bin.
  - 4.608kg of FOGO compliant material per week in the waste and recycling bins.
  - Additionally, containerised FO could potentially be recovered accounting for a further 0.736kg.
- The average household diverted 15.9% of material from landfill using the kerbside recycling bin; this is consistent with the diversion rate reported quarterly to Council.

- A potential diversion rate of 27.5% could be achieved if all recyclables from the waste bin were recovered.
- If a Food Organic Garden Organic bin service was introduced a maximum potential diversion rate of 59.3% would be achieved; an increased 22% of the current total weight of waste diverted from landfill. Noting that the total 'weight of waste' will increase with the implementation of a FOGO service with the expectation of a higher weight of garden organics.

Additionally; further information was gained

- Households with the small waste bin (140L) used 73.6% of their waste bin and 66.1% of their recycling bins. This shows the average household using the small waste bin option has sufficient waste and recycling capacity.
    - Average recycling contaminate in the yellow bin was 17.4%
- Households with the large waste bin (240L) used 77.1% of their waste bins and 80.2% of their recycling bins.
    - Average recycling contamination in the yellow bin was 21.2%; higher than that with small waste bins. The data shows that most households applied for a small waste bin based on their normal waste and recycling behaviours; not intending to dispose of general waste into the recycling bin.
- Resource recovery rate is the percentage of a material type by weight that is recovered compared to the weight of material in all bin types. Glass, cardboard and paper have high bulk densities and therefore increase the resource recovery rate.
    - The recycling recovery rate indicates a small waste bin is beneficial to a higher recycling recovery; with the average household resource recovery rate:
        - Small waste bin 63.8%
        - Large waste bin 54.1%
- On average, 14.5% of the bin contents in the waste bin is compliant recyclables that should be placed in the recycling bin. Education should focus on recovering the following from red bins to yellow bins:
    - Recyclable paper
    - Recyclable plastics
    - Recyclable glass
- On average the overall contamination rate of the recycling bin was 19.8%
    - If the worst 7 individual bins were excluded, then the contamination would reduce to 13% which aligns within the 14% contamination in a typical recycling bin in 2020-21 as presented in the National Waste Report 2022 (DCCEEW, 2022).
- A total of 98 hazardous items were disposed of by count (mostly consisting of electric items and peripherals (57) and dry cell batteries (29)).

Key recommendations of the audit include;

- Use the data from the audit to inform the assessment of the practicality and viability of a future FOGO service and how it is delivered.
- Reduce contamination levels particularly in urban recycling bins by delivering targeted education.

- Continue to promote the community recycling centre (CRC) as the preferred drop off for hazardous waste.
- Increase the recovery of recyclable items that are currently being disposed of in the residual waste bin.
- Relaunch recycling campaigns to improve user understanding of what can be placed in each bin.
- Continue to promote 'never bin a battery' to reduce the risk of fire from batteries within the collection vehicles, processing facilities and landfill and promote drop-off at the CRC.
- Conduct regular waste audits and seasonal audits to profile the waste and inform implementation of the waste strategy, waste processing and waste minimisation. Bin compositions and quantities can vary seasonally and based on time-specific factors such as weather and events. Seasonal and weather impacts are particularly applicable to garden organics, which can be affected by plant growth rates and gardening activity.

Improvements on the existing bin services will provide increased diversion from landfill, additionally the implementation of a FOGO service would increase the diversion rate to more than 50% which will deliver a significant reduction of waste to landfill.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The audit was funded from the NSW EPA under the NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy. Council contributed operational funding to some additional sorting and categorisation of the recycling bin contents that was beyond the scope of the grant funded project.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cowra Shire Council Household Kerbside Bin System Audit 2026 ⇩

ecSustainable

REPORT PRODUCED FOR:
Cowra Shire Council

Household Kerbside Bin System Audit 2026



Report: March 2026

(v1504-26)

This project is an initiative of the NSW Environment Protection Authority under the NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy, and is funded from the waste levy.

EC Sustainable Pty Ltd

ACN: 163 386 061
ABN: 87 163 386 061

Tel: 1300 WASTE AUDIT (1300 927 832)
Email: info@ecsustainable.com

Head Office
Suites 701-702, 107 Walker Street,
NORTH SYDNEY, NSW 2060.

Copyright © EC Sustainable Pty Ltd 2013-2026

"This document is and shall remain the property of
EC Sustainable Pty Ltd
Unauthorised use of this document in any form is prohibited."

EC Sustainable Reference: 1504-26

AUDIT CONDUCTED BY

Name:	EC Sustainable Pty Ltd
Disclaimer:	Any representation, statement, opinion or advice, expressed or implied in this publication is made in good faith but on the basis that the authors are not liable (whether by reason of negligence, lack of care or otherwise) to any person for any damage or loss whatsoever, which has occurred or may occur in relation to that person taking or not taking action (as the case may be) in respect to any representation, statement or advice referred to herein.
Acknowledgements:	Belinda O'Reilly from Cowra Shire Council for assisting with overall project management and implementation of the project such as providing the sampling database and reviewing the results and for assisting with the collection and disposal logistics. Cowra Shire Council for providing a sorting site and removal of the sorted waste and recycling.

Table of contents

List of appendices ..... **iv**
List of figures ..... **iv**
List of tables ..... **v**
Executive summary ..... **vi**
1 Introduction **1**
1.1 Background 1
1.2 Objectives 1
1.3 Council information 2
1.4 Document structure 2
2 Project methods **1**
2.1 Guidelines 1
2.2 Sampling 1
2.3 Audit 2
2.3.1 Timing 2
2.3.2 Pre-collection bin survey 2
2.3.3 Collection 3
2.3.4 Sorting 3
2.4 Management systems 7
2.4.1 Quality control 7
2.4.2 Work Health and Safety 7
2.5 Analysis 7
3 Assumptions and limitations **8**
4 Results **9**
4.1 Presentation rate 9
4.2 Generation rates 10
4.2.1 By weight 10
4.2.2 By volume 12
4.3 Composition 15
4.3.1 Resources in each bin type – overview 15
4.3.2 Composition – waste bin 18
4.3.3 Composition – recycling bin 22
4.4 Resources in the waste bin 26
4.5 Hazardous materials 29
4.6 Recycling bin contamination rate and types 32
4.7 Recycling resource recovery rates 40
4.8 Diversion rates 43
4.9 Sub-sorting – CDS eligibility 46
5 Recommendations **48**
6 Audit photos **51**
References **54**
Abbreviations **55**
Glossary **56**

List of appendices

Appendix 1 – CDS eligibility 57
Appendix 2 – Current CDS eligible containers data 58
Appendix 3 – Analysis of food organics sub-sort in the waste bin 60
Appendix 4 – Comparison with Weddin Shire Council 62
Appendix 5 – Raw data 63

List of figures

Figure 1 - Generation rate – by weight 11
Figure 2 - Generation rate – by volume 12
Figure 3 - Overview of resources in each bin type 16
Figure 4 - Overview of resources in each bin type 18
Figure 5 - Resources in the waste bin – high level overview 26
Figure 6 - Resources in the waste bin – detailed breakdown 27
Figure 7 - Hazardous material composition – waste bin 29
Figure 8 - Recycling bin contamination rate 33
Figure 9 - Recycling bin contamination types 35
Figure 10 - Recycling contamination level distribution, overall 38
Figure 11 - Recycling contamination level distribution by waste bin size 39
Figure 12 - Recycling resource recovery rates 41
Figure 13 - Diversion rates 44
Figure 14 - Waste bin beverage containers composition – CDS eligibility 47
Figure 15 - Recycling bin beverage containers composition – CDS eligibility 47
Figure 16 - Photos of sorting site 51
Figure 17 - Photos of waste bin contents 52
Figure 18 - Photos of bin contents – contamination in recycling bins 53

List of tables

Table 1 - Bin services provided by Council 2
Table 2 - Sample frame 2
Table 3 - Material categories and recoverability 4
Table 4 - Bin presentation rate 9
Table 5 - Generation rate – by weight 11
Table 6 - Generation rate – by volume 13
Table 7 - Bin usage – percentage full distribution 14
Table 8 - Waste bin usage – percentage full distribution by bin size 14
Table 9 - Overview of resources – waste bin 17
Table 10 - Overview of resources – recycling bin 17
Table 11 - Waste bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories) 19
Table 12 - Recycling bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories) 23
Table 13 - Resources in the waste bin – detailed breakdown 28
Table 14 - Hazardous material composition – waste bin 30
Table 15 - Hazardous item counts – waste bin 31
Table 16 - Recycling bin contamination types 36
Table 17 - Recycling bin contamination types, by waste bin size 37
Table 18 - Recycling resource recovery rates 42
Table 19 - Recycling bin compliant material – recovered vs total generation 42
Table 20 - Diversion rates 45
Table 21 - Resources summary: weights correctly recovered and not recovered 45
Table 22 - CDS eligibility 57
Table 23 - Eligible CDS beverage containers weights 58
Table 24 - Eligible CDS beverage containers counts 59
Table 25 - Detailed loose food organics composition in the waste bin 61
Table 26 - Key results comparison with Weddin audit 63

Executive summary

Cowra Shire Council is evaluating the introduction of a food and garden organics (FOGO) collection service for households to meet the NSW EPA mandate for a residential FOGO service by 2030.

To inform the implementation of this service, Council engaged EC Sustainable Pty Ltd (EC Sustainable) to conduct a composition audit of the kerbside residential waste and recycling bin contents. The audit was conducted in summer 2026, during February.

This audit provides data to identify the amount of FOGO materials in the current waste and recycling bins, update its characterisation of bin contents, plan for future services, assist in monitoring and implementation of new and existing services, and provide additional data for 'eligible containers' in the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).

This audit involved:

- A target sample size of 150 households, with 160 households audited.
    - Urban (main towns): 129 households
    - Rural (villages): 31 households
- Matched waste and recycling bins, whereby the pair of waste and recycling bins were targeted from the same household that presented both bin types.
- A visual inspection survey of the bins and bin contents at the kerbside prior to collection.
- Individual household bag collection and sorting of the bin contents inspected.
- A total of 109 material sorting categories, including the NSW Guidelines plus CDS and some additional sorting categories to assist with contamination, resource recovery and diversion rates reporting.
- Detailed data analysis as provided in this report.

The objective of this audit was to provide the data indicators, as shown in the following Table. Appendix 4 provides a comparison with the 2026 Weddin Shire Council residential bin audit results.

Key data indicators by household type

Data indicator		Unit of measurement	Urban	Rural	Average
Presentation rate	Percentage (%)	Waste bin	76.0	54.8	71.9
		Recycling bin	65.9	58.1	64.4
Generation rate	By weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Waste bin	12.06	9.19	11.50
		Recycling bin	2.95	2.36	2.84
		All bins	**15.01**	**11.56**	**14.34**
	By volume *(bin % full)*	Waste bin	76.9	69.5	75.5
		Recycling bin	74.8	69.5	73.8
Resources in the waste bin ^	By weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Compliant recyclables *	1.73	1.43	1.67
		Garden organics	2.30	2.15	2.27
		Food loose/ in liners <	2.41	1.78	2.29
		Non-compliant organics #	1.69	1.09	1.57
	Percentage (% by weight)	Compliant recyclables *	14.4	15.5	14.5
		Garden organics	19.0	23.4	19.7
		Food loose/ in liners <	20.0	19.4	19.9
		Non-compliant organics #	14.0	11.8	13.7
Contamination	Weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Recycling bin	0.65	0.17	0.56
	Rate *(% by weight)*	Recycling bin	22.2	7.2	19.8
Resource recovery ^^	Rate *(% by weight)*	Recycling bin	57.0	60.6	57.6
Diversion ^^	Rate *(% by weight)*	Current	15.3	19.0	15.9
Eligible CDS containers	Weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Waste bin	0.14	0.29	0.17
		Recycling bin	0.33	0.54	0.37
		All bins	**0.47**	**0.83**	**0.54**
	Count *(count/hh/wk)*	Waste bin	3.5	5.2	3.9
		Recycling bin	4.6	7.2	5.1
		All bins	**8.2**	**12.4**	**9.0**

* Recycling bin accepted material, which should be placed into yellow-lid bins. Refer to Table 3 for detailed materials.
^ Many tea bags might contain staples or PFAs and is recommended to dispose of into the waste bin.
+ Includes both food and container components.
< No AS 4736 certified compostable liners were audited in waste bins.
Includes tea bags and coffee pods, containerised food, other putrescible and wood/ timber (treated and untreated).
^^ At the kerbside for kerbside performance data based on accepted material in each service type.

Key data indicators by waste bin size

Data indicator		Unit of measurement	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
Generation rate	By volume *(bin % full)*	Waste bin	73.5	77.1
		Recycling bin	66.1	80.2
Contamination *	Weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Recycling bin	0.42	0.68
	Rate *(% by weight)*	Recycling bin	17.4	21.2
Resource recovery ^^	Rate *(% by weight)*	Recycling bin	63.8	54.1

* Based on recyclable material, which should be placed into yellow-lid recycling bins. Refer to Table 3 for detailed materials.
^^ At the kerbside for kerbside performance data based on accepted material in each service type.

Key findings

The key findings for the audit were:

- **Food and garden organics in the bin system**

The average household generated 4.608kg of FOGO compliant material per week in the waste and recycling bins, with 99% of this material in the waste bin.

  - Waste bin: 39.7% of the bin contents were FOGO compliant material, 4.562kg/hh/wk.
  - Recycling bin: 1.3% of the bin contents were FOGO compliant material, 0.046kg/hh/wk.

Additionally, containerised food organics could potentially be recovered if presented correctly.

  - Waste bin: 6.0% of the bin contents, 0.692kg/hh/wk[1].
  - Recycling bin: 1.6% of bin contents, 0.044kg/hh/wk.

- **Waste bin: generation and unrecovered organics**

The average household generated 11.50kg of waste bin contents per week, which comprised of 19.9% of loose food and 19.7% of garden organics. This provides a potential opportunity for organics recovery through a FOGO collection service in the future.

  - Urban: Generated 12.06kg including 20.0% loose food (2.42kg) and 19.0% garden organics (2.30kg).
  - Rural: Generated 9.19kg including 19.4% loose food (1.78kg) and 23.4% garden organics (2.15kg).

The main types of food in the waste bin were meal leftovers (including takeaways), fruit/vegetable peelings and skins and unused fruit/ vegetable.

[1] This includes both the weight of food and the container.

- **Waste bin: unrecovered recyclables**

Accepted recyclables were 14.5% of the average waste bin contents, material which could be recovered through the recycling bins.

- **Recycling bin: generation and contamination**

The average household generated 2.84kg of recycling bin contents per week, which comprised 19.8% contamination, material which should be placed into the waste bins.

  - Urban: Generated 2.95kg including 22.2% contamination. FOGO material was 0.05kg.
  - Rural: Generated 2.36kg including 7.2% contamination. FOGO material was 0.003kg.

The main contamination types were non-recyclable plastics (other plastics non-packaging/ non-beverage), treated wood/ timber, non-recyclable glass (glass fines – broken glass <4.75mm) and containerised food and liquid.

The higher contamination rate in urban areas is mainly due to MGB non-recyclable items (i.e. textiles, earth-based material, electrical items, other plastics items not packaging, non-recyclable glass items and glass fines), other organics (i.e. treated wood and other putrescible), other steel and loose food organics.

- **Diversion and resource recovery rates**

The average household diverted 15.9% of the total material in all bin types from landfill, with a recovery rate of 57.6% for recyclables correctly placed in the recycling bin for recovery.

  - Urban: Diverted 15.3% with a recovery rate of 57.0% for recyclables.
  - Rural: Diverted 19.0% with a recovery rate of 60.6% for recyclables.

- **Bin usage behaviour comparison for households by waste bin size**

The average household with a small waste bin (120L or 140L) used 73.5% of their waste bins and 66.1% of their match paired recycling bins. This shows the average household has sufficient waste and recycling capacity, with the smaller waste bin typically not leading to higher contamination rates.

- Their recycling bin contamination rate was 17.4% on average.
- 12 out of 73 of these households have 25% or more contamination in their recycling bins.

- 4 of them used 100% or more;
- 5 used 70% to 90%, and;
- the rest used 60% or less of their waste bins.

The average household with a large waste bin (240L) used 77.1% of their waste bins and 80.2% of their match paired recycling bins.

- Their recycling bin contamination rate was 21.2% on average, which was slightly higher than households with a small waste bin.

This result shows that the majority of households applied for a small waste bin based on their normal waste and recycling behaviours, not intending to dispose of general waste into the recycling bin.

The recycling recovery rate shows that a small waste bin is beneficial to a higher recycling recovery rate, with the average household recovering:

- small waste bin (120L or 140L): 63.8% of recyclables through their recycling bins.
- large waste bin (240L): 54.1% of recyclables through their recycling bins.

Recommendations

The following key recommendations are made. Council could consider to:

- Use the data from this audit to assess the practicality and viability of a future FOGO service or home composting system, to ensure the chosen recovery approach offers the best outcome and value for the community and Council. Council should consider the weight (kg/hh/wk) and percentage by weight to make a decision.
- Reduce contamination levels in urban recycling bins by delivering education based on the key contamination types identified in this audit.
- Develop and publish a recycling bin guide for Councils website to educate residents on what can and can't go into the recycling bin.
- Continue to promote the Community Recycling Centre (CRC) as the preferred drop-off point for hazardous and hard to recycle materials.
- Conduct regular waste audits and seasonal audits to profile the waste and inform implementation of waste strategy, waste processing and waste minimisation. Bin compositions and quantities can vary seasonally and based on time-specific factors such as weather and events. Seasonal and weather impacts are particularly applicable to garden organics, which can be affected by plant growth rates and gardening activity. It is possible that more garden organics may be generated in seasons other than summer.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Cowra Shire Council is evaluating the introduction of a food and garden organics (FOGO) collection service for households to meet the NSW EPA mandate for a residential FOGO service by 2030.

To inform the implementation of this service, Council engaged EC Sustainable Pty Ltd (EC Sustainable) to conduct a composition audit of the kerbside residential waste and recycling bin contents. The audit was conducted in summer 2026, during February.

This audit provide data to identify the amount of FOGO materials in the current waste and recycling bins, update its characterisation of bin contents, plan for future services, assist in monitoring and implementation of new and existing services, and provide additional data for 'eligible containers' in the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). This is the first audit completed on behalf of Cowra Shire Council since the introduction of the 'Return and Earn' program, which commenced on 1 December 2017.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this report are to provide the following data indicators:

- Generation rates, based on weight (kg/hh/wk) and volume (L/hh/wk and bin % full).
- Resources in the waste bin.
- Contamination rates and types in the recycling bin.
- Kerbside resource recovery rates.
- Kerbside diversion rates.
- CDS eligible containers and potential eligible CDS in all bins.

The data indicators assist Council to identify the current performance of the bin system at the kerbside, measure trends to plan for future services including reductions in waste to landfill and consider waste minimisation options.

1.3 Council information

Cowra Shire Council is located in the Central West region of New South Wales, approximately 310 kilometres west of Sydney. Council has a population of 9,273 people, with a total of 2,421 households residing in 4,410 properties, with an average of 2.3 people per household (ABS, 2021). Out of all properties, 3,760 were occupied comprising of 89.9% separate houses, 7.0% semi-detached, row or terrace houses, townhouses etc, 2.4% flats or apartments and 0.6% were other dwellings (ABS, 2021).

The threshold for the inclusion of MUDs in the NSW EPA Guideline audits is when 10% or more of dwellings are MUDs. This threshold was not met by the demographics of the area. Therefore, it was agreed that MUDs were to be excluded from sampling. Table 1 shows the bin services provided by Council.

Table 1 - Bin services provided by Council

Residential bin services		
Bin types	**Collection frequency**	**Bin size**
Waste	Weekly	120L, 140L, 240L
Recycling	Fortnightly	240L

1.4 Document structure

This report provides:

- Section 2 – Methods used to obtain the data.
- Section 3 – Assumptions and limitations.
- Section 4 – The results of the audit.
- Section 5 – Comments and recommendations.
- Section 6 – Audit photos.

Appendices provide additional information:

- Appendix 1 – CDS eligibility
- Appendix 2 – Current CDS eligible containers data
- Appendix 3 – Analysis of food organics sub-sort
- Appendix 4 – Comparison with Weddin Shire Council
- Appendix 5 – Raw data

2 Project methods

This section provides the project methods for the kerbside residential bin audit.

2.1 Guidelines

This audit was designed to conform to the NSW residential waste auditing guidelines known as the "NSW EPA Guidelines" or the "*Guidelines for Conducting Household Kerbside Residual Waste, Recycling and Garden Organics Audits in NSW Local Government Areas*" (NSW, 2008) and *"Addendum 2010"* (NSW EPA, 2010). However, more detailed sorting categories related to were agreed, such as:

- CDS eligibility including weights and counts.
- FOGO services.

NSW EPA has become the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

2.2 Sampling

A sample size of 160 households was audited. Table 2 provides the sample size in streets and households for each bin type audited. Samples were developed using clustered random sampling of streets within the agreed service areas.

Where a selected household did not present a bin, as identified in the pre-collection bin survey, the next appropriate household in the street was selected. If there were no suitable households available in the street, additional households were selected from a street on the reserve list.

2.3 Audit

2.3.1 Timing

The audit collection was conducted over two weeks from Wednesday 04 February 2026 to Friday 13 February 2026. Table 2 shows the sample frame by waste, recycling and organics. The two weeks incorporate the waste and recycling bins within both urban and rural.

Table 2 - Sample frame

Audit week	Collection day	Collection date	Waste and Recycling *				
			Suburb(s)	Household type	No. of streets	No. of households	
Week 1	Wednesday	4/02/2026	**Woodstock**	**Rural**	4	31	
Week 2	Monday	9/02/2026	**Cowra**	**Urban**	4	31	129
	Tuesday	10/02/2026			4	31	
	Thursday	12/02/2026			4	36	
	Friday	13/02/2026			4	31	
Total					**20**	**160**	

* Waste and recycling bins matched pairs were targeted.

2.3.2 Pre-collection bin survey

A pre-collection bin survey, or inspection, of selected households was completed just prior to the collection of the bin contents. The bin survey of each selected household included:

- Presentation rate.
- Number of bins presented, or the number stored within the bin rooms.
- Bin size for each bin.
- Bin capacity used (i.e. bin percentage full).

2.3.3 Collection

Collection was conducted using an individual bag collection system to collect the contents of each bin separately. This allowed individual results to be collected for each household where they had individual bins.

The bin contents were collected from bins presented to the kerbside on the household's usual collection day. Collections were conducted 1-2 hours prior to Council's regular collection servicing bins to minimise the impact on Council's regular collection systems and maximise the potential to collect the targeted samples prior to the regular Council collection truck.

The materials were delivered to the sorting site for sorting.

2.3.4 Sorting

The materials were sorted and classified for analysis using the categories shown in Table 3.

A safe undercover sorting site was provided at Glenlogan Road Landfill and MRF on 236 Glenlogan Road, Cowra. The sorted waste and recycling were disposed or recycled at the sorting site.

ecSustainable waste • recycling • sustainability

Table 3 - Material categories and recoverability

Material category		Acceptable into recycling bins
Paper and Cardboard	Newspaper	✓
	Promotional pamphlets (excl. magazines) *	✓
	Magazines / brochures	✓
	Miscellaneous packaging	✓
	Corrugated cardboard	✓
	Cardboard/ packaging board – pizza boxes *	✓
	Cardboard/ packaging board – other *	✓
	LPB containers	✓^
	Tetrapak containers *	✓^
	Disposable paper product – coffee cups *	-
	Disposable paper product – plates *	✓
	Disposable paper product – other *	✓
	Print / writing / office paper – whole *	✓
	Print / writing / office paper – shredded *	-
	Composite (mostly paper)	-
	AHW / nappies	-
	Contaminated soiled paper	-
Organics	Food-unavoidable: fruit/vegetable – peelings & skins *	-
	Food-unavoidable: meat/seafood – bones, fat, carcasses, soft shells etc. *	-
	Food-unavoidable: seafood – hard shells (i.e. oyster, mussel) *	-
	Food-unavoidable: dairy/eggs – egg shells & rinds (i.e. egg shells without cartons, cheese rinds) *	-
	Food-unavoidable: tea leaves & coffee grinds *	-
	Food-unavoidable: tea bags & coffee pods (not accepted in FOGO) *	-
	Food-avoidable: fruit/ vegetable – unused *	-
	Food-avoidable: meat/seafood – unused *	-
	Food-avoidable: dairy/eggs – unused *	-
	Food-avoidable: dairy/eggs – eggs in cartons *	-
	Food-avoidable: staple foods (i.e. bread, cereal, pasta, rice, grains etc.) *	-
	Food-avoidable: meal leftovers (incl. takeaways) *	-
	Food-avoidable: desserts – cakes & biscuits *	-
	Food-avoidable: desserts – chocolate *	-
	Food-avoidable: desserts – sweets & lollies (excl. chocolate) *	-
	Garden / vegetation – compliant *	-
	Garden / vegetation – oversized *	-
	Other putrescible	-
	Wood / timber – treated *	-
	Wood / timber – untreated *	-
	Textile/ rags	-
	Leather	-
	Rubber	-
	Oils	-

Table 3 (cont.) – Material categories and recoverability

Material category		Acceptable into recycling bins
Glass	Glass beverage containers	🟨
	Glass non beverage containers / other packaging glass	🟨
	Mixed glass / fines (<4.75mm)	-
	Miscellaneous / other glass	-
Plastics	PET beverage containers	🟨
	PET packaging (excl. beverage containers)	🟨
	PET other non-beverage/ non-packaging	-
	HDPE beverage containers	🟨
	HDPE packaging (excl. beverage containers)	🟨
	HDPE other non-beverage / non-packaging	-
	PVC beverage containers	🟨
	PVC packaging (excl. beverage containers)	🟨
	PVC other non-beverage / non-packaging	-
	LDPE packaging	🟨
	LDPE non-packaging	-
	PP packaging	🟨
	PP non-packaging	-
	PS packaging	🟨
	EPS packaging	-
	PS and EPS non-packaging *	-
	Other plastics – packaging	🟨
	Other plastics – other	-
	Plastic bags – non-compostable *	-
	Plastic bags – empty compostable liners (AS 4736-2006 compliant) *	-
	Plastic bags – empty compostable liners (non-AS 4736-2006) *	-
	Plastic film *	-
	Composite (mostly plastic)	-
Ferrous	Steel beverage containers	🟨
	Steel packaging (excl. beverage containers)	🟨
	Steel other non-packaging	-
	Composite (mostly ferrous)	-
Non-Ferrous	Aluminium beverage containers	🟨
	Aluminium packaging (excl. beverage containers)	🟨
	Aluminium non-packaging	🟨
	Non-ferrous other non-packaging	-
	Composite (mostly ferrous)	-

Table 3 (cont.) – Material categories and recoverability

Material category		Acceptable into recycling bins
Hazardous	Paint	-
	Fluorescent tubes	-
	Dry cell batteries (non-rechargeable)	-
	Dry cell batteries (rechargeable)	-
	Vehicle batteries	-
	Household chemicals	-
	Asbestos / building materials	-
	Clinical pathogenic infectious	-
	Gas bottles	-
	Hazardous other	-
Building waste	Building materials and fittings	-
Earth based	Ceramics, dust, dirt, rock, inert, ash	-
E-waste	Computer equipment	-
	TVs	-
	Mobile phones	-
	Electrical items and peripherals	-
	Toner cartridges	-
Other	Containerised food and liquid *	-
	Other waste	-

Compliant material in the recycling bin.

* Additional categories audited by EC Sustainable above the requirements of the NSW EPA Guidelines. The blue text indicates categories sub-sorted to determine beverage containers eligible for the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).

^ Liquid paperboard and Tetrapak are classified as acceptable in the recycling bin based on education provided to residents. Although, in large quantities they may be considered as contamination during processing. However, due to the small volumes currently received, they are recovered with cardboard.

2.4 Management systems

2.4.1 Quality control

The following quality control factors were implemented:

- **Material weighing** – Each weight was verified by a second person for accuracy.
- **Scale servicing** – Each scale was serviced prior to the audit and calibrated for accuracy to within 0.5% of an interval for use.
- **Scale calibration** – Scales were externally serviced and calibrated if they did not calibrate based on internal calibrations.
- **Purity audits** – A team leader conducted a purity audit of selected sorted material to ensure quality control standards were met.
- **Data form back-up** – All data forms were created in duplicate in the field using electronic back-up. The original and back-up resided in two separate secure locations until data entry.
- **Monitoring –** A management staff member was assigned the role of monitoring the audit for WHS compliance, sorting accuracy, conducting equipment checks, managing stakeholders and data verification.

2.4.2 Work Health and Safety

A detailed WHS plan was made for the audit including:

- Safe Work Method Statement (SWMSs).
- Hazard Assessment Checks (HACs).
- Site inductions.
- Training permits to work.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Manual handling aids.

2.5 Analysis

This report presents results by household type and average results. Additional results based on waste bin size for sections 4.2.2, 4.6 and 4.7.

3 Assumptions and limitations

The following assumptions and limitations of the study are noted:

- The audit was designed to meet at least a Council-wide confidence level of 90% with a maximum interval of +/-10% on the main aggregated categories and data indicators within the Executive Summary. The main aggregated categories include:
    - Organics
    - Paper
    - Plastics
    - Earth based
    - Metals
    - Glass
    - Hazardous
    - Other

  This confidence level should also apply to the main data aggregated indicators of resources in the waste bins, diversion, resource recovery, bin percentage used, contamination and presentation. The data for each dwelling type, suburb and area is indicative, but not designed to the same level of confidence.
- Data is reported up to three (3) decimal places for weights and up to two (2) decimal places for percentages. Figures that are average values such as values per household or per bin, may have a decimal place rounding discrepancy due to the number of decimal places used.
- Bin compositions and quantities can vary seasonally and based on time-specific factors such as weather and events. Seasonal and weather impacts are particularly applicable for garden organics, which can be affected by plant growth rates and gardening activity.
- Bin composition for this audit was recorded by weight, meeting the NSW Guidelines. However, some materials are present in small amounts by weight due to their comparative low densities, for example plastic films and Expanded Polystyrene (EPS). However, materials like these can consume large amounts of the bin volume. A weight-based analysis was used for this audit because it is:
    - The NSW Guideline approach.
    - The most accurate method to collect data, particularly with individual household sorting and a large number of sorting categories.

Council could consider collecting volume-based composition data through load audits, where the amount of material per sample is greater.

4 Results

This section provides the results for this audit. Appendix 4 provides the results comparison of key data indicators for previous audits with this audit.

4.1 Presentation rate

Table 4 provides the bin presentation rate for each bin type. The bin presentation rate is the percentage of bins placed out on the kerbside for collection to the total number of bins available at those properties, as defined in the Glossary section. The data shows the presentation rates were:

- Waste: 71.9%, with a higher presentation rate for the urban area at 76.0% compared to 54.8% for the rural area.
- Recycling: 64.4%, with a higher presentation rate for the urban area at 65.9% compared to 58.1% for the rural area.

Table 4 - Bin presentation rate

Presentation rate (%)			
Bin type	**Urban**	**Rural**	**Average**
Waste	76.0	54.8	71.9
Recycling	65.9	58.1	64.4

It is possible that the presentation rate may be increased further between the audit truck sampling and the regular truck completing its collection. Samples were normally collected 1-2 hours before the regular collection trucks or the night before the early morning collection.

4.2 Generation rates

4.2.1 By weight

This section provides the average generation rate per household by weight for the audit period. The results are converted to generation rate per week and provided based on two scenarios:

- The average generation rate when a bin was presented (i.e. per bin collected).
- The average generation rate allowing for non-presentation (i.e. per household Council-wide including zero weights for bins that were not presented). This could also be used to estimate the annual generation rate and to validate the weighbridge data at the waste receiving facilities.

Where a bin is presented

Figure 1 and Table 5 show that an average household generated a total of 14.34kg material per week where bins were presented, consisting of:

- Waste bin: 11.50kg, with a higher rate in urban areas at 12.06kg compared to rural areas at 9.19kg.
- Recycling bin: 2.84kg, with a higher rate in urban areas at 2.95kg compared to rural areas at 2.36kg.

Allowing non-presentation

The total generation rate was 10.09kg/hh/wk, assuming a mean bin weight of zero for non-presented bins, consisting of:

- Waste bin: 8.27kg.
- Recycling bin: 1.83kg.

Figure 1 - Generation rate – by weight

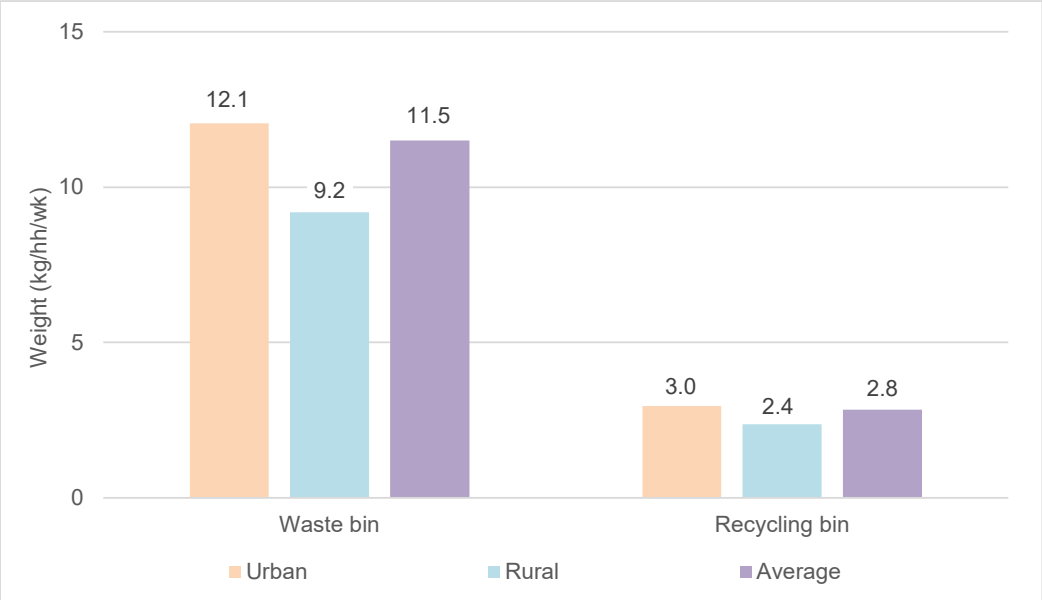


Table 5 - Generation rate – by weight

Generation rate by weight			Urban	Rural	Average
Average **weekly** generation per household (kg/hh/wk)	when a bin was presented	Waste	12.061	9.194	11.500
		Recycling	2.950	2.363	2.835
		Total	**15.011**	**11.557**	**14.335**
	allowing for non-presentation *	Waste	9.166	5.038	8.269
		Recycling	1.944	1.373	1.826
		Total	**11.110**	**6.411**	**10.094**

* Assumes a mean bin weight of zero for non-presented bins.

4.2.2 By volume

This section provides the average generation rate per household by volume for the audit period. The results are based on the bin percentage full survey and reported as: the mean bin percentage full at the time of collection, and the mean litres generated per household per week.

Figure 2 and Table 6 show that an average household generated a total of 229L bin contents per week, when bins were presented, consisting of:

- Waste: 141L, with urban area at 144L and rural area at 128L.
- Recycling: 88L, with urban area at 90L and rural area at 83L.

Table 6 also shows the mean bin percentage full at the time of collection:

- Waste: 75.5%, with:
  - Urban area at 76.9% and rural area at 69.5%.
  - Smaller waste bins (120L/ 140L) at 73.5% and larger bins (240L) at 77.1%.
- Recycling: 73.8%, with:
  - Urban area at 74.8% and rural area at 69.5%.
  - Matched with a smaller waste bin (120L/ 140L) at 66.1% and a larger bin (240L) at 80.2%.

Figure 2 - Generation rate – by volume

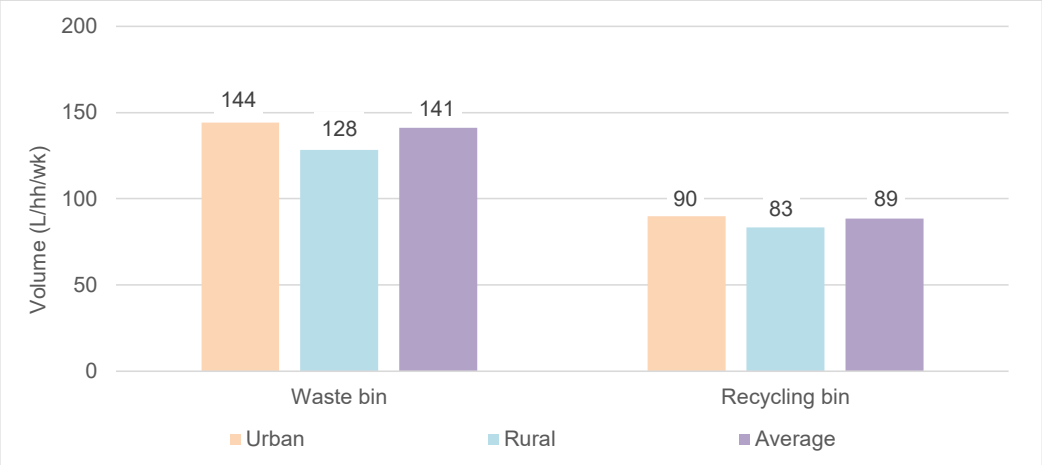


Table 6 - Generation rate – by volume

Generation rate by volume			Urban	Rural	Average	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
Average weekly generation per household (L/hh/wk) *	when a bin was presented	Waste	144	128	141	-	
		Recycling	90	83	88		
		Total	**234**	**212**	**229**		
Average bin percentage full (% by volume)		Waste	76.9	69.5	75.5	73.5	77.1
		Recycling	74.8	69.5	73.8	66.1	80.2

* Based on bin sizes and collection frequencies as shown in Table 1 in Section 1.3, as well as bin percentage full results from bin surveys.

Table 7 provides the bin percentage full distribution. The data shows that the percentage of households that used 90+% of their available bin capacity was 45.6% for waste and 41.3% for recycling.

Table 8 provides the bin percentage full distribution by waste bin size. The data shows that the percentage of households that used 90+% of their available bin capacity was 39.7% for small waste bins (120L or 140L) and 50.5% for larger waste bins (240L).

The households, who used more than 90% of their bin capacity, appeared to have insufficient bin capacity based on the current generation.

- The lack of remaining waste bin capacity for some households may lead to overflow of waste into the recycling and organics bins, causing contamination and potentially litter.
- The lack of remaining recycling and organics bin capacity for some households may lead to recoverable material being placed in the waste bins, although this may still be recovered by post-collection recovery if available.

Households that filled their bins to 90%+ may require additional bin capacity, with further study on bin usage. However, it may be that the bins were full because they were not presented for every collection event. To consider whether a lack of capacity is an issue, Council should study the set-out rate of those households as well as the bin percentage full for each collection. The set-out rate is the number of times a bin is presented over a series of collection events, such as four or more collections.

Table 7 - Bin usage – percentage full distribution

Bin type	bin % full range	Number of collection households			Percentage of households (%)		
		Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Waste	0-49	18	5	23	14.0	16.1	14.4
	50-69	24	7	31	18.6	22.6	19.4
	70-89	24	9	33	18.6	29.0	20.6
	90-99	9	0	9	7.0	0.0	5.6
	100+	54	10	64	41.9	32.3	40.0
	Total	**129**	**31**	**160**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Recycling	0-49	25	6	31	19.4	19.4	19.4
	50-69	22	5	27	17.1	16.1	16.9
	70-89	23	13	36	17.8	41.9	22.5
	90-99	7	1	8	5.4	3.2	5.0
	100+	52	6	58	40.3	19.4	36.3
	Total	**129**	**31**	**160**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Table 8 - Waste bin usage – percentage full distribution by bin size

Bin % full range	Number of collection households		Percentage of households (%)	
	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
0-49	10	13	13.7	14.9
50-69	14	17	19.2	19.5
70-89	20	13	27.4	14.9
90-99	4	5	5.5	5.7
100+	25	39	34.2	44.8
Total	**73**	**87**	**100.0**	**100.0**

4.3 Composition

The composition of each bin type audited is provided at two levels, as shown in Table 3:

- Overview of resources in each bin type, based on material recoverability.
- Composition by sorting categories (excl. CDS sub-sorting).

4.3.1 Resources in each bin type – overview

This section provides the resources summary, based on suitability for particular uses:

- **Compliant recyclable** – materials that can be placed into the kerbside recycling bins.
- **Potentially recyclable** – metals that are not compliant in the kerbside recycling bin, but that may be recovered by a MRF or AWT due to their value or other factors.
- **FOGO compliant organics**– materials that are accepted in a kerbside FOGO bin under the NSW EPA FOGO mandate. This includes: garden organics, loose food organics and AS 4736 certified compostable liners.
- **Non-compliant organics** – materials that can potentially be composted, such as in an AWT, excluding materials that are compliant in the recycling bin and a FOGO bin. This includes tea bags, coffee pods, containerised food organics, wood/timber treated or untreated and other putrescible.
- **MGB non-recyclable** – materials that cannot be placed into the kerbside recycling bins and are not compostable or potentially recyclable. This includes some materials that can be recovered but are not recoverable in the Council MGB system, such as textiles at a clothes bank or e-waste at a drop-off centre, mobiles in MobileMuster.

The detailed sorting categories included in each recovery category is provided in Table 3 in section 2.3.4. The resource details are provided in Section 4.4 for unrecovered resources and Section 4.6 for contamination rates.

Figure 3 and Table 9 to Table 10 show resources summary in each bin type.

Compliant recyclables in each bin type that should be placed in the recycling bin accounted for approximately:

- Waste bin: 14.5% of the bin contents.
- Recycling bin: 80.2% of the bin contents, which was correctly recovered in recycling bins.

Compliant FOGO materials (i.e. garden organics, loose food organics and AS 4736 certified compostable liners) in each bin type that could be recovered in the future FOGO bin accounted for approximately:

- Waste bin: 39.6% of the bin contents.
- Recycling bin: 1.3% of the bin contents.

Figure 3 - Overview of resources in each bin type

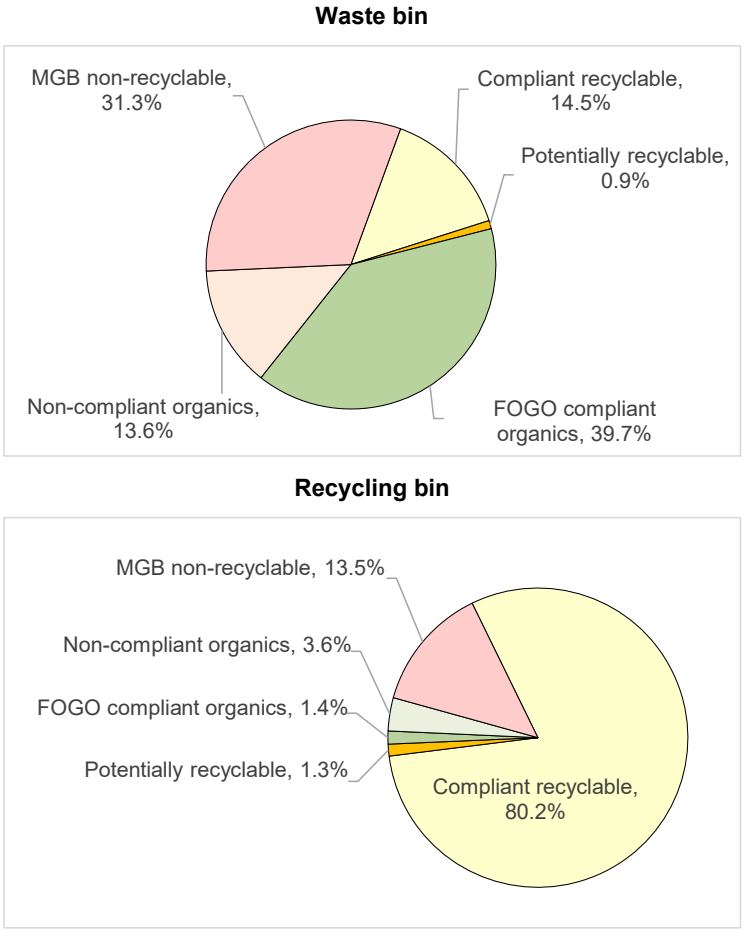


Table 9 - Overview of resources – waste bin

Recoverability category	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Compliant recyclable	**1.732**	**1.428**	**1.672**	**14.36**	**15.53**	**14.54**
Potentially recyclable	0.102	0.120	0.105	0.85	1.31	0.91
FOGO compliant organics	4.713	3.931	4.562	39.08	42.76	39.67
Non-compliant organics	1.682	1.087	1.565	13.95	11.82	13.61
MGB non-recyclable	3.832	2.628	3.596	31.77	28.58	31.27
Total	**12.061**	**9.194**	**11.500**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

Table 10 - Overview of resources – recycling bin

Recoverability category	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Compliant recyclable	**2.296**	**2.192**	**2.275**	**77.83**	**92.76**	**80.25**
Potentially recyclable	0.046	0.000	0.036	1.56	0.00	1.27
FOGO compliant organics	0.050	0.003	0.040	1.69	0.13	1.41
Non-compliant organics	0.109	0.070	0.102	3.69	2.96	3.60
MGB non-recyclable	0.449	0.098	0.382	15.22	4.15	13.47
Total	**2.950**	**2.363**	**2.835**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

4.3.2 Composition – waste bin

The top categories by weight of the waste bin contents were:

1. Food/ kitchen, 20.16%. (detailed composition see Figure 4 and Appendix 3)
2. Garden / vegetation – compliant, 18.65%.
3. Other putrescible, 6.40%.
4. Containerised food and liquid, 6.02%.
5. AHW / nappies, 5.33%.
6. Ceramics / dust / dirt / rock / inert / ash, 4.46%.
7. Textile / rags, 4.37%.
8. Contaminated soiled paper, 3.65%.
9. Plastic film, 3.14%.
10. Electrical items and peripherals, 2.50%.
11. Cardboard / package board, 2.23%.
12. Plastic bags, 1.59%.
13. PP packaging, 1.23%.
14. Glass beverage containers, 1.21%.
15. Disposable paper product – other, 1.10%.

Table 11 provides the detailed composition by sorting category (excl. CDS sub-sorting categories). The CDS container analysis is provided in Section 4.9.

Figure 4 - Overview of resources in each bin type

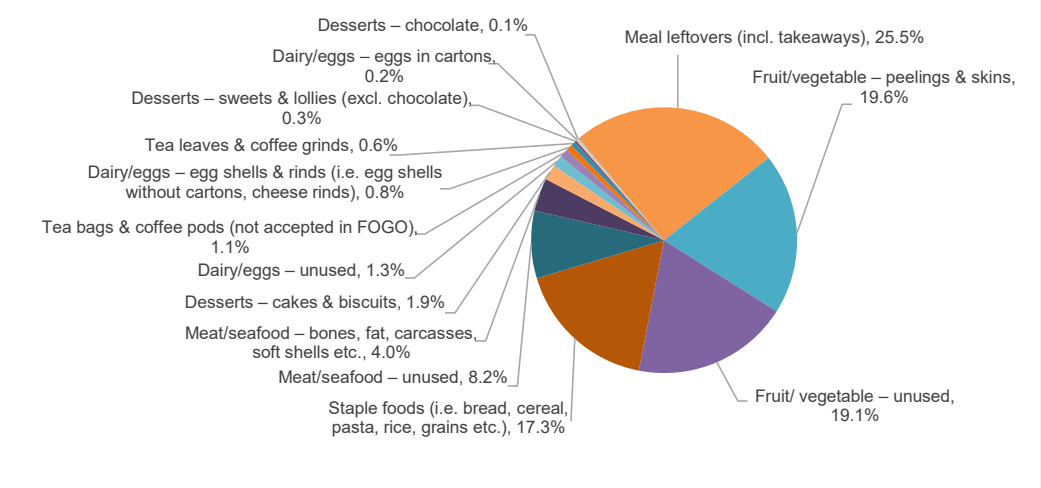


Table 11 - Waste bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories)

Material categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Newspaper	0.010	0.008	0.010	0.08	0.09	0.09
Magazines / brochures	0.117	0.043	0.103	0.97	0.47	0.90
Miscellaneous packaging	0.100	0.026	0.086	0.83	0.28	0.75
Corrugated cardboard (incl. pizza boxes)	0.147	0.052	0.128	1.22	0.57	1.11
Cardboard/ packaging board	0.264	0.224	0.256	2.19	2.44	2.23
Liquid paperboard containers	0.031	0.041	0.033	0.26	0.45	0.29
Tetrapak containers	0.021	0.019	0.021	0.17	0.21	0.18
Disposable paper product – coffee cups	0.023	0.002	0.019	0.19	0.02	0.17
Disposable paper product – general	0.128	0.118	0.126	1.06	1.28	1.10
Print / writing / office paper – whole	0.071	0.050	0.067	0.59	0.54	0.58
Print / writing / office paper – shredded	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Composite (mainly paper)	0.030	0.006	0.025	0.25	0.07	0.22
AHW / nappies	0.708	0.216	0.613	5.87	2.35	5.33
Contaminated soiled paper	0.445	0.314	0.420	3.69	3.42	3.65
Sub-total: Paper	***2.095***	***1.119***	***1.907***	***17.37***	***12.17***	***16.58***
Food / kitchen	2.445	1.792	2.318	20.27	19.49	20.16
Garden / vegetation – compliant	2.143	2.150	2.145	17.77	23.38	18.65
Garden / vegetation – oversized	0.154	0.000	0.124	1.28	0.00	1.08
Other putrescible	0.816	0.408	0.736	6.77	4.44	6.40
Wood / timber – treated	0.097	0.163	0.110	0.80	1.77	0.96
Wood / timber – untreated	0.001	0.010	0.002	0.01	0.11	0.02
Textile / rags	0.594	0.124	0.503	4.92	1.35	4.37
Leather	0.018	0.011	0.016	0.15	0.12	0.14
Rubber	0.037	0.035	0.037	0.31	0.38	0.32
Oils	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: Organics	***6.305***	***4.693***	***5.991***	***52.28***	***51.04***	***52.10***
Glass beverage containers	0.126	0.193	0.139	1.04	2.10	1.21
Glass non beverage containers / other packaging glass	0.113	0.109	0.112	0.94	1.19	0.97
Miscellaneous / other glass	0.070	0.026	0.061	0.58	0.28	0.53

Table 11 (cont.) - Waste bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories)

Material categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Mixed glass / fines	0.016	0.000	0.013	0.13	0.00	0.11
Sub-total: Glass	***0.325***	***0.328***	***0.325***	***2.69***	***3.57***	***2.83***
PET beverage containers	0.053	0.066	0.056	0.44	0.72	0.49
PET packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.135	0.081	0.124	1.12	0.88	1.08
PET other non-beverage/ non-packaging	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.03	0.00	0.03
HDPE beverage containers	0.037	0.017	0.033	0.31	0.18	0.29
HDPE packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.054	0.046	0.052	0.45	0.50	0.45
HDPE other non-beverage / non-packaging	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.01	0.00	0.01
PVC beverage containers	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.00	0.02	0.00
PVC packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.004	0.002	0.004	0.03	0.02	0.03
PVC other non-beverage / non-packaging	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.02	0.03	0.03
LDPE packaging	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.01	0.00	0.01
LDPE non-packaging	0.050	0.000	0.040	0.41	0.00	0.35
PP packaging	0.143	0.141	0.142	1.19	1.53	1.23
PP non-packaging	0.032	0.023	0.030	0.27	0.25	0.26
PS packaging	0.009	0.001	0.008	0.07	0.01	0.07
EPS packaging	0.026	0.007	0.022	0.22	0.08	0.19
PS and EPS non-packaging	0.010	0.004	0.009	0.08	0.04	0.08
Other plastics beverage containers	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other plastics packaging	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other plastics – other	0.108	0.061	0.099	0.90	0.66	0.86
Plastic bags	0.177	0.207	0.183	1.47	2.25	1.59
Plastic bags – compostable	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Plastic film – other	0.353	0.393	0.361	2.93	4.27	3.14
Composite (mostly plastic)	0.042	0.016	0.037	0.35	0.17	0.32
Sub-total: Plastics	***1.242***	***1.070***	***1.208***	***10.30***	***11.64***	***10.50***
Steel beverage containers	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.00	0.02	0.00
Steel packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.104	0.099	0.103	0.86	1.08	0.90
Steel other non-packaging	0.047	0.009	0.039	0.39	0.10	0.34
Composite (mostly ferrous)	0.051	0.111	0.063	0.42	1.21	0.55
Sub-total: Ferrous	***0.202***	***0.221***	***0.205***	***1.67***	***2.40***	***1.78***

Table 11 (cont.) - Waste bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories)

Material categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Aluminium beverage containers	0.024	0.045	0.028	0.20	0.49	0.24
Aluminium packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.019	0.022	0.019	0.16	0.24	0.17
Aluminium non-packaging	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.17	0.23	0.18
Non-ferrous other non-packaging	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Composite (mostly ferrous)	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.03	0.00	0.03
Sub-total: Non-ferrous	***0.068***	***0.088***	***0.071***	***0.56***	***0.96***	***0.62***
Paint	0.024	0.000	0.019	0.20	0.00	0.17
Fluorescent tubes	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.01	0.03	0.01
Dry cell batteries (non-rechargeable)	0.002	0.004	0.002	0.02	0.04	0.02
Dry cell batteries (rechargeable)	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.01	0.03	0.01
Vehicle batteries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Household chemicals	0.112	0.102	0.110	0.93	1.11	0.96
Asbestos / building materials	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Clinical pathogenic infectious	0.057	0.000	0.046	0.47	0.00	0.40
Gas bottles	0.006	0.000	0.005	0.05	0.00	0.04
Hazardous other	0.003	0.000	0.002	0.02	0.00	0.02
Sub-total: Hazardous	***0.206***	***0.112***	***0.186***	***1.71***	***1.22***	***1.62***
Building materials and fittings (NEC)	**0.141**	**0.000**	**0.114**	**1.17**	**0.00**	**0.99**
Ceramics / dust / dirt / rock / inert / ash	**0.451**	**0.771**	**0.513**	**3.74**	**8.39**	**4.46**
Computer equipment	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.02	0.00	0.01
TVs	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mobile phones	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Electrical items and peripherals	0.285	0.297	0.287	2.36	3.23	2.50
Toner cartridges	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: E-waste	***0.287***	***0.297***	***0.288***	***2.38***	***3.23***	***2.50***
Containerised food and liquid – cooking oil	0.004	0.032	0.009	0.03	0.35	0.08
Containerised food and liquid – non-cooking oil	0.735	0.463	0.683	6.09	5.04	5.94
Other (specify)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: Miscellaneous	***0.739***	***0.495***	***0.692***	***6.13***	***5.38***	***6.02***
Grand total	**12.061**	**9.194**	**11.500**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

4.3.3 Composition – recycling bin

The top categories by weight of the recycling bin contents were:

1. Glass beverage containers, 17.92%.
2. Corrugated cardboard, 15.73%.
3. Cardboard / package board, 11.46%.
4. Glass non-beverage containers / other packaging glass, 5.26%.
5. Newspaper, 4.90%.
6. Print / writing / office paper – whole, 3.67%.
7. Magazines / brochures, 3.21%.
8. PET beverage containers, 3.00%.
9. Steel packaging (excl. beverage containers), 2.82%.
10. Other plastics – other, 2.50%.
11. HDPE beverage containers, 1.98%.
12. Miscellaneous packaging, 1.94%.
13. HDPE packaging (excl. beverage containers), 1.94%.
14. PET packaging (excl. beverage containers), 1.83%.
15. Wood/ timber - treated, 1.62%.

Table 12 provides the detailed composition by sorting category (excl. CDS sub-sorting categories). The CDS container analysis is provided in Section 4.9.

Table 12 - Recycling bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories)

Material categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Newspaper	0.112	0.248	0.139	3.80	10.50	4.90
Magazines / brochures	0.104	0.035	0.091	3.53	1.48	3.21
Miscellaneous packaging	0.055	0.055	0.055	1.86	2.33	1.94
Corrugated cardboard (incl. pizza boxes)	0.480	0.309	0.446	16.27	13.08	15.73
Cardboard/ packaging board	0.331	0.303	0.325	11.22	12.82	11.46
Liquid paperboard containers	0.008	0.032	0.011	0.27	1.35	0.39
Tetrapak containers	0.039	0.009	0.033	1.32	0.38	1.16
Disposable paper product – coffee cups	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.07	0.04	0.07
Disposable paper product – general	0.027	0.007	0.023	0.92	0.30	0.81
Print / writing / office paper – whole	0.127	0.005	0.104	4.31	0.21	3.67
Print / writing / office paper – shredded	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.07	0.08	0.07
Composite (mainly paper)	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.20	0.13	0.18
AHW / nappies	0.017	0.000	0.014	0.58	0.00	0.49
Contaminated soiled paper	0.026	0.006	0.022	0.88	0.25	0.78
Sub-total: Paper	***1.336***	***1.015***	***1.272***	***45.29***	***42.95***	***44.87***
Food / kitchen	0.046	0.003	0.037	1.56	0.13	1.31
Garden / vegetation – compliant	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.14	0.00	0.11
Garden / vegetation – oversized	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other putrescible	0.014	0.000	0.012	0.47	0.00	0.42
Wood / timber – treated	0.051	0.026	0.046	1.73	1.10	1.62
Wood / timber – untreated	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Textile / rags	0.052	0.002	0.042	1.76	0.08	1.48
Leather	0.013	0.000	0.011	0.44	0.00	0.39
Rubber	0.007	0.000	0.005	0.24	0.00	0.18
Oils	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: Organics	***0.187***	***0.031***	***0.156***	***6.34***	***1.31***	***5.50***
Glass beverage containers	0.466	0.685	0.508	15.80	28.99	17.92
Glass non beverage containers / other packaging glass	0.152	0.138	0.149	5.15	5.84	5.26
Miscellaneous / other glass	0.022	0.000	0.018	0.75	0.00	0.63

Table 12 (cont.) - Recycling bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories)

Material categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Mixed glass / fines	0.051	0.018	0.044	1.73	0.76	1.55
Sub-total: Glass	***0.691***	***0.841***	***0.719***	***23.42***	***35.59***	***25.36***
PET beverage containers	0.083	0.092	0.085	2.81	3.89	3.00
PET packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.054	0.045	0.052	1.83	1.90	1.83
PET other non-beverage/ non-packaging	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.00	0.04	0.00
HDPE beverage containers	0.059	0.044	0.056	2.00	1.86	1.98
HDPE packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.060	0.031	0.055	2.03	1.31	1.94
HDPE other non-beverage / non-packaging	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.03	0.00	0.04
PVC beverage containers	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.07	0.04	0.07
PVC packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.03	0.00	0.04
PVC other non-beverage / non-packaging	0.004	0.000	0.004	0.14	0.00	0.14
LDPE packaging	0.000	0.003	0.001	0.00	0.13	0.04
LDPE non-packaging	0.019	0.000	0.015	0.64	0.00	0.53
PP packaging	0.034	0.031	0.033	1.15	1.31	1.16
PP non-packaging	0.015	0.000	0.012	0.51	0.00	0.42
PS packaging	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.03	0.00	0.04
EPS packaging	0.002	0.004	0.003	0.07	0.17	0.11
PS and EPS non-packaging	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.03	0.08	0.07
Other plastics beverage containers	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other plastics packaging	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other plastics – other	0.083	0.020	0.071	2.81	0.85	2.50
Plastic bags	0.008	0.026	0.011	0.27	1.10	0.39
Plastic bags – compostable	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Plastic film – other	0.022	0.011	0.020	0.75	0.47	0.71
Composite (mostly plastic)	0.017	0.000	0.013	0.58	0.00	0.46
Sub-total: Plastics	***0.466***	***0.311***	***0.438***	***15.80***	***13.16***	***15.45***
Steel beverage containers	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Steel packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.079	0.087	0.080	2.68	3.68	2.82
Steel other non-packaging	0.020	0.000	0.016	0.68	0.00	0.56
Composite (mostly ferrous)	0.024	0.000	0.019	0.81	0.00	0.67
Sub-total: Ferrous	***0.123***	***0.087***	***0.115***	***4.17***	***3.68***	***4.06***

Table 12 (cont.) - Recycling bin composition (excl. CDS and food sub-categories)

Material categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Aluminium beverage containers	0.017	0.032	0.020	0.58	1.35	0.71
Aluminium packaging (excl. beverage containers)	0.003	0.000	0.003	0.10	0.00	0.11
Aluminium non-packaging	0.002	0.000	0.002	0.07	0.00	0.07
Non-ferrous other non-packaging	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Composite (mostly ferrous)	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.07	0.00	0.04
Sub-total: Non-ferrous	***0.024***	***0.032***	***0.026***	***0.81***	***1.35***	***0.92***
Paint	0.008	0.000	0.007	0.27	0.00	0.25
Fluorescent tubes	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dry cell batteries (non-rechargeable)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dry cell batteries (rechargeable)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vehicle batteries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Household chemicals	0.012	0.000	0.010	0.41	0.00	0.35
Asbestos / building materials	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Clinical pathogenic infectious	0.000	0.002	0.001	0.00	0.08	0.04
Gas bottles	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hazardous other	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: Hazardous	***0.020***	***0.002***	***0.018***	***0.68***	***0.08***	***0.63***
Building materials and fittings (NEC)	**0.013**	**0.000**	**0.010**	**0.44**	**0.00**	**0.35**
Ceramics / dust / dirt / rock / inert / ash	**0.028**	**0.000**	**0.022**	**0.95**	**0.00**	**0.78**
Computer equipment	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
TVs	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mobile phones	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Electrical items and peripherals	0.018	0.000	0.015	0.61	0.00	0.53
Toner cartridges	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: E-waste	***0.018***	***0.000***	***0.015***	***0.61***	***0.00***	***0.53***
Containerised food and liquid – cooking oil	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Containerised food and liquid – non-cooking oil	0.044	0.044	0.044	1.49	1.86	1.55
Other (specify)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total: Miscellaneous	***0.044***	***0.044***	***0.044***	***1.49***	***1.86***	***1.55***
Grand total	**2.950**	**2.363**	**2.835**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

4.4 Resources in the waste bin

This section provides the amount (by weight and by percentage) of resources in the waste bin, based on suitability for particular uses as shown in Section 4.3.1. Figure 5 shows the summary categories, with the categories provided in more detail in Figure 6 and Table 13.

The average data shows:

- Compliant recyclable materials were 14.5% of the waste bin contents. These materials could be recovered in the recycling bins. Therefore, education should focus on the main unrecovered recyclables such as:
  - Recyclable paper at 7.2% of the bin contents.
  - Recyclable plastics at 3.7% of the bin contents.
  - Recyclable glass at 2.2% of the bin contents.
- FOGO bin compliant materials were 39.7% of the waste bin contents. These materials could be recovered in the FOGO bin when it is available:
  - Garden organics at 19.7% of the bin contents, with 1.1% was oversized garden organics which may not be accepted in the kerbside bin system.
  - Food organics loose at 19.9% of the bin contents.

Figure 5 - Resources in the waste bin – high level overview

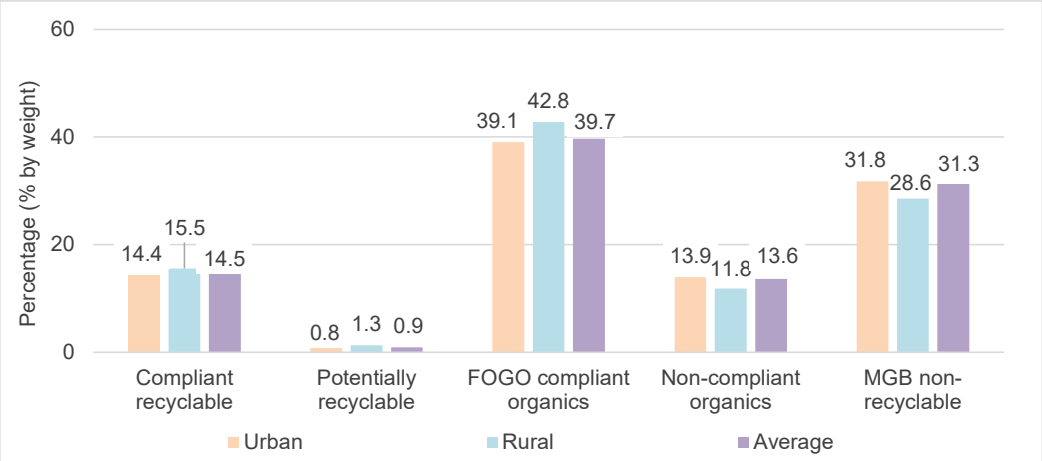


Figure 6 - Resources in the waste bin – detailed breakdown

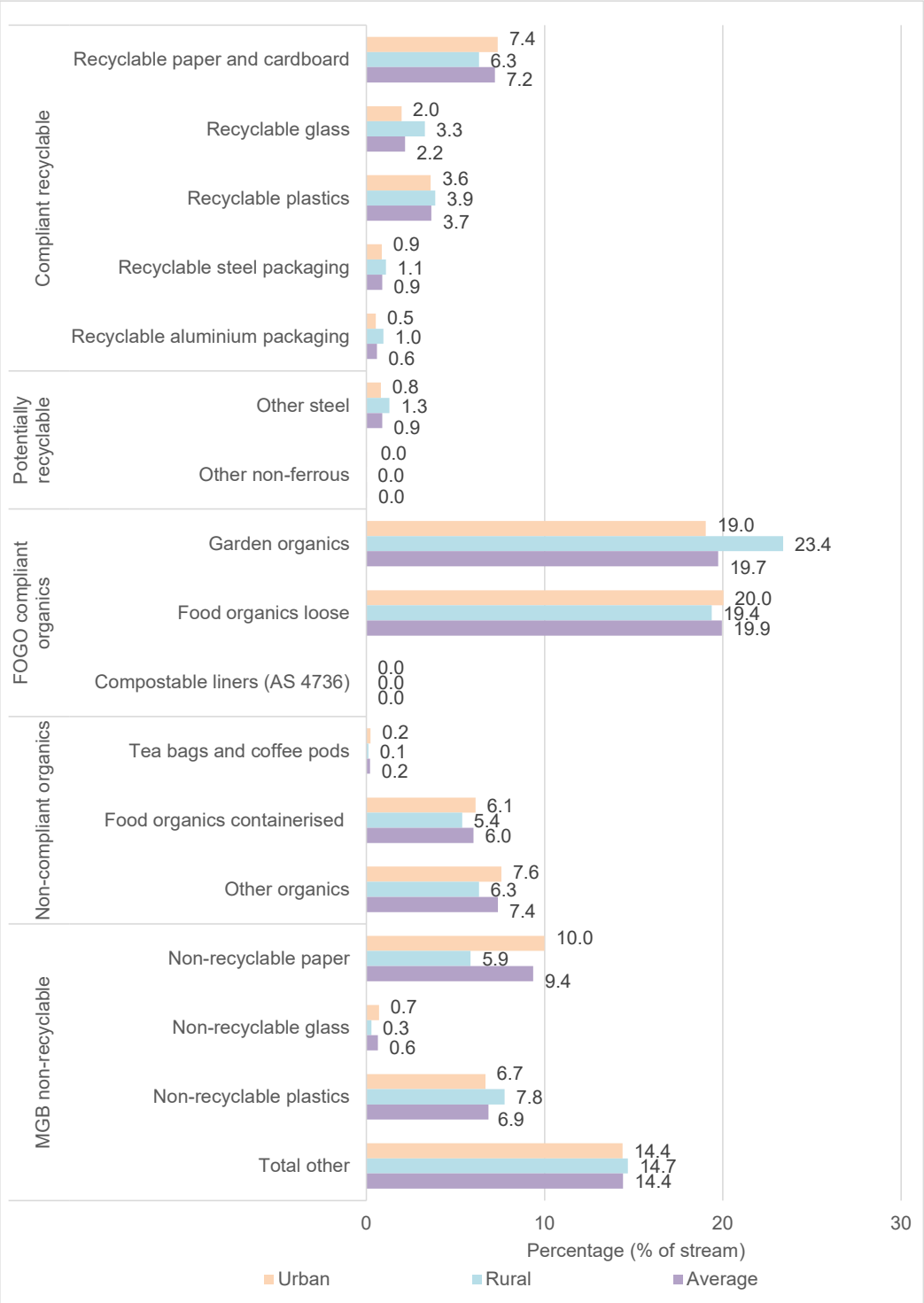


Table 13 - Resources in the waste bin – detailed breakdown

Recoverability category	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage by weight (%)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Recyclable paper	0.889	0.581	0.830	7.37	6.32	7.22
Recyclable glass	0.239	0.302	0.251	1.98	3.28	2.18
Recyclable plastics	0.436	0.356	0.420	3.61	3.87	3.65
Recyclable steel packaging	0.104	0.101	0.103	0.86	1.10	0.90
Recyclable aluminium packaging	0.064	0.088	0.068	0.53	0.96	0.59
Compliant recyclable	**1.732**	**1.428**	**1.672**	**14.36**	**15.53**	**14.54**
Other steel	0.098	0.120	0.102	0.81	1.31	0.89
Other non-ferrous	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.03	0.00	0.03
Potentially recyclable	**0.102**	**0.120**	**0.105**	**0.85**	**1.31**	**0.91**
Garden organics	2.297	2.150	2.269	19.04	23.38	19.73
Food organics loose	2.416	1.781	2.293	20.03	19.37	19.94
Compostable liners (AS 4736)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
FOGO compliant organics	**4.713**	**3.931**	**4.562**	**39.08**	**42.76**	**39.67**
Tea bags^ and coffee pods	0.029	0.011	0.025	0.24	0.12	0.22
Food organics containerised +	0.739	0.495	0.692	6.13	5.38	6.02
Other organics #	0.914	0.581	0.848	7.58	6.32	7.37
Non-compliant organics	**1.682**	**1.087**	**1.565**	**13.95**	**11.82**	**13.61**
Non-recyclable paper	1.206	0.538	1.077	10.00	5.85	9.37
Non-recyclable glass	0.086	0.026	0.074	0.71	0.28	0.64
Non-recyclable plastics	0.806	0.714	0.788	6.68	7.77	6.85
Total other ^^	1.734	1.350	1.657	14.38	14.68	14.41
MGB non-recyclable	**3.832**	**2.628**	**3.596**	**31.77**	**28.58**	**31.27**
Total	**12.061**	**9.194**	**11.500**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

^ Many tea bags might contain staples or PFAs and is recommended to dispose of into the waste bin.
+ Includes both food and container components
# Includes other putrescible and wood/ timber (treated and untreated).
^^ Total other was mainly textile/ rags, ceramics / dust / dirt / rock / inert / ash and electrical items and peripherals.

The 'total other' category includes other materials that could potentially be recovered but not within the Council MGB system. This includes items that can mainly be recovered in resident drop-off systems such as textiles/rags, oils, wood, ceramics/dust/dirt/rock/inert/ash, mobile phones, computer equipment and ash/earth based. However, the Guidelines sorting requirements do not include sub-segregation of which parts of these items are recoverable and which parts are not recoverable. For example, some textiles may be contaminated beyond recovery, while others can be re-used without re-processing (such as in charity shops) and some may be re-usable with re-processing.

4.5 Hazardous materials

This section provides analysis on hazardous materials disposed in the waste bin.

Figure 7 and Table 14 provide the hazardous materials in the waste bin, which includes Sorting categories classified as hazardous and e-waste, as shown in Table 3.

Hazardous material was 0.47kg/hh/wk (4.1% of the waste bin contents), with the top materials:

1. Electrical items and peripherals, 60.5% of total hazardous material.
2. Household chemicals, 23.2 % of total hazardous material.
3. Clinical pathogenic infectious, 9.7 % of total hazardous material.

Figure 7 - Hazardous material composition – waste bin

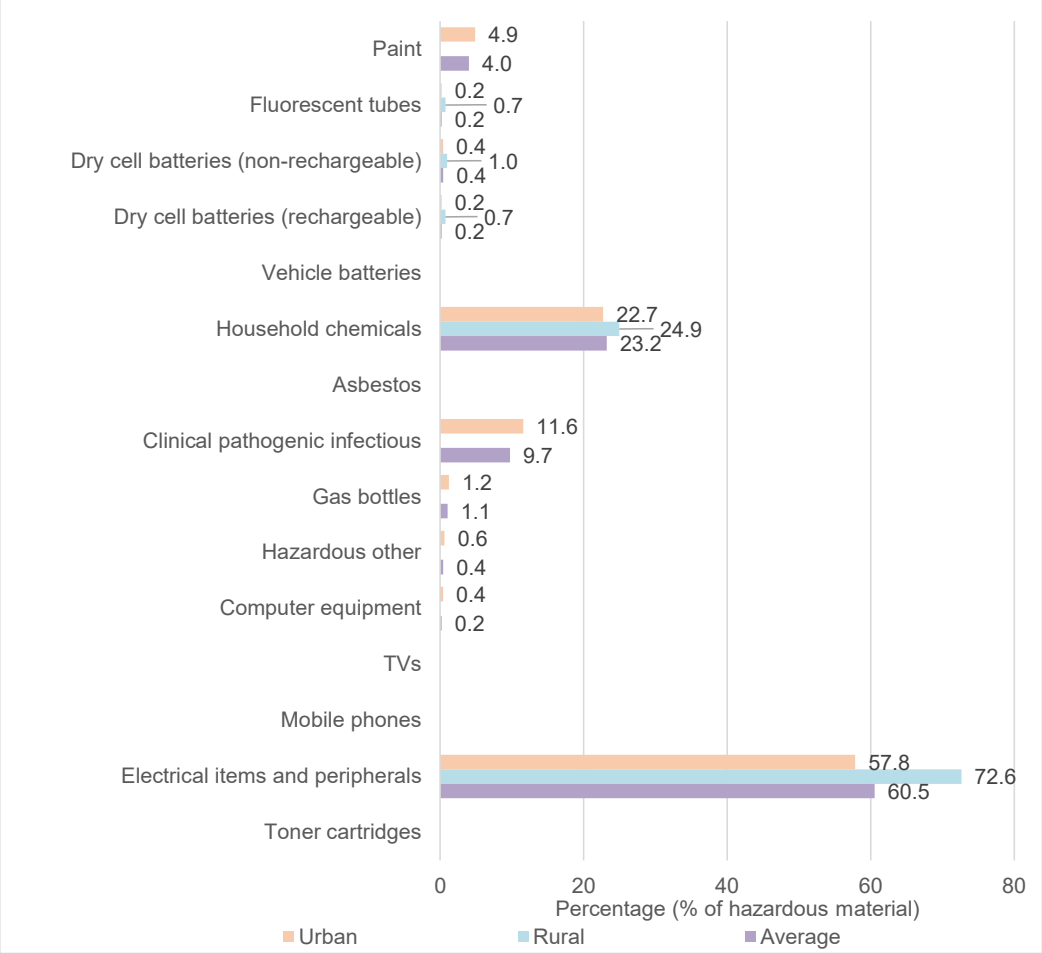


Table 14 - Hazardous material composition – waste bin

Hazardous categories	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight) of total hazardous		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Paint	0.024	0.000	0.019	4.87	0.00	4.01
Fluorescent tubes	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.20	0.73	0.21
Dry cell batteries (non-rechargeable)	0.002	0.004	0.002	0.41	0.98	0.42
Dry cell batteries (rechargeable)	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.20	0.73	0.21
Vehicle batteries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Household chemicals	0.112	0.102	0.110	22.72	24.94	23.21
Asbestos	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Clinical pathogenic infectious	0.057	0.000	0.046	11.56	0.00	9.70
Gas bottles	0.006	0.000	0.005	1.22	0.00	1.05
Hazardous other	0.003	0.000	0.002	0.61	0.00	0.42
Computer equipment	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.41	0.00	0.21
TVs	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mobile phones	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Electrical items and peripherals	0.285	0.297	0.287	57.81	72.62	60.55
Toner cartridges	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	**0.493**	**0.409**	**0.474**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

Table 15 provides the counts of each hazardous item requiring a count in the NSW EPA Guideline. This data is provided as a count of items disposed in the audit and per household per week (item/hh/wk).

The data shows:

- A total of 98 hazardous items were disposed in the audit samples.
- The most common hazardous wastes disposed by count were electrical items and peripherals (57 items) and dry cell batteries (29 items). These two categories accounted for approximately 88% of the hazardous items by count.
- An average of 0.18 dry cell batteries are disposed per household per week, which equates to approximately 1 dry cell battery for every 6 households. This is equivalent to 9 dry cell batteries being disposed by one household per year.

Table 15 - Hazardous item counts – waste bin

Hazardous categories	Item count as collected (No. of items)			Item count per household per week (item/hh/wk)		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Average
Fluorescent tubes	2	3	5	0.02	0.10	0.03
Dry cell batteries (non-rechargeable)	11	7	18	0.09	0.23	0.11
Dry cell batteries (rechargeable)	7	4	11	0.05	0.13	0.07
Vehicle batteries	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gas bottles	2	0	2	0.02	0.00	0.01
Computer equipment	5	0	5	0.04	0.00	0.03
TVs	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mobile phones	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Electrical items and peripherals	44	13	57	0.34	0.42	0.36
Toner cartridges	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	**71**	**27**	**98**	**0.55**	**0.87**	**0.61**

4.6 Recycling bin contamination rate and types

Figure 8 provides a summary level of the contamination in the recycling bin based on the materials accepted by Council for recycling. All of the data results in this report, are based on bagged materials in the recycling bin being opened and sorted to their material category. This follows the NSW Guideline process. However, the bagged material weights were recorded and provided in the raw data file in Appendix 5.

The data shows that the average contamination rate was 19.8% of the recycling bin contents.

- Urban households had a higher recycling bin contamination rate at 22.2% compared to 7.2% for rural households.
- Households have a large waste bin had a higher recycling bin contamination rate at 21.2% compared to those have a small waste bin at 17.4%.

These results compare to 14% [2] contamination in a typical recycling bin in 2020-21 as presented in the National waste report 2022 (DCCEEW, 2022).

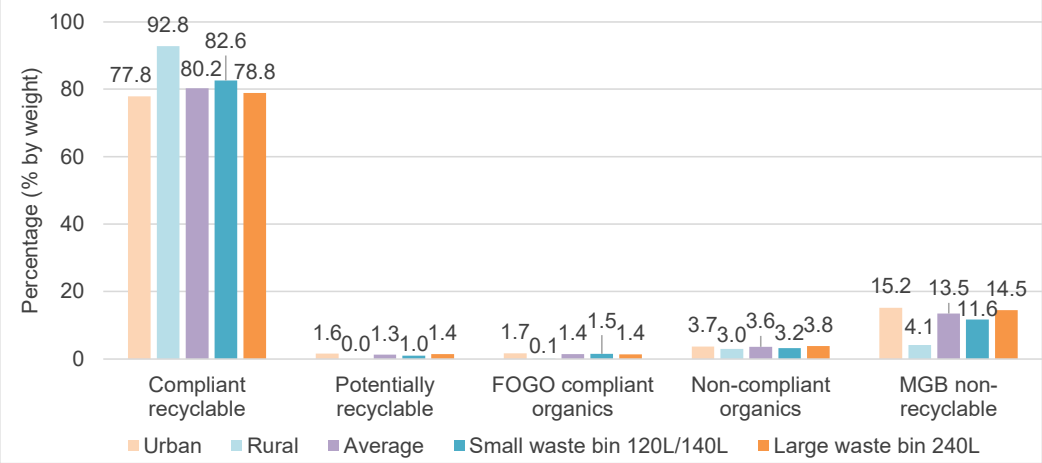
Around 45% of urban contamination audited (75.14kg) was due to contamination in seven households recycling bins. If these households with high contamination levels were excluded the urban contamination rate would reduce to 14.2%, and the overall result to 12.9%.

Bagged material

Bagged material was 2.5% by weight of the recycling bin contents. Approximately 18.0% by weight of bagged material was recyclable. The contamination rate would increase to 20.2% if all bagged material was deemed as contamination.

[2] This result was based on collations of audits in the five largest states and population weighted. However, it is noted that some states operated CDS during the audit an some did not. Therefore, contamination rates may be higher where CDS was available.

Figure 8 - Recycling bin contamination rate



Recoverability categories	Urban	Rural	Average	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
Percentage (% by weight)					
Compliant recyclable	**77.83**	**92.76**	**80.25**	**82.64**	**78.84**
Potentially recyclable	1.56	0.00	1.27	0.99	1.44
FOGO compliant organics	1.69	0.13	1.41	1.49	1.38
Non-compliant organics	3.69	2.96	3.60	3.23	3.82
MGB non-recyclable	15.22	4.15	13.47	11.65	14.51
Contamination	**22.17**	**7.24**	**19.75**	**17.36**	**21.16**
Total bin contents	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**
Weight (kg/hh/wk)					
Compliant recyclable	**2.296**	**2.192**	**2.275**	**2.296**	**2.192**
Potentially recyclable	0.046	0.000	0.036	0.024	0.046
FOGO compliant organics	0.050	0.003	0.040	0.036	0.044
Non-compliant organics	0.109	0.070	0.102	0.078	0.122
MGB non-recyclable	0.449	0.098	0.382	0.449	0.098
Contamination	**0.654**	**0.171**	**0.560**	**0.419**	**0.675**
Total bin contents	**2.950**	**2.363**	**2.835**	**2.413**	**3.190**

The results show that the contamination rates were higher for urban areas compared to rural areas. The differences were mainly caused by MGB non-recyclable items (i.e. textiles, earth-based material, electrical items and peripherals, other plastics items not packaging, non-recyclable glass items and glass fines – broken glass <4.75mm), other organics (i.e. treated wood and other putrescible), other steel and loose food organics, as shown in Figure 9 and Table 16.

A comparison of recycling bin contamination rates for households with a smaller or a larger waste bin shows households with a larger waste bin had a higher contamination rate than those with a smaller waste bin. This was mainly due to other steel, non-recyclable plastics and total other material in recycling bins at households with larger waste bins. Whereas households with a smaller waste bin incorrectly disposed of a higher percentage of non-recyclable paper and glass into their recycling bins.

Figure 9 and Table 16 provide the types of contamination in the recycling bin based on the materials not accepted by Council for recycling. The average data shows the top 4 contamination types were:

1. Non-recyclable plastics, 27.1% of the contamination.
2. Total other, 22.0% of contamination. This mainly comprises of:
    - Textile / rags, 7.5% of contamination.
    - Ceramics / dust / dirt / rock / inert / ash, 3.9% of contamination.
    - Electrical items and peripherals, 2.7% of contamination.
3. Non-recyclable glass, 11.1% of contamination.
4. Other organics, 10.4% of contamination, with mainly treated wood/ timber.

Figure 9 - Recycling bin contamination types

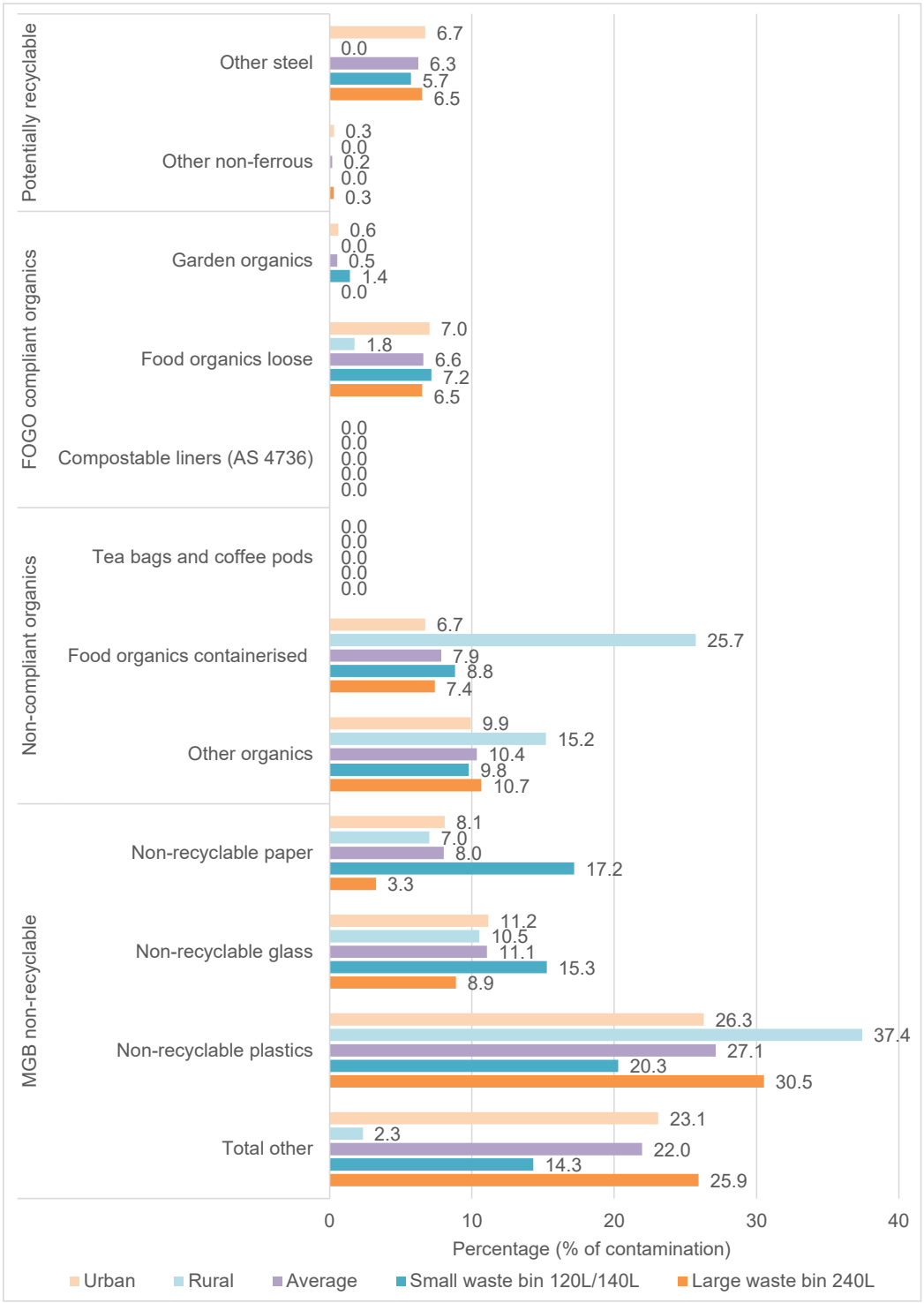


Table 16 - Recycling bin contamination types

Recoverability category	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight of the bin contents)			Percentage (% by weight of contamination)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Other steel	0.044	0.000	0.035	1.49	0.00	1.23	*6.73*	*0.00*	*6.25*
Other non-ferrous	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.07	0.00	0.04	*0.31*	*0.00*	*0.18*
Potentially recyclable	**0.046**	**0.000**	**0.036**	**1.56**	**0.00**	**1.27**	***7.03***	***0.00***	***6.43***
Garden organics	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.14	0.00	0.11	*0.61*	*0.00*	*0.54*
Food organics loose	0.046	0.003	0.037	1.56	0.13	1.31	*7.03*	*1.75*	*6.61*
Compostable liners (AS 4736)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
FOGO compliant organics	**0.050**	**0.003**	**0.040**	**1.69**	**0.13**	**1.41**	***7.65***	***1.75***	***7.14***
Tea bags^ and coffee pods	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.00*
Food organics containerised +	0.044	0.044	0.044	1.49	1.86	1.55	*6.73*	*25.73*	*7.86*
Other organics #	0.065	0.026	0.058	2.20	1.10	2.05	*9.94*	*15.20*	*10.36*
Non-compliant organics	**0.109**	**0.070**	**0.102**	**3.69**	**2.96**	**3.60**	***16.67***	***40.94***	***18.21***
Non-recyclable paper	0.053	0.012	0.045	1.80	0.51	1.59	*8.10*	*7.02*	*8.04*
Non-recyclable glass	0.073	0.018	0.062	2.47	0.76	2.19	*11.16*	*10.53*	*11.07*
Non-recyclable plastics	0.172	0.064	0.152	5.83	2.71	5.36	*26.30*	*37.43*	*27.14*
Total other	0.151	0.004	0.123	5.12	0.17	4.34	*23.09*	*2.34*	*21.96*
MGB non-recyclable	**0.449**	**0.098**	**0.382**	**15.22**	**4.15**	**13.47**	***68.65***	***57.31***	***68.21***
Total contamination	**0.654**	**0.171**	**0.560**	**22.17**	**7.24**	**19.75**	***100.00***	***100.00***	***100.00***

Note: Rounding of figures could lead to slight differences after two decimal places.

^ Many tea bags might contain staples or PFAs and is recommended to dispose of into the waste bin.

+ Includes both food and container components

Includes other putrescible and wood/ timber (treated and untreated).

Table 17 - Recycling bin contamination types, by waste bin size

Recoverability category	Weight (kg/hh/wk)		Percentage (% by weight of the bin contents)		Percentage (% by weight of contamination)	
	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
Other steel	0.024	0.044	0.99	1.38	*5.73*	*6.52*
Other non-ferrous	0.000	0.002	0.00	0.06	*0.00*	*0.30*
Potentially recyclable	**0.024**	**0.046**	**0.99**	**1.44**	***5.73***	***6.81***
Garden organics	0.006	0.000	0.25	0.00	*1.43*	*0.00*
Food organics loose	0.030	0.044	1.24	1.38	*7.16*	*6.52*
Compostable liners (AS 4736)	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	*0.00*	*0.00*
FOGO compliant organics	**0.036**	**0.044**	**1.49**	**1.38**	***8.59***	***6.52***
Tea bags^ and coffee pods	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	*0.00*	*0.00*
Food organics containerised +	0.037	0.050	1.53	1.57	*8.83*	*7.41*
Other organics #	0.041	0.072	1.70	2.26	*9.79*	*10.67*
Non-compliant organics	**0.078**	**0.122**	**3.23**	**3.82**	***18.62***	***18.07***
Non-recyclable paper	0.072	0.022	2.98	0.69	*17.18*	*3.26*
Non-recyclable glass	0.064	0.060	2.65	1.88	*15.27*	*8.89*
Non-recyclable plastics	0.085	0.206	3.52	6.46	*20.29*	*30.52*
Total other	0.060	0.175	2.49	5.49	*14.32*	*25.93*
MGB non-recyclable	**0.281**	**0.463**	**11.65**	**14.51**	***67.06***	***68.59***
Total contamination	**0.419**	**0.675**	**17.36**	**21.16**	***100.00***	***100.00***

Note: Rounding of figures could lead to slight differences after two decimal places.

^ Many tea bags might contain staples or PFAs and is recommended to dispose of into the waste bin.

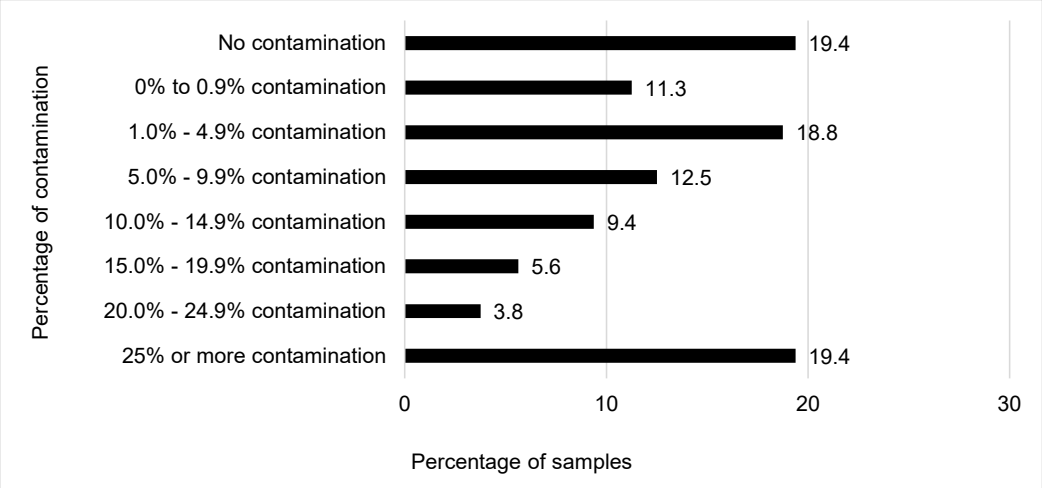
+ Includes both food and container components

Includes other putrescible and wood/ timber (treated and untreated).

Figure 10 provides a count of the extent of contamination in each sample and shows the distribution of contamination. The data shows:

- 19.4% of samples have no contamination
- 11.3% of samples have less than 1% contamination.
- 19.4% of samples have 25% or more contamination.

Figure 10 - Recycling contamination level distribution, overall



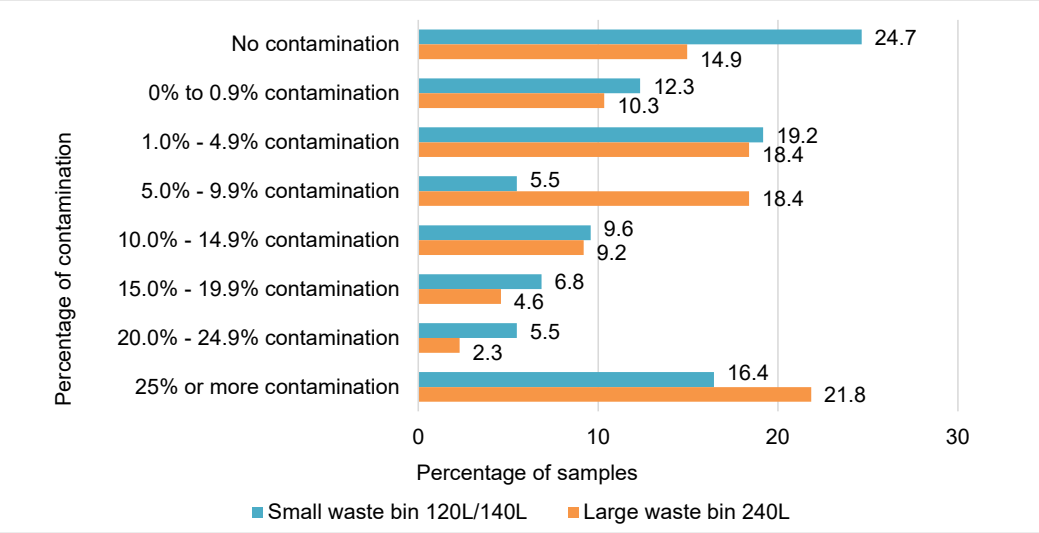
Percentage of contamination in the recycling bin	Number of samples	% of samples	Weight of contamination (kg)	% of total contamination
None	31	19.4	0	0.0
Up to 0.9%	18	11.3	1	0.2
1.0% to 4.9%	30	18.8	4	1.7
5.0% to 9.9%	20	12.5	13	5.1
10.0% to 14.9%	15	9.4	21	8.5
15.0% to 19.9%	9	5.6	33	13.2
20.0% to 24.9%	6	3.8	39	15.5
25% or more	31	19.4	141	55.9
Total	**160**	**100.0**	**252**	**100.0**

Figure 10 provides a count of the extent of contamination in each sample and shows the distribution of contamination. The data shows that:

- 16.4% of households (12 out of 73) with a smaller waste have 25% or more contamination in their recycling bins, whereas 21.8% for households with a 240L waste bin.
- Of the 12 households using a small waste bin with a 25% or more contamination rate, 4 households used 100% or more, 5 used 70% to 90% and the rest used 60% or less of their waste bins.

The data shows that the majority of households applied for a small waste bin based on their normal waste and recycling behaviours, not intending to dispose of general waste into the recycling bin.

Figure 11 - Recycling contamination level distribution by waste bin size



Percentage of contamination in the recycling bin	Number of samples		% of samples	
	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
None	18	13	24.7	14.9
Up to 0.9%	9	9	12.3	10.3
1.0% to 4.9%	14	16	19.2	18.4
5.0% to 9.9%	4	16	5.5	18.4
10.0% to 14.9%	7	8	9.6	9.2
15.0% to 19.9%	5	4	6.8	4.6
20.0% to 24.9%	4	2	5.5	2.3
25% or more	12	19	16.4	21.8
Total	**73**	**87**	**100.0**	**100.0**

4.7 Recycling resource recovery rates

Resource recovery rate is the percentage of a material type that is recovered compared to the overall amount of that material in all bin types, as defined in the Glossary section.

Figure 12 and Table 18 provide the resource recovery rates of recyclable materials at the kerbside, based on the bin systems provided at the kerbside. This is the household performance based on the bin system available, and does not account any additional recovery that may occur after collection, through processing arrangements.

Table 19 shows the data used for the calculation of resource recovery rate:

- Total generation in all bin types.
- Correctly recovered in recycling bin.

The data show that the average household generated 3.947kg/hh/wk of recyclables in all bins, with 57.6% correctly recovered in the recycling bin (2.275kg/hh/wk).

The materials with the highest resource recovery rates were:

1. Glass, 72.4%.
2. Cardboard, 66.8%.
3. HDPE, 56.6%.

Comparing households with a smaller waste bin (120L or 140L) and a larger waste bin (240L), the recycling recovery rate was higher at 63.8% for households with a smaller waste bin whereas it was 54.1% for households with a larger waste bin.

Glass, cardboard and paper have high bulk densities and therefore increase the resource recovery rate. However, the generation rates of glass and paper are typically in decline. This may be due to a greater use of plastics and liquid paperboard for containers and more electronic materials instead of paper.

Further initiatives should be considered to increase the recovery of recyclables, particularly for materials with a low resource recovery rate such as liquid paperboard, plastics (excl. HDPE) and metal.

Figure 12 - Recycling resource recovery rates

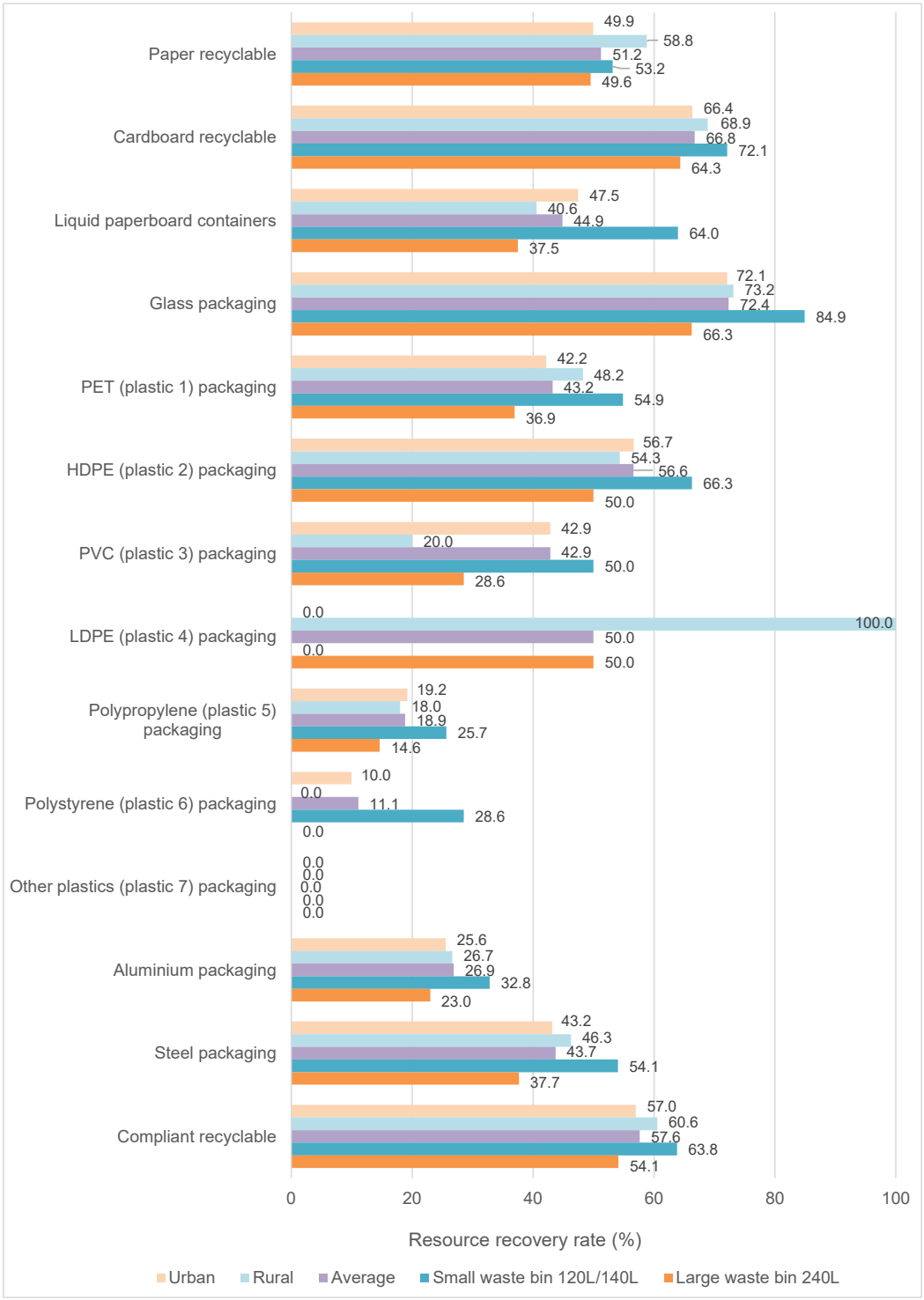


Table 18 - Recycling resource recovery rates

Material category	Resource recovery rate (% by weight)				
	Urban	Rural	Average	Small waste bin (120L/140L)	Large waste bin (240L)
Recyclable paper	49.94	58.82	51.24	53.16	49.56
Recyclable cardboard	66.37	68.92	66.75	72.10	64.35
Liquid paperboard containers *	47.47	40.59	44.90	64.00	37.50
Glass packaging	72.11	73.16	72.36	84.94	66.25
PET (plastic 1) packaging	42.15	48.24	43.22	54.88	36.94
HDPE (plastic 2) packaging	56.67	54.35	56.63	66.28	50.00
PVC (plastic 3) packaging	42.86	20.00	42.86	50.00	28.57
LDPE (plastic 4) packaging	0.00	100.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
Polypropylene (plastic 5) packaging	19.21	18.02	18.86	25.68	14.65
Polystyrene (plastic 6) packaging	10.00	0.00	11.11	28.57	0.00
Other plastics (plastic 7) packaging	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	0.00
Aluminium cans and foil	25.58	26.67	26.88	32.84	23.01
Steel packaging	43.17	46.28	43.72	54.05	37.67
Total	**57.00**	**60.55**	**57.64**	**63.81**	**54.13**

* Includes Tetrapak containers.

Table 19 - Recycling bin compliant material – recovered vs total generation

Material category	Correctly recovered in recycling bin (kg/hh/wk)			Total generation in all bin types (kg/hh/wk)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Recyclable paper	0.425	0.350	0.412	0.851	0.595	0.804
Recyclable cardboard	0.811	0.612	0.771	1.222	0.888	1.155
Liquid paperboard containers *	0.047	0.041	0.044	0.099	0.101	0.098
Glass packaging	0.618	0.823	0.657	0.857	1.125	0.908
PET (plastic 1) packaging	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.325	0.284	0.317
HDPE (plastic 2) packaging	0.119	0.075	0.111	0.210	0.138	0.196
PVC (plastic 3) packaging	0.003	0.001	0.003	0.007	0.005	0.007
LDPE (plastic 4) packaging	0.000	0.003	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.002
Polypropylene (plastic 5) packaging	0.034	0.031	0.033	0.177	0.172	0.175
Polystyrene (plastic 6) packaging	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.010	0.001	0.009
Other plastics (plastic 7) packaging	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Aluminium cans and foil	0.022	0.032	0.025	0.086	0.120	0.093
Steel packaging	0.079	0.087	0.080	0.183	0.188	0.183
Total	**2.296**	**2.192**	**2.275**	**4.028**	**3.620**	**3.947**

* Include Tetrapak containers.

4.8 Diversion rates

Diversion rate is the percentage of the total material in all bin types diverted from landfill, as defined in the Glossary section. Table 20 and Figure 13 provide the current kerbside bin diversion rate and potential for improvement based on the implementation of various initiatives. The results have taken into consideration of different collection services.

Current kerbside diversion rate

The average household diverted 15.9% of material at the kerbside based on the current kerbside bin systems. This is the household performance based on the bin system available, and does not account any additional diversion that may occur after collection through processing arrangements.

Further recovery: with current bin system**,** the diversion rate could increase by 11.7%, if recyclables from the waste bin were recovered. This would achieve a potential diversion rate of 27.5%.

Additional further recovery, if a FOGO bin service was introduced, the diversion rate could increase by 43.5%, if garden organics and loose food organics from the waste bin were recovered.

This would achieve a maximum potential diversion rate of 59.3 %.

Figure 13 - Diversion rates

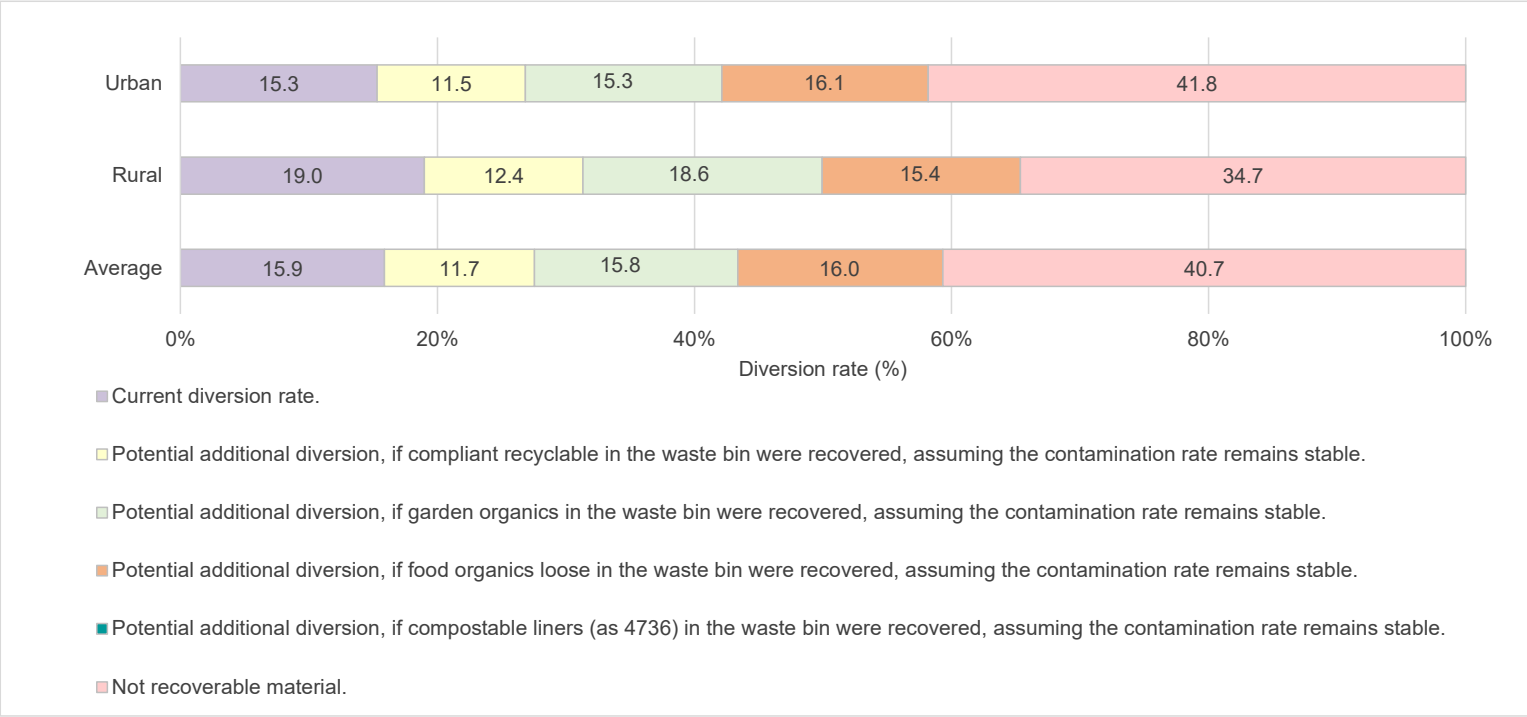


Table 20 - Diversion rates

Diversion rates	Contributor - % of all bin contents			
		Urban	Rural	Average
Kerbside diversion rate by recovering recyclable material in the recycling bin	**Kerbside diversion rate**	**15.3**	**19.0**	**15.9**
Potential diversion rate With the current bin system, by recovering recyclable material from the waste bin	Recyclables	11.5	12.4	11.7
	Potential diversion rate	**26.8**	**31.3**	**27.5**
Maximum potential diversion rate If all households were provided with a FOGO bin.	Recyclables	11.5	12.4	11.7
	Garden organics	15.3	18.6	15.8
	Food organics loose	16.1	15.4	16.0
	Compostable liners (AS 4736-2006)	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total additional	**42.9**	**46.4**	**43.5**
	Maximum potential diversion rate	**58.2**	**65.3**	**59.3**

Table 21 - Resources summary: weights correctly recovered and not recovered

Contributor	Weight (kg/hh/wk)		
	Urban	Rural	Average
Resources correctly recovered in the recycling bins			
Recyclables	2.296	2.192	2.275
Resources not recovered in the waste bins ^			
Recyclables	1.732	1.428	1.672
Garden organics	2.297	2.150	2.269
Food organics loose	2.410	1.781	2.288
Compostable liners (AS 4736-2006)	0.000	0.000	0.000

^ In addition, there can be further “not recovered” material in the incorrect recovery bin, e.g. organics in the recycling and recycling in the organics.

4.9 Sub-sorting – CDS eligibility

This section shows the composition of beverage containers in each bin type, taking into consideration of CDS eligibility.

- Figure 14 – waste bin
- Figure 15 – recycling bin

Appendix 2 provides the detailed weight and count for each CDS eligible container category.

The average household disposed of:

- Waste bin: 0.310kg/hh/wk of beverage containers, which was 2.7% of the bin contents.
- Recycling bin: 0.715kg/hh/wk of beverage containers, which was 25.2% of the bin contents.

CDS eligible containers were:

- Waste bin: 55.2% of all beverage containers (0.171kg/hh/wk).
- Recycling bin: 51.9% of all beverage containers (0.371kg/hh/wk).

Figure 14 - Waste bin beverage containers composition – CDS eligibility

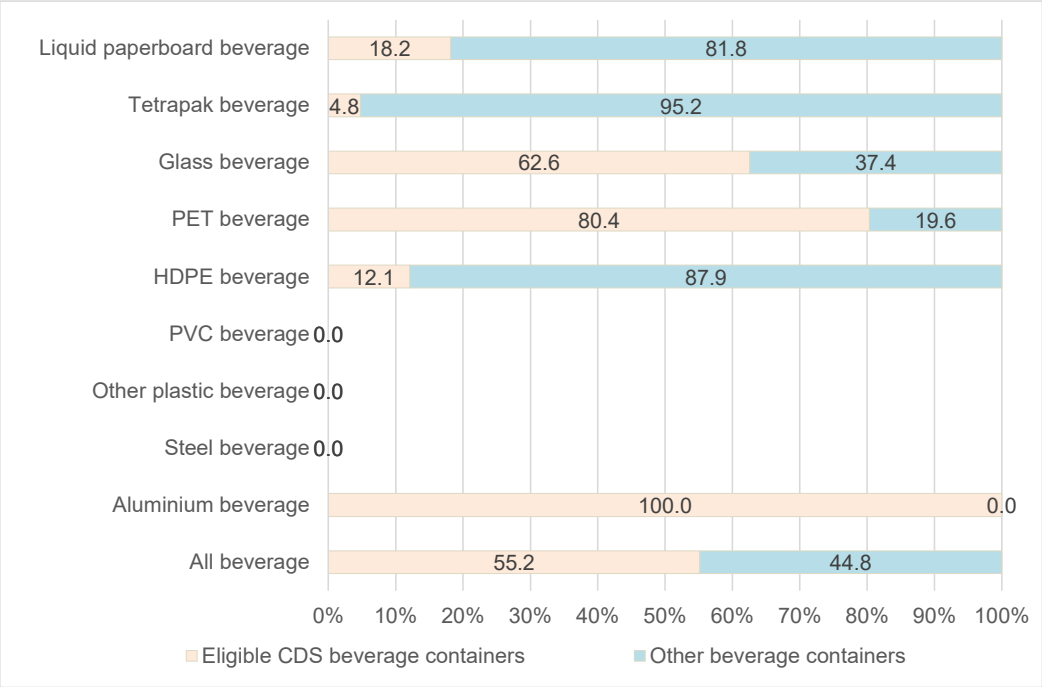
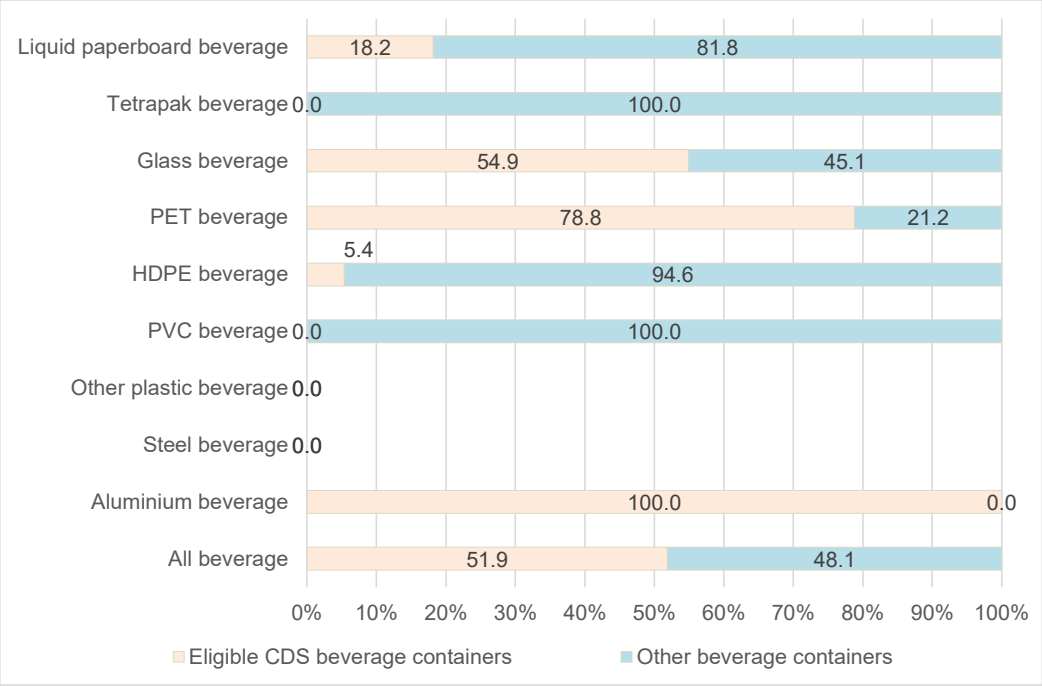


Figure 15 - Recycling bin beverage containers composition – CDS eligibility



5 Recommendations

Based on the results of this audit, and experience in waste auditing and waste minimisation initiatives, the following recommendations are made. Council could consider to:

Waste reduction and diversion.

- Consider further initiatives to increase diversion and align with NSW circular economy principles:
  - Further improve the resource recovery rates of recyclables through correct source separation. Education programs should prioritise items which were heavier (i.e. glass, paper and cardboard have a higher mass) [3] or had lower resource recovery rates [4].
  - Halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030:
    - Investigate the feasibility of introducing a FOGO collection service. Council should also consider collaborating with neighbouring councils to share collection and processing costs.
    - Consider home composting initiatives as an alternative to a FOGO bin service, particularly for rural areas.
  - Develop a Circular Economy strategy and collaborate with neighbouring councils to create long term circular economies locally and regionally.
- Consider further initiatives to avoid resource loss into the waste bin, particularly recyclables, food, garden organics and other compostable material. Initiatives could include:
  - Reviewing and enhancing existing recycling programs and use the finding of this audit to tailor educational efforts. Ensure clear guidelines on what can be recycled are provided, targeting materials identified in this audit.
  - Review education and behaviour change programs and relaunch campaigns through various communication channels to further raise awareness on the importance of proper material separation – such as Tetrapak containers or packaging, which is listed as compliant in the recycling on the education brochures but non-compliant in the Cowra MRF app.

[3] Heavy items such as glass bottles and paper/cardboard items have a higher mass and have a larger influence on the overall recovery rate which is a weight-based performance. These high-weight materials are priority because a modest improvement on recovery of these materials delivers significant recovery gains.

[4] Items such as metal and plastics (except HDPE) containers .

- Continue to offer and promote the Community Recycling Centre (CRC), event-based collections, reuse, resell or donate options (such as garage sales, clothing swaps or repair workshops) for items in good condition and recycling programs.
- Batteries are becoming an increasing challenge for the waste industry, with the disposal of batteries (including embedded battery products) becoming a common cause of fires in waste collection trucks and at facilities. Audit data shows household batteries were 0.03% of the waste bin, with none in the recycling bin. No vehicle batteries observed at the time of the audit. Council should:
    - Promote drop-off points for e-waste, batteries and embedded battery products at local community centres, libraries, and the Community Recycling Centre.
    - Continue to promote the use of local recycling schemes at retail stores like Coles, Woolworths, Bunnings and Officeworks, where residents can safely dispose of batteries and other hazardous material.
    - Continue to provide education to residents on the dangers of disposing of batteries and embedded battery products in bins and how to correctly dispose of old, unused or dead batteries. Education could be provided through social media, community workshops and recycling guides.

Contamination in recycling bin

- Provide education and behaviour change programs to reduce contamination, increase material separation and encouraging responsible waste practices.
- Reduce contamination levels in urban recycling bins by delivering education based on the key contamination types identified in this audit. The education can be designed with simple messages, lots of graphics, and be recurring.
- Council could share a ‘circularity story’ with residents to highlight the importance of recycling and material recovery, which may aid in correct disposal practices. For example:
    - Illustrate the scale of materials currently being sent to landfill.
    - Demonstrate the recycling process and how recovered recyclables and FOGO materials are used.
- Conduct bin inspections and bin stickering programs to identify contamination hotspots and provide feedback to the community. Additionally, Council could consider completing pre and post bin audits to measure the effectiveness of their education programs and enhance education.

Waste strategy and processing

- Consider the potential initiatives to reduce waste generation at source, improve at source separation and post-collection recovery. This data assists Council to consider the optimum system which should be considered in a model alongside the impacts on collection, processing and disposal.
- Ensure that Council's waste strategies are aligned with the *National Action Plan 2019* targets, including an 80% resource recovery rate and a 10% waste reduction per person by 2030 (DCCEEW, 2019).
- Consider reviewing and updating Council's planning documents to include support for circular economy principles and post-collection recovery, in particular include provisions for FOGO services. Reference could be made to the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 to align Council's strategic planning policies with State targets. Council could review and amend the Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan.

Conduct further auditing

- Council should conduct regular waste audits to monitor progress towards diversion goals, identify opportunities for improvement, and use the data to inform policy decisions and tailor programs to the specific needs of the community.
- Kerbside audits should be conducted in other seasons to profile the waste and inform implementation of waste strategy, waste processing and waste minimisation. Bin compositions and quantities can vary seasonally and based on time-specific factors such as weather and events. Seasonal and weather impacts are particularly applicable to garden organics, which can be affected by plant growth rates and gardening activity.
- Conduct bin capacity surveys to identify trends in bin needs over a few weekly cycles.
- If council decided to introduce a FOGO service, it would be beneficial for Council to conduct pre- and post-audits of the kerbside bins to effectively monitor the implementation of a FOGO service. These audits would assist with evaluating the new services performance and highlight any educational needs that should be addressed.

6 Audit photos

Figure 16 to Figure 18 provide photos of unrecovered resources in the waste bin and contamination in recycling and organics bins.

Figure 16 - Photos of sorting site

1. 
2. 

1. Sorting site supplied by Council. 2. Collected kerbside bin contents sorted into the category-labelled bins.

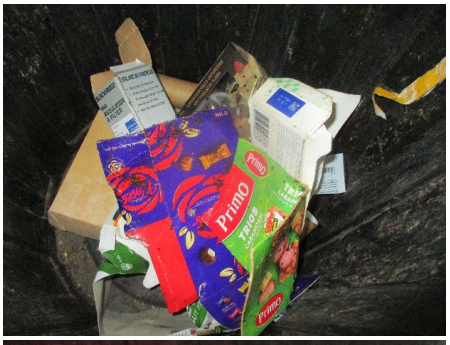
Figure 17 - Photos of waste bin contents

1. 

2. 

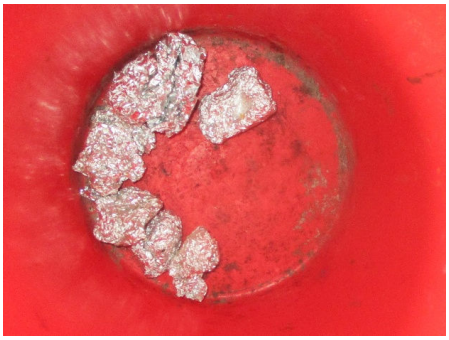
3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

1. Bread. 2. Garden organics. 3. Tea bags and coffee pods. 4. Containerised food and liquid. 5. Cardboard boxes. 6. Aluminium cans. 7. A toaster. 8. Scrunched foil.

Figure 18 - Photos of bin contents – contamination in recycling bins

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

1. A filled plastic bag. 2. Glassware (includes glass lids with rubber attached). 3. Clothing. 4. Treated wood. 5. Ceramic plant pot. 6. A battery. 7. Two land line phones with plugs. 8. Woven baskets.

References

ABS (2021), "*https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/103021063"*, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS*)* [accessed 26 February 2026].

DCCEEW (2022), National Waste Report 2022, The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

EC Sustainable (2012), "*Audits of 25 Councils in the SMA and ERA in 2011*", unpublished.

NSW EPA [previously DECC] (2008), "*Guidelines for Conducting Household Kerbside Residual Waste, Recycling and Garden Organics Audits in NSW Local Government Areas*" (June 2008), Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), Sydney.

NSW EPA [previously DECCW] (2010), "*Guidelines for Conducting Household Kerbside Residual Waste, Recycling and Garden Organics Audits in NSW Local Government Areas (Addendum December 2010)*", Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water (DECCW), Sydney.

NSW EPA [previously OEH] (2011), "*Domestic Kerbside Waste and Recycling in NSW: Reports on the Results of Waste Audits of Household Kerbside Collection Systems 2007-2008*", NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), Sydney.

NSW EPA (2014), "*Domestic Kerbside Waste and Recycling in NSW: Results of the 2011 Waste Audits*", NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Sydney.

NSW EPA (2018), "*Analysis of NSW Food and Garden Bin Audit Data*", NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Sydney.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AHW	Absorbent Hygiene Waste
AWT	Alternative Waste Treatment (or Technology)
CDS	Container Deposit Scheme
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment
E-waste	Electronic waste
HDPE	High Density Polyethylene
LDPE or LLDPE	Low Density Polyethylene
LGA	Local Government Authority
LPB	Liquid Paperboard
MGB	Mobile Garbage Bin
MLA	Metropolitan Levy Area
MRF	Materials Recovery Facility
MUD	Multiple Unit Dwelling
NSW	New South Wales
PET	Polyethylene Terephthalate
PP	Polypropylene
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PS	Polystyrene
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
SUD	Single Unit (Occupancy) Dwelling
WHS	Work Health and Safety

Glossary

This section defines the main terms in the report and provides the formulae used for calculations. All formulae are based on the properties in the study and are based on the kerbside results, excluding any other improvements that may occur after collection, such as at a processing facility.

Contamination rate:	The percentage of the recycling bin (or organics bins) contents not accepted. $= \frac{\textit{Weight of material not accepted in the recycling bins (or organics bins)}}{\textit{Total weight of recycling bins (or organics bins) contents}} \textit{ X 100}$
Diversion rate:	The percentage of the total waste diverted from landfill. $= \frac{\textit{Weight of materials accepted in the recycling bins and organics bins}}{\textit{Total weight of contents of all bins}} \textit{ X 100}$
Generation rate:	The amount of material generated in a timeframe such as a week, provided by household as weight or volume. The generation rates in this report are based on the contents of the bins presented, not only the compliant material in the bins.
Non-recyclable material:	Material that is not accepted for recycling by Council, which is contamination when placed into the recycling bins.
Presentation rate:	The percentage of bins placed out on the kerbside for collection compared to the total number of bins available at those properties $= \frac{\textit{Bins presented}}{\textit{All bins available}} \textit{ X 100}$
Recyclable material:	Material that is accepted for recycling by Council.
Recycling bin:	The contents of the yellow-lidded recycling bins. Collectively known as the recycling bin.
Residual waste bin:	The contents of the red-lidded waste bins, also known as also known as garbage or Municipal Solid Waste (MSW). Collectively known as the waste bin.
Resource recovery rate:	The percentage of a material type that is recovered compared to the overall amount of that material in all bins in the study. $= \frac{\textit{Weight of a recyclable material in the correct bin}}{\textit{Total weight of that material in all bins}} \textit{ X 100}$
Resources in the waste bin:	Recoverable material in the residual waste bins.

Appendix 1 – CDS eligibility

Table 22 indicates the criteria required for a container to be eligible for the CDS.

Table 22 - CDS eligibility

Container types	Container sizes							
	0-150 ml	151-500 ml	501 ml-1L	1.1-1.5L	1.6-2L	2.1-2.5L	2.6-3L	>3.1 L
Alcoholic sodas and spirit mixers								
Beer								
Cider/fruit based								
Flavoured water/soft drink (carbonated)								
Flavoured water/soft drink/ sports drink (non-carbonated)								
Plain milk								
Flavoured milk								
Pure fruit/veg juice (> 90%)								
Other fruit juice								
Drink pouches								
Plain water (incl. carbonated)				**				
Wine *		*		**				
Wine cooler								
Spirit ^		Unless glass						
Other								

* Containers that are plastic and/or foil and 150ml-250ml are not deemed ineligible.
^ Containers between sizes 151ml - 3L are eligible, except if glass.
** Casks for wine, wine-based beverage or water that are greater than 1L are ineligible.

Key
Eligible
Ineligible

Appendix 2 – Current CDS eligible containers data

This section provides the current eligible CDS beverage containers weights and counts. All of the data results in this report, are based on bagged materials in bins being opened and sorted to their material category. This follows the NSW EPA Guideline process. However, the MRF would usually dispose of bagged material in the recycling and garden organics bins to landfill.

Current CDS eligible containers data

The section provides the data of the current CDS eligible containers accepted by Return and Earn since 1 December 2017, as outlined in Appendix 1.

By weight

Table 23 provides the weekly generation rate by weight in each of the bin types audited and total, as well as the percentage by weight. The results show each household generated 0.54kg/wk of eligible CDS beverage containers in the kerbside bin system:

- 68.5% of eligible CDS beverage containers by weight were in the recycling bin.
- Based on the number of households in the Council area and assuming complete bin presentation, the total weight is equivalent to 106.0 tonnes of eligible containers per year Council-wide, based on the number of services in the Council area.
- Most of the eligible CDS beverage containers by total weight were glass (67.5%), PET (20.7%) and aluminium (8.9%).

Table 23 - Eligible CDS beverage containers weights

Material type	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by weight)		
	Waste	Recycling	Total	Waste	Recycling	Total
Liquid Paperboard	0.006	0.002	0.008	3.51	0.54	1.48
Tetrapak	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.58	0.00	0.18
Glass	0.087	0.279	0.366	50.88	75.20	67.53
PET (P1)	0.045	0.067	0.112	26.32	18.06	20.66
HDPE (P2)	0.004	0.003	0.007	2.34	0.81	1.29
PVC (P3)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other plastics (P7)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Steel	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00
Aluminium	0.028	0.020	0.048	16.37	5.39	8.86
Total	**0.171**	**0.371**	**0.542**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.000**

By count

Table 24 provides the weekly generation rate by count in each of the bin types audited and total, as well as the percentage by count. The results show each household generated approximately 9.0 eligible CDS beverage containers per week in the kerbside bin system:

- 57.1% of eligible CDS beverage containers by count were in the recycling bin.
- Based on the number of households in the Council area and assuming complete bin presentation, the total count is equivalent to 1.8 million eligible containers per year Council-wide, based on the number of services in the Council area.
- Most of the eligible CDS beverage containers by total count were PET (38.6%), aluminium (33.9%) and glass (19.2%).

Table 24 - Eligible CDS beverage containers counts

Material type	Count (item/hh/wk)			Percentage (% by count)		
	Waste	Recycling	Total	Waste	Recycling	Total
Liquid Paperboard	0.43	0.13	0.55	11.00	2.50	6.15
Tetrapak	0.06	0.01	0.07	1.46	0.18	0.73
Glass	0.39	1.34	1.73	10.03	26.13	19.21
PET (P1)	1.26	2.21	3.47	32.69	43.06	38.60
HDPE (P2)	0.07	0.06	0.13	1.78	1.10	1.39
PVC (P3)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other plastics (P7)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Steel	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.03
Aluminium	1.66	1.38	3.05	43.04	26.98	33.88
Total	**3.86**	**5.13**	**8.99**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.000**

^ Counts include eligible beverage containers contained within bagged material (0.1 containers/hh/wk in recycling), and excludes eligible beverage containers containing food or liquid (0.1 containers/hh/wk in recycling, with a total of 0.2 containers/hh/wk). These may not be recovered by the MRF, but the container itself would be eligible.

The number of containers equates to a value of approximately $0.18 million of eligible CDS containers per year in all bin types audited, with approximately 57.1% of this value, $0.1 million, in the recycling bin.

Appendix 3 – Analysis of food organics sub-sort in the waste bin

This section provides the additional analysis of the food organics sub-sort in the waste bin. Table 25 provides the detailed food composition in the waste bin.

The data shows that:

- The top 3 loose food by type in an average waste bin was meal leftovers (incl. takeaways), fruit/vegetable – peelings & skins and unused fruit/ vegetable.
- Unavoidable food organics was 26.1% of all loose food organics whereas avoidable food organics was 73.9%.
- Urban areas had a higher percentage of avoidable food organics in their waste bins at 76.5%, compared to 59.5% for rural areas.

Table 25 - Detailed loose food organics composition in the waste bin

Detailed food category	Weight (kg/hh/wk)			Percentage of the waste bin (%by weight)			Percentage of total loose food (% by weight)		
	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average	Urban	Rural	Average
Fruit/vegetable – peelings & skins	0.451	0.467	0.454	3.74	5.08	3.95	18.45	26.06	19.59
Meat/seafood – bones, fat, carcasses, soft shells etc.	0.061	0.226	0.093	0.51	2.46	0.81	2.49	12.61	4.01
Seafood – hard shells (i.e. oyster, mussel)	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.00	0.04
Dairy/eggs – egg shells & rinds (i.e. egg shells without cartons, cheese rinds)	0.016	0.022	0.018	0.13	0.24	0.16	0.65	1.23	0.78
Tea leaves & coffee grinds	0.017	0.000	0.013	0.14	0.00	0.11	0.70	0.00	0.56
Tea bags & coffee pods (not accepted in FOGO)	0.029	0.011	0.025	0.24	0.12	0.22	1.19	0.61	1.08
Food-unavoidable	**0.575**	**0.726**	**0.604**	**4.77**	**7.90**	**5.26**	**23.52**	**40.51**	**26.06**
Fruit/ vegetable – unused	0.446	0.426	0.442	3.70	4.63	3.84	18.24	23.77	19.07
Meat/seafood – unused	0.218	0.072	0.190	1.81	0.78	1.65	8.92	4.02	8.20
Dairy/eggs – unused	0.039	0.002	0.031	0.32	0.02	0.27	1.60	0.11	1.34
Dairy/eggs – eggs in cartons	0.006	0.000	0.005	0.05	0.00	0.04	0.25	0.00	0.22
Staple foods (i.e. bread, cereal, pasta, rice, grains etc.)	0.417	0.340	0.402	3.46	3.70	3.50	17.06	18.97	17.34
Meal leftovers (incl. takeaways)	0.690	0.179	0.591	5.72	1.95	5.14	28.22	9.99	25.50
Desserts – cakes & biscuits	0.049	0.021	0.044	0.41	0.23	0.38	2.00	1.17	1.90
Desserts – chocolate	0.003	0.005	0.003	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.12	0.28	0.13
Desserts – sweets & lollies (excl. chocolate)	0.002	0.021	0.006	0.02	0.23	0.05	0.08	1.17	0.26
Food-avoidable	**1.870**	**1.066**	**1.714**	**15.51**	**11.59**	**14.90**	**76.48**	**59.49**	**73.94**
Total	**2.445**	**1.792**	**2.318**	**20.27**	**19.49**	**20.16**	**100.00**	**100.00**	**100.00**

Appendix 4 – Comparison with Weddin Shire Council

This Appendix provides a comparison of key data indicators with the 2026 Weddin Shire Council.

Table 26 shows the comparison of key data indicators between Cowra Shire Council and Weddin Shire Council. By comparing these key data indicators:

- Weddin households had a lower average weekly generation in both bin types, with:
  - Waste bin: 9.8kg for Weddin and 11.5kg for Cowra.
  - Recycling bin: 2.2 kg for Weddin and 2.8kg for Cowra.
- For the waste bin, the average household in both councils generated the same level of recyclables at approximately 1.7kg weekly, but Weddin households generated less garden organics and loose food organics.
  - Weddin: 1.96kg of garden organics and 2.01kg of loose food organics.
  - Cowra: 2.27kg of garden organics and 2.29kg of loose food organics.
- The recycling contamination was lower for Weddin at 15.1% compared to 19.8% for Cowra.
- However, the recycling resource recovery rate was higher for Cowra at 57.6% compared to 52.6% for Weddin.
- The kerbside diversion rate was at the same level that Cowra achieved 15.9% and Weddin achieved 15.7%.

Table 26 - Key results comparison with Weddin audit

Data indicator		Unit of measurement	Cowra	Weddin
Presentation rate	Percentage (%)	Waste bin	71.9	70.2
		Recycling bin	64.4	78.8
Generation rate	By weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Waste bin	11.50	9.75
		Recycling bin	2.84	2.22
		All bins	**14.335**	**11.97**
	By volume *(bin % full)*	Waste bin	75.5	72.4
		Recycling bin	73.8	52.0
Resources in the waste bin ^	By weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Compliant recyclables *	1.67	1.70
		Garden organics	2.27	1.96
		Food loose/ in liners <	2.29	2.01
		Non-compliant organics #	1.57	1.40
	Percentage (% by weight)	Compliant recyclables *	14.5	17.4
		Garden organics	19.7	20.1
		Food loose/ in liners <	19.9	20.6
		Non-compliant organics #	13.7	14.4
Contamination	Weight *(kg/hh/wk)*	Recycling bin	0.56	0.34
	Rate *(% by weight)*	Recycling bin	19.8	15.1
Resource recovery ^^	Rate *(% by weight)*	Recycling bin	57.6	52.6
Diversion ^^	Rate *(% by weight)*	Current	15.9	15.7

* Recycling bin accepted material, which should be placed into yellow-lid bins. Refer to Table 3 for detailed materials.

^^ At the kerbside for kerbside performance data based on accepted material in each service type.

< No AS 4736 certified compostable liners were audited in waste bins.

Includes tea bags and coffee pods, containerised food, other putrescible and wood/ timber (treated and untreated).

Appendix 5 – Raw data

This Appendix provides the raw data, in a separate Excel file, providing the raw data for this current audit.

6.2 Arrangement to lease or purchase two Council owned lots; Lot 1 DP 1201417 (Lee Street) and Lot 1107219 (River Street); and use of road reserves to comply with General Condition 13 of the Notice of Determination DA 57/2020

File Number: D26/808

Author: Dirk Wymer, Director-Infrastructure & Operations

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That Council notes that upon the Council Land being reclassified from Community Land to Operational Land that Council may enter into negotiations with Buzzree Pty Ltd to purchase or lease the land to comply with DA 57/2020 condition 13 of the Determination Notice.**
2. **That Council notes the lease of the unused public road known as Part Lee Street and Part River Street commenced 1 February 2025 and will continue to be leased to Buzzree Pty Ltd in accordance with Section 154 of the Roads Act 1993.**
3. **That Council notes that upon a negotiated sale of Lot 1 DP 120417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 to Buzzree Pty Ltd, an application will then be made to close the roads known as Part Lee Street and Part River Street in accordance with Roads Act 1993 Division 3 Section 38 and sell to Buzzree Pty Ltd.**

INTRODUCTION

This report provides Council with an update on progress toward compliance with condition 13 of DA 57/2020 which requires:

The applicant shall obtain the written agreement (and any associated permits, leases or purchases required) from Cowra Council for the use of road reserves within the existing project site and two Council owned lots within the site, being Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219.

BACKGROUND

Development Application 57/2020 Lot 2 DP 557714, over Lot 1 DP 1201417, Lot 10 DP 1107219 and Lot 3905 DP 1200283 2-4 Kite Street Cowra; lodged by Buzzree Pty Ltd for the continued use of, and proposed upgrades to landscaping material supplies; was approved 11 March 2024. Condition 13 states:

13. The applicant shall obtain the written agreement (and any associated permits, leases or purchases required) from Cowra Council for the use of road reserves within the existing project site and two Council owned lots within the site, being Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219.

Council's Environmental Services Department have initiated the preparation of a Planning Proposal that seeks to amend the provisions of the Cowra Local Environmental (LEP) 2012 by adding Lot 1 DP 120417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 to Schedule 4 and reclassifying the Council owned land from Community Land to Operational Land.

Reclassification of the two parcels from Community Land to Operational Land under the Local Government Act 1993 is required in order to ensure the land is classified according to its current operational use and allow Council to resolve to offer to lease or offer the land for sale to satisfy conditions of development consent DA 57/2020.

Local Government Act 1993 Division 2 Section 45 prohibits Council from selling Community Land and until the reclassification is finalised, negotiations for the sale of the land to Buzzree Pty Ltd to comply with DA 52/2020 cannot commence.

Lot 1 DP 1201417 (Lee Street) and Lot 10 DP 1107219 (River Street) are two existing parcels of land which are currently under the ownership of Cowra Council. As public land, these parcels are required to be managed under the Local Government Act 1993 based on their classification. In the case of Lot DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219, the land is currently classified as Community Land and there is no formal authorisation in place for the use of the land.

A lease agreement is in place between Cowra Council and Buzzree Pty Ltd, for the unused public road Part Lee Street and Part River Street, in accordance with Section 154 of the Roads Act 1993. The executed lease commenced 1 February 2025 for a term of 5 years expiring 31 January 2030.

Upon a negotiated sale of Lot 1 DP 120417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 to Buzzree Pty Ltd, an application will then be made to close the roads known as Part Lee Street and Part River Street in accordance with Roads Act 1993 Division 3 Section 38 and sell.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Road lease – income $773.00 per annum

Land lease or sale income – Lot 1 DP 120417 & Lot 10 DP 1201417

ATTACHMENTS

1. Annexure B to unused public road lease ⇩



NOTES/ AMENDMENTS : NOTE 1 NOTE 2 NOTE 3 NOTE 4 NOTE 5 NOTE 6	SCALES : NOT TO SCALE DATUM : XXXXX AZIMUTH : DDD.MMSS Drawing1.dwg ----\	SURVEY REF : LISCAD.SEE	SURVEYED : DATE : DESIGNED : DATE : DRAWN : RAS DATE : DD/MM/YYYY	CHECKED AND RECOMMENDED NAME CHECKED ..... DATE : DD/MM/YYYY APPROVED NAMEAPPROVED ..... DATE : DD/MM/YYYY	Cowra Council	ANNEXURE B PART LEE ST. ROAD RESERVE PART RIVER ST. ROAD RESERVE

SHEET No.	OF SHEETS
SHEET # 1	1

6.3 Section 355 Committee Minutes - Saleyards Committee

File Number: D26/809

Author: Dirk Wymer, Director-Infrastructure & Operations

RECOMMENDATION

That the draft minutes of the Saleyards Committee meeting held on 7 May 2026 be noted.

INTRODUCTION

The Minutes and recommendations of Cowra Shire Council's Section 355 Committee are presented for noting and consideration.

BACKGROUND

Attached for the information of Councillors are the draft Minutes from the recent Section 355 Committee meeting.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft minutes from the Saleyards Committee Meeting held on 7 May 2026 ⇩

DRAFT

Cowra Council

MINUTES

Saleyards Committee Meeting
Thursday, 7 May 2026

Order Of Business

1 Apologies 3
2 Confirmation of Minutes 3
3 Reports of Council Officers 3
3.1 Stock Figures Update 3
3.2 Cowra Saleyards 2025-2026 Financial Figures Update 3
3.3 B-Triple Access 4
3.4 Shade Trees 4
3.5 Update on Truck Wash 4
3.6 Saleyards Effluent Dam and System 4
3.7 Draft 2026/2027 Saleyards Fees and Charges 4
4 General Business 5
4.1 Covered Walkways 5
4.2 Saleyards Conference 5
4.3 Project and Maintenance of Assets 5
4.4 Advertising 5
5 Next Meeting Date 6
6 Meeting Close 6

MINUTES OF COWRA COUNCIL
SALEYARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM 1, 116 KENDAL STREET, COWRA NSW 2794
ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2026 AT 8.00AM

PRESENT: Cr Peter Wright (Chairperson), Bill West, Daniel Wright, Darcy Howard, Jack Harper, Andrew Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE: Dirk Wymer (Director-Infrastructure & Operations), Elizabeth Bryce (Supervisor – Airport Cemeteries & Saleyards)

1 APOLOGIES

Cr Paul Smith, Craige Oliver, Damien Stephenson, John Sullivan, Pat Waters

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Andrew Wilson
Seconded: Darcy Howard

That the minutes of Saleyards Committee Meeting held on 5 February 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

3 REPORTS OF COUNCIL OFFICERS

3.1 Stock Figures Update

The report on the stock figures was noted by the Committee. It was also noted that:

- New season lambs to start in August
- Due to cyclic conditions numbers are expected to drop off and this is consistent with other yards.

3.2 Cowra Saleyards 2025-2026 Financial Figures Update

The 2025/2026 financial report was noted by the Committee. It was noted that:

- $50,000 adjustment for second quarter
- Avdata fees increased – no adjustments made
- Anticipating $25,000 to go to Saleyards reserves at the end of the financial year

3.3 B-Triple Access

Director – Infrastructure & Operations provided an update on B-triple access to the Cowra Saleyards. Committee was advised that Council resolved to forward a letter to Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to support access to the Saleyards.

3.4 Shade Trees

- Trees to be planted by Saleyards staff in winter (Chinese Elms)
- Suggested set up of watering system
- Approximately cost of trees $2000

3.5 Update on Truck Wash

- Council assessed data for current queuing and future projections
- Staff looking into renting AI cameras (similar to the cameras on the bridge) to further estimate truck wash use. Data is to support the business case and grant application.
- It was noted that if the data does not reflect an accurate projection then an in-person survey can be conducted

3.6 Saleyards Effluent Dam and System

- A risk management option to manage EPA licence compliance at the Saleyards was discussed: when the effluent dam is approaching capacity using the effluent water in Council's truck wash to ensure no dam overflow.
- It was noted that there is a pump inlet for recycled effluent water to the truck wash; however it is capped.
- The committee discussed the option and generally agreed with the risk mitigation strategy; noting no objections to use of recycled water in the truck wash similar to yard cleaning.
- Council team to design effluent re-use for the truck wash for implementation.

3.7 Draft 2026/2027 Saleyards Fees and Charges

- Proposed 2026/2027 Saleyards fees and charges adjusted according to CPI increase
- Draft budget to be sent to agents for review and comment
- Capital works for covered walkways noted

4 GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 Covered Walkways

Suggested options for covered walkways:

- Sectioned covers
- Carports
- Shade cloth

4.2 Saleyards Conference

Cr Peter Wright was nominated to attend the 2026 Saleyards Conference on behalf of Cowra Saleyards.

4.3 Project and Maintenance of Assets

Supervisor – Airport Cemeteries & Saleyards provide the Planned Asset Maintenance and Renewal Program as follows:

Asset	**Estimated Cost**
Fix gutter #8 Fill in gutter #4	$1,500
Cattle yard board	$300
Erosion in D yards (concrete)	$105
Plant 16 Trees	Quote for bare rooted not provided Established ~$1920
Fix Fletcher paddock irrigation	$80
Fix cameras	$3,000
Covered walkways	$30,000 (not including labour)
Conveyor belts on D ramp entry	$105
Cattle grid end	$1,540
Ramp repairs (A & D)	$3,365
Further division of holding yards	$6,500
New hoist (B ramp)	$4,599
Office roof	$1,000

4.4 Advertising

Saleyards staff to investigate options for advertising on ramps and other areas of the Saleyards.

5 NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 6 August 2026 at 8.00am in the Committee Room 1, 116 Kendal Street, COWRA NSW 2794.

6 MEETING CLOSE

The Meeting closed at 9.04am.

.....

CHAIRPERSON

6.4 Installation of Electric Vehicle Destination Chargers

File Number: D26/807

Author: Dirk Wymer, Director-Infrastructure & Operations

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. **the 'Installation of EV charging' budget estimate is moved from the 2025/26 Operational Plan into the draft 2026/27 Operational Plan prior to adoption; with the estimated budget shortfall of $3400 funded by Council.**
2. **Council advertise for 28 days its intention to charge $0.25 per kWh for Council operated EV chargers.**

INTRODUCTION

Council has received grant funding toward installation of electric vehicle (EV) 'destination' chargers.

Destination chargers are Alternate Current (AC) EV chargers and can be 'slow' from a single phase supply (typically 3.6kW to 7kW power) or 'fast' from a three phase supply (11kW to 22kW).

This report recommends the installation of 'fast' EV destination chargers located at the Art Gallery and Visitor Information Centre because dual port 22kW fast AC chargers are a similar purchase price to dual port 7kW slow AC chargers; with significantly improved functionality for EV drivers.

There is an element of project financial risk because the available electrical power at each site cannot be confirmed with Essential Energy until a Level 2 electrician applies to connect under the 'contested works' scheme. The project will likely require the management of the total electrical demand at each site through 'load management'; to ensure electrical demand is managed within electrical capacity; and this functionality is included in the project estimate. Through load management, at times of peak site demand the available power to the EV chargers may be restricted.

Additionally, the project estimate includes functionality to implement fees for EV charging and it is recommended a fee be adopted to cover electricity usage costs.

BACKGROUND

Council has confirmed funding of $43,445 under the NSW Government Local Small Commitments Allocation Grant Program for the 'Installation of vehicle destination chargers'.

The term 'destination charger' is generally applicable to AC charging stations; known as Level 1 and 2; or Type 1 and 2 EV chargers. The difference between different levels of EV charging is as follows:

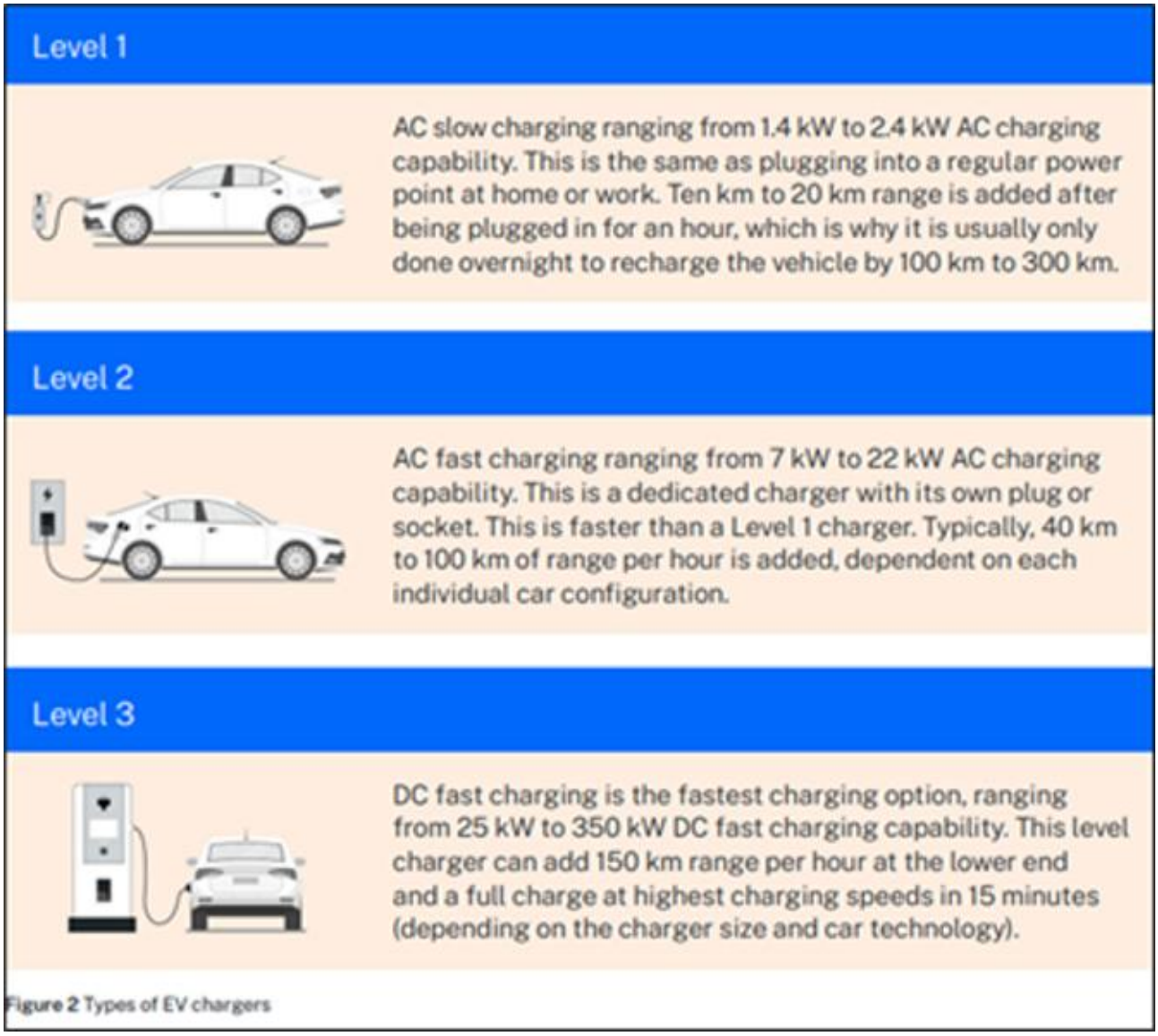


Figure 2 Types of EV chargers

Additonal background information on EV Chargers is provided as follows:

EV Charger Electrical Capacity Summary

Charger Type	***Typical Power Range***	***Supply Type***	***Current Range***	***Typical Use Case***
Type 1 (Slow AC)	*3.6 – 7.4 kW*	*Single-phase*	*16–32 Amps @ 230 V*	*Residential / kerbside*
Type 2 (Fast AC)	*11 – 22 kW (up to 43 kW legacy)*	*3-phase*	*16–32 Amps per phase @ 400 V*	*Public car parks, workplaces*
Type 3 (DC Fast / HPC)	*50 – 350+ kW*	*3-phase HV AC input → DC output*	*80 Amps – 500+ Amps (DC side)*	*Highways, fleet, rapid charging*

1. Type 1 (Slow AC Charging)

Electrical infrastructure implications

- *Minimal grid impact*
- *Can often connect to:*
    - *Existing building supply*
    - *Small distribution boards*

Planning and design notes

- *Diversity can be applied (not all chargers at full load simultaneously)*
- *Suitable where:*
    - *Long dwell times are acceptable (>6–8 hours)*
    - *Limited electrical infrastructure*

2. Type 2 (Fast AC Charging)

Electrical infrastructure implications

- *Moderate grid impact*
- *Multiple units quickly add up:*
    - *Eg 10 × 22 kW chargers = 220 kW site load*
- *Requires:*
    - *Larger switchboards*
    - *Three-phase distribution*

Planning and design notes

- *Load management usually required*
- *Suitable for:*
    - *Commercial car parks*
    - *Destination charging (1–4 hours stay)*

3. Type 3 (DC Fast / HPC Charging)

Electrical infrastructure implications

- *Very high instantaneous loads*
- *Often requires:*
    - *Dedicated transformer*
    - *HV (11 kV / 22 kV) connection for multi-bay sites*
    - *Significant switchgear and protection*

Site examples

- *4 × 150 kW chargers = 600 kW peak load*
- *6 × 350 kW chargers = >2 MW site load*

Planning and design notes

- *Demand charges and grid capacity become critical*
- *Often paired with:*
    - *Battery energy storage*
    - *Solar (secondary support)*
    - *Smart load sharing*

Bottom Line

- *Type 1 (3–7 kW): Low impact, easy deployment*
- *Type 2 (11–22 kW): Moderate capacity, needs planning*
- *Type 3 (50–350+ kW): High-capacity infrastructure project requiring grid upgrades*

The identified 'long dwell time'; potentially greater than 6 hours; for slow AC charging is not considered suitable to the Art Gallery and Visitors Centre sites; and potentially faster charging options at each site have been investigated as follows:

Cowra Visitors Centre:
The preferred connection point is from the Visitors Centre / Rose Garden Carpark Main Switch Board (MSB).

- An application to Essential Energy from a Level 2 qualified electrician is required for approval to connect to the existing three-phase 80A
- If approved, then the scope is to:
    - Install a new main switch on a small load centre
    - Install a new meter
    - Install 2 x 40A outlets for EV chargers, to install dual port 22kW destination chargers

If the installation is rejected from this MSB on the existing electrical pole there is an alternative location which is to use the MSB from the Cowra Visitors Information Centre building. This will not be known until the Level 2 qualified electrician has submitted a request for a basic connection.

Cowra Art Gallery:
The preferred connection point is to run two dedicated circuits to the carpark from the existing MSB.

- An application to Essential Energy from a Level 2 qualified electrician is required for approval
- load management may need to be implemented
- the charging spaces will be located adjacent to the carpark retaining wall on the northern side of the building, to avoid trenching across the carpark
- the chargers will be in locations between parking spaces such that up to four bays can easily reach them. May need to install on posts against the fence.
- install dual port 22kW destination chargers

The project estimate includes functionality within the charger units to implement fees for EV charging. A search of regional EV charging adopted fees and charges was carried out:

Local Government Area	**Adopted Fee and Charge**	**Fee ex GST**
Orange City	Electric vehicle charge stations (Council operated) – 7kW	$0.52 / kWh
	Electric vehicle charge stations (Council operated) – 22kW	$0.55 / kWh
Kempsey Shire	Use of Council supplied EV charging stations	$0.32 / kWh

Outside of adopted fees and charges, other available information on fees is as follows:

Local Government Area	**Website Description**	**Fee ex GST**
Dubbo Regional Council: Wellington	Electric vehicle charge stations (Council operated) – 22kW	No charge
Dubbo Regional Council Dubbo	Electric vehicle DC fast charge stations commercial operations Tesla and NRMA	Commercial operator fees
Bathurst Regional	Use of Council supplied EV charging stations: '*fees will be collected by EVSE as the owners of the chargers. It is a similar arrangement to other chargers that have been installed by NRMA, Evie Networks, and Tesla that can be accessed throughout our city*'	Commercial operator fees
Forbes Council	*Travellers driving electric vehicles (EV) will now be able to stop in Forbes to charge their vehicles thanks to the new EV Charging Station on Spring Street. The EV Charging Station features two 22kw AC fast chargers and one 60kw DC rapid charger with two ports. The fast chargers will give vehicles around 120km after an hour of charging, while the rapid chargers will give around 300km in an hour of charging.* *To use the chargers, users will need to download the Exploren EV Charging app and create an account, with usage charged from the payment details provided in their account.*	Commercial operator fees
Parkes Council	*Parkes Shire Council has installed four electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in the Parkes Library carpark, supported by funding from the NSW Electric Vehicle Destination Charging Grants program.* *Council will charge a minimal fee for usage, which will be determined annually by the average cost of electricity at the Parkes Shire Library and Cultural Centre over a 12-month period.*	Commercial operator fees
Parkes	Charging Networks: Exploren: 2 stations · 6 plugs, 2 AC NRMA: 1 station · 2 plugs, 1 DC Tesla: 2 stations · 5 plugs 1 DC, 1AC	Commercial operator fees
Weddin	Charging networks in Weddin include Exploren, providing 4 plugs across 2 stations.	Commercial operator fees

Council's electricity bills at the Edgell Park switchboard including the Tesla EV chargers show that after supply charges the largest bill components are;

- usage charges $0.1742 per kWh
- retail charges $0.0575 per kWh

Average total cost to Council $0.23 per kWh.

Using the Parkes Council library example, adopting an initial minimal fee of $0.25 per kWh would ensure average charging costs are met by the driver.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

A Request for Quotation for the project was prepared based on the specifications included in the report. The recommended supply and install quote is $46,850 excluding GST which exceeds the grant budget by $3400. It is recommended that the 'Installation of EV charging' expenditure budget estimate is moved from 2025/26 into the draft 2026/27 Operational Plan prior to adoption; with the shortfall funded by Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

6.5 Caravan Park Capital Works Planning

File Number: D26/821

Author: Dirk Wymer, Director-Infrastructure & Operations

RECOMMENDATION

That Council amend the capital works program for the Caravan Park in the draft Long Term Financial Plan as follows:

	Budget Estimate	Operational Plan Year
Main Switch Board upgrade	**$88,000**	**2026/27**
Manager's residence renovation	**$37,000**	**2027/28**
Central Precinct Redevelopment – Internal Roads	**$70,000**	**2028/29**

INTRODUCTION

The draft 2026/27 Operational Plan includes a capital budget allocation of $70,000 toward 'Central Precinct Redevelopment – Internal Roads' of $70,000.

This report recommends deferring the planned next stage of the adopted 'Business Development Strategy and Master Plan for Cowra Van Park' planned upgrade works and allocating the budget toward renewal works to address ongoing operational issues at the Van Park.

	Budget Estimate	Operational Plan Year
Main Switch Board upgrade	$88,000	2026/27
Manager's residence renovation	$37,000	2027/28
Central Precinct Redevelopment – Internal Roads	$70,000	2028/29

BACKGROUND

The next stages of the implementation of the adopted 'Business Development Strategy and Master Plan for Cowra Van Park' include:

- Constructing a further section of the internal access road to amend the vehicle circulation through the park; with capital funding included in Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP).
- Major reconstruction of the administration and amenities area including new Managers residence, new amenities, new camp kitchen etc; shown as items 1 to 7 on the following plan. There is currently no funding allocated for this stage of works in the period of the draft Long Term Financial Plan. The draft LTFP shows the Caravan Park reserve is forecast to rise from a balance of $1.26M to a balance of $2.66M over the period of the LTFP without these upgrade works.



© 2016 All rights reserved. No part of this plan may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the written permission of Integrated Site Design Pty Ltd
3 / 181 - 183 River St, Ballina, NSW, 2478
t: 0437 458 490
e: isd@iprimus.com.au
w: www.isdesign.com.au

The draft 2026/27 Operational Plan includes a capital budget allocation of $70,000 toward 'Central Precinct Redevelopment – Internal Roads' of $70,000. However, priority asset renewal projects are recommended as follows.

1. Replacement of the main switch boards at the Caravan Park to meet current standards.
   - The upgrade requirement is to comply with *National Metering Installation Requirements Version 2.1*; a new switch board for the caravan park which needs to be placed on a raised platform – to control potential flood damage.
   - This involves replacing older fuse boxes with modern units, upgrades to wiring to handle higher loads from new appliances, solar systems, or smart meters etc. The upgrade can prevent hazards like electrical fires and shocks, improves overall safety, and ensures the system can accommodate increasing power demands.

Estimates have been obtained on the following scope of works:

- New Hager Quadro M series CT metering Panel with 150-100A Main switch, 60 Pole chassis cubical for outgoing circuits with room for additions in future. To be floor mounted with bottom access for all circuits and bottom access to allow for 100A Incoming supply from grid, with room to increase to 150A
- Hager switch gear/RCDs to replace and replicate current circuits in use
- New current metering CT's, 100A service fuses
- New earth stake
- New raised galvanized switchboard frame and stand with handrail and stairs to current standards and flood levels
- Concrete slab for frame to bolt to

The total estimate based on quotes received to date including 10% contingency is $88,000.

2. The Manager's residence requires renovation to improve the living standard for the current and future Park Managers:
   - The windows don't hold open to allow ventilation
   - Carpet replacement is due
   - Upgrade of residential dwelling bathroom – leaking plumbing fixtures/re-tiling/painting and plumbing issues

The budget estimate is as follows:

Window replacement	$5,400
Carpet replacement	$7,000
Bathroom renovation and plumbing	$21,000
Total manager Residence Renovation including 10% contingencies	$37,000

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed to fund the amended capital program from the Caravan Park reserve; and if the recommendation is adopted the draft LTFP Reserves Schedule will need to be amended accordingly.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7 DIRECTOR-ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORT

7.1 Draft Environmental Sustainability Management Delivery Plan

File Number: D25/1757

Author: Larissa Hackett, Director - Environmental Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Draft Environmental Sustainability Management Delivery Plan be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

INTRODUCTION

In 2017 Council adopted the Natural Resource Management Delivery Plan. The plan was established in consultation with Council's Natural Resource Management Committee. The Management Plan was created to identify objectives that Council, the committee and community can aim to achieve and implement.

As the scope of Council's Natural Resource Management Committee has been reviewed and the name of the committee changed, it is appropriate that the document be reviewed and modified to provide an accurate reflection of the objectives of the Environmental Sustainability Committee and the community.

The revised policy of the Draft Environmental Sustainability Management Plan is included in Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

A further review of the current Natural Resource Management Plan has been undertaken in consultation with Council's Environmental Sustainability Committee. The Action items have been updated to reflect both legislative changes and revised priorities for the committee and wider community.

The objectives are focusing on Environmental Sustainability, community partnerships and management of both community and operational lands.

The proposed changes to the policy are identified in the attached 'track changes' version of the draft policy.

CONCLUSION

Council's adopted Natural Resources Management Delivery Plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect the current priorities of both Council and the community.

It is proposed that the draft Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan be placed on public exhibition for a period of twenty-eight (28) days. Following which any submissions will be reviewed and the draft document referred back to Council for adoption.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

NIL

ATTACHMENTS

1. Natural Resource Management Delivery Plan 2017 - including draft tracked changes ⇩
2. Draft - Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan ⇩

~~2017-2020~~2026-2029

Cowra Council

~~Natural Resource Management Delivery Plan~~Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan

The Cowra Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan represents a four year plan which details actions to achieve better diversity outcomes within the Cowra Local Government Area.



Council Department	Environmental Services
Contact Officer	Director – Environmental Services

Revision History

Version	Council Meeting Date	Responsible Officer
Adopted	27 November 2017	Director – Environmental Services

List of Definitions

~~CLEAN~~	~~Cowra Low Emissions Action Network~~
COUNCIL	Cowra Shire Council
DCP	Cowra Council Development Control Plan
DES	Director – Environmental Services
DIO	Director – Infrastructure & Operations
LED	Light-emitting diode
LLS	Local Land Services (Central Tablelands)
~~NRM~~	~~Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee~~
ESC	Environmental Sustainability Committee
TSR	Travelling Stock Reserve
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design Principals

1.0

The Plan

The Cowra ~~Natural Resource Management~~ Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan represents a four-year plan which details actions to achieve better diversity outcomes within Cowra Local Government Area.

Environmental Sustainability is defined as the responsible management of natural resources to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Environmentally sustainable practices focus on maintaining an ecological balance by conserving natural resources, reducing pollution and promoting practices that protect biodiversity. The Plan focuses on completing actions that can be applied within the existing framework of Council's regulatory and operational functions in the following focus areas:

- Strategic planning and development control
- ~~Operator of major infrastructure and road plant~~ Roadside Vegetation Management
- ~~Manager~~ Management of community and operational land (community wetlands, etc)
- Community ~~liaison / facilitation~~ engagement
- Development of Regional and Local Partnerships
- Regularly Review Council's Functions and Responsibilities in the Context of Integration of ~~Natural Resource Management~~Environmental Sustainability processes.

The 'Actions' proposed in this Plan are not binding on the Council to complete or to be undertaken within the timeframes indicated.

The 'Actions' are objectives only that Council will aim to achieve, through the planning and implementation of the Cowra Shire Council Delivery Plan. Where funding or resources are not available to complete 'Actions', projects may need to be deferred.

1.0

Focus Area

Strategic Planning & Development Control

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2017~~26~~/2018~~27~~	~~2018~~2027/~~2019~~2028	~~2019~~2028/~~2020~~2029	Council	DES	DIO	~~NRM~~ ES Committee	
Encourage the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design principles in new urban release areas and subdivisions: Review provisions in the DCP and incorporate additional WSUD principals for all development including, residential, industrial, commercial and Council related.	•		•				•			On-going. Nil budget required.
Review the recommended tree list with input of the Birds in Backyards project and Birdlife Australia and include this in the review of the DCP		•	•						•	Nil budget required.
Investigate and consider best practice environmental sustainability options for Development Control Plans.	•		•			•				Nil budget required
Build and promote Council's and the community's preparedness for, adaptability to and resilience to climate change and natural disaster impacts			•			•				Nil budget required
Tree Preservation – To consider and recommend programs and projects which manage, promote and enhance our tree canopy in urban and natural areas	•		•	•	•				•	Nil budget required.

2.0
Focus Area
Operators of Major Infrastructure & Road Plant

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027~~2017/2018~~	2027/2028~~2018/2019~~	2028/2029~~2019/2020~~	Council	DES	DIO	~~NRM~~ ES Committee	
Continue to implement strategies to optimally position Cowra Shire in a low carbon emission future. ~~Continue to support CLEAN Cowra~~.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Continue to develop and support innovations in this field. No additional budget required.
Continue to investigate alternative energy technologies for Council facilities. ~~Continue to support CLEAN Cowra with trials for sludge processing.~~	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	Continue to develop and support innovations in this field. Source additional budget as required.
Investigate opportunities for renewable / alternative energy sources for Council infrastructure and Depot redevelopment.			•				•	•		Source additional budget as required.
~~Continue to participate in the State of the Environment Report supported by LLS.~~	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			~~In-house resources required to complete action. No additional budget required.~~
~~Liaise with Essential Energy to investigate the use of LED lighting in all street lighting in Cowra.~~	•	•	•			•		•	•	~~In-house resources required to complete action. No additional budget required.~~
Maximise opportunities for the Cowra Material Recycling Facility (MRF) to participate in the circular economy	•		•	•	•			•		Continue to support ongoing innovation and operational opportunities for the MRF

	Reduce the emissions of Council Operations in line with NSW Government targets for the local government sector	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	Source additional budget as required
	Implement Energy Efficiency projects included in the adopted Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Plan	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	Source additional budget as required
	Monitor emissions of council operations	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	Continue to monitor as required
	Source road making materials in an environmentally responsible manner	•		•	•	•	•		•	Source additional funding as required

3.0

Focus Area

Managing Community & Operational Land

to conserve and enhance biodiversity

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027~~2017/2018~~	2027/2028~~2018/2019~~	2028/2029~~2019/2020~~	Council	DES	DIO	~~NRM~~ ES Committee	
Continue to manage Council land in terms of weed and pest management within the current legislation	•	•	•	•	•			•		This is an ongoing budget item. Additional Government funding is required.
Continue to seek funding for the Lachlan River Master Plan, as available, to provide improved access to the Lachlan River.	•	•	•	•	•			•		Lachlan River Precinct Masterplan adopted by Council. Additional external funding required.
Continue to seek funding to improve the Cowra Peace Precinct~~.~~ including Bellevue Hill	•	•	•	•	•			•		Cowra Peace Precinct Masterplan adopted by Council. Additional external funding required.
~~Continue to support and investigate the use of traditional / ecological burning practice on appropriate Council owned land.~~ ~~NRM Committee to organise a visit to a demonstration site.~~	~~•~~	~~•~~	~~•~~	~~•~~	~~•~~	~~•~~		~~•~~		~~To provide support to Council and other agencies to undertake this practice.~~
Liaise with appropriate government agencies to promote better management of government owned land within Cowra Shire	•	•	•	•	•	•				Advocate for better management practices along railway corridors, TSRs and Crown Reserves. Extra funding may be required to complete some projects and conduct training.

Investigate potential wetlands projects within existing retention basins to: • Reduce the impacts from storm damage and flooding • maintain good water quality in rivers • recharge groundwater • store carbon • help to stabilise climatic conditions • control pests • act as important sites for biodiversity. • Promote birdwatching and encourage community engagement.	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	Develop guidelines on the use and management of the wetlands.
Undertake a review of Council's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan	•	•	•			•				Nil budget required
Continue work with local Wiradjuri community to support and investigate the use of traditional/ecological burning practice on appropriate council owned land	•	•	•			•				To provide support to Council and other agencies to undertake this practice.

4.0

Focus Area

Community Liaison & Facilitation

to support and engage local communities as part of ann NRM Environmental Sustainability partnership

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027~~2017/2018~~	2027/2028~~2018/2019~~	2028/2029~~2019/2020~~	Council	DES	DIO	~~NRM~~ ES Committee	
Maintain a community ~~-~~based committee to advise on ~~NRM~~ Environmental Sustainability issues and projects.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	No extra funding required.
Provide resources and support activities of community groups undertaking environmental restoration work through the Small Environmental grants program.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	Continue the annual environmental incentive fund for small ~~community based~~environmental projects.
Provide support and participate with ~~to Mid Lachlan Land Care and the Cowra Bird Watchers Group as required~~ local environmental land care groups.	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	As requested or required.
Continue to participate in the Aussie Bird Count ~~Birds in Backyards Project~~.	•		•	•	•		•			Where budget permits participation.
Continue to participate and promote ~~the Science in the Pub / Library in conjunction with the Cowra Cabonne Science Hub~~ Environmental Sustainability and environmental educational community ~~-~~events.	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	Some funding may be required.

Continue the development of training programs that focus on environmental management and biodiversity conservation for Council staff, Building Industry Reference Group and ~~NRM~~ the Environmental Sustainability Committee.	•	•	•	•	•		•			These courses are offered as they become available.
~~Review the use of water tanks for residential purposes.~~	~~•~~	~~•~~	~~•~~				~~•~~			~~This has BASIC's implications.~~
Encourage the use of Integrated Sustainable Water Management practices for water treatment, reuse and conservation in the Cowra Shire related to water use by residential, industrial, commercial, community and Council activities	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Investigating options as part of DCP review.
Collaborate with surrounding councils and regional groups to improve the health of the Lachlan River	•	•		•			•		•	Some funding may be required.
Investigate and implement strategies to mitigate negative impacts to native fish	•	•		•			•		•	Some funding may be required.
Show leadership by taking action and promoting practices to encourage Cowra Shire to be an environmentally responsible community	•	•		•			•			No extra funding required.
Improve the understanding and management of groundwater resources	•	•		•			•		•	Some funding may be required.

5.0

Focus Area

Development of Regional and Local Partnerships

to share ideas and resources to address ~~NRM~~ Environmental Sustainability matters

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027 ~~2017/2018~~	2027/2028 ~~2018/2019~~	2028/2029 ~~2019/2020~~	Council	DES	DIO	~~NRM~~ ES Committee	
Establish and maintain partnerships with local schools, community environmental groups, and individual residents to increase improved ~~NRM~~ Environmental Sustainability outcomes – via the small community grants program	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			Existing budget.
Collaborate with other agencies for control of ~~-~~exotic pests, disease and animals as required (E.g. Fruit Fly education program)~~-~~	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	Ongoing. No additional budget is required.
Continue to support and promote the Kanangra – Boyd to Wyangala Conservation Partnership (K2W link)	•		•	•	•				•	No additional budget is required

6.0

Focus Area

Review Council's Functions & Responsibilities

to embrace a culture for continual improvement in ~~NRM~~Environmental Sustainability

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027~~2017/2018~~	2027/2028~~2018/2019~~	2028/2029~~2019/2020~~	Council	DES	DIO	~~NRM~~ ES Committee	
Regularly review the ~~Natural Resource~~Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan, and any other strategies, policies or documents developed under it, to ensure continual improvement through the adoption of new information as it becomes available.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			This action is ongoing. No external funding required.
Promote the introduction of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collections in the Cowra LGA, for large food waste generating businesses (e.g. supermarkets) and households.	•		•	•	•	•				Additional funding may be required

2026-2029

Cowra Council

Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan

The Cowra Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan represents a four-year plan which details actions to achieve better diversity outcomes within the Cowra Local Government Area.



Council Department	Environmental Services
Contact Officer	Director – Environmental Services

Revision History

Version	Council Meeting Date	Responsible Officer
Adopted	27 November 2017	Director – Environmental Services

List of Definitions

COUNCIL	Cowra Shire Council
DCP	Cowra Council Development Control Plan
DES	Director – Environmental Services
DIO	Director – Infrastructure & Operations
LED	Light-emitting diode
LLS	Local Land Services (Central Tablelands)
ESC	Environmental Sustainability Committee
TSR	Travelling Stock Reserve
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design Principals

1.0

The Plan

The Cowra Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan represents a four-year plan which details actions to achieve better diversity outcomes within Cowra Local Government Area.

Environmental Sustainability is defined as the responsible management of natural resources to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Environmentally sustainable practices focus on maintaining an ecological balance by conserving natural resources, reducing pollution and promoting practices that protect biodiversity.

The Plan focuses on completing actions that can be applied within the existing framework of Council's regulatory and operational functions in the following focus areas:

- Strategic planning and development control
- Roadside Vegetation Management
- Management of community and operational land (community wetlands, etc)
- Community engagement
- Development of Regional and Local Partnerships
- Regularly Review Council's Functions and Responsibilities in the Context of Integration of Environmental Sustainability processes.

The 'Actions' proposed in this Plan are not binding on the Council to complete or to be undertaken within the timeframes indicated.

The 'Actions' are objectives only that Council will aim to achieve, through the planning and implementation of the Cowra Shire Council Delivery Plan. Where funding or resources are not available to complete 'Actions', projects may need to be deferred.

1.0
Focus Area
Strategic Planning & Development Control

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Council	DES	DIO	ES Committee	
Encourage the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design principles in new urban release areas and subdivisions: Review provisions in the DCP and incorporate additional WSUD principals for all development including, residential, industrial, commercial and Council related.	•		•				•			On-going. Nil budget required.
Review the recommended tree list with input of the Birds in Backyards project and Birdlife Australia and include this in the review of the DCP		•	•						•	Nil budget required.
Investigate and consider best practice environmental sustainability options for Development Control Plans.	•		•			•				Nil budget required
Build and promote Council's and the community's preparedness for, adaptability to and resilience to climate change and natural disaster impacts			•			•				Nil budget required
Tree Preservation – To consider and recommend programs and projects which manage, promote and enhance our tree canopy in urban and natural areas	•		•	•	•				•	Nil budget required.

2.0
Focus Area
Operators of Major Infrastructure & Road Plant

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Council	DES	DIO	ES Committee	
Continue to implement strategies to optimally position Cowra Shire in a low carbon emission future.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Continue to develop and support innovations in this field. No additional budget required.
Continue to investigate alternative energy technologies for Council facilities.	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	Continue to develop and support innovations in this field. Source additional budget as required.
Investigate opportunities for renewable / alternative energy sources for Council infrastructure and Depot redevelopment.			•				•			Source additional budget as required.
Maximise opportunities for the Cowra Material Recycling Facility (MRF) to participate in the circular economy	•		•	•	•			•		Continue to support ongoing innovation and operational opportunities for the MRF
Reduce the emissions of Council Operations in line with NSW Government targets for the local government sector	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		Source additional budget as required
Implement Energy Efficiency projects included in the adopted Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Plan	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		Source additional budget as required

Monitor emissions of council operations	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		Continue to monitor as required
Source road making materials in an environmentally responsible manner	•		•	•	•	•		•		Source additional funding as required

3.0

Focus Area

Managing Community & Operational Land

to conserve and enhance biodiversity

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Council	DES	DIO	ES Committee	
Continue to manage Council land in terms of weed and pest management within the current legislation.	•	•	•	•	•			•		This is an ongoing budget item. Additional Government funding is required.
Continue to seek funding for the Lachlan River Master Plan, as available, to provide improved access to the Lachlan River.	•	•	•	•	•			•		Lachlan River Precinct Masterplan adopted by Council. Additional external funding required.
Continue to seek funding to improve the Cowra Peace Precinct, including Bellevue Hill.	•	•	•	•	•			•		Cowra Peace Precinct Masterplan adopted by Council. Additional external funding required.
Liaise with appropriate government agencies to promote better management of government owned land within Cowra Shire.	•	•	•	•	•	•				Advocate for better management practices along railway corridors, TSRs and Crown Reserves. Extra funding may be required to complete some projects and conduct training.

Investigate potential wetlands projects within existing retention basins to: • Reduce the impacts from storm damage and flooding • maintain good water quality in rivers • recharge groundwater • store carbon • help to stabilise climatic conditions • control pests • act as important sites for biodiversity. • Promote birdwatching and encourage community engagement.	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	Develop guidelines on the use and management of the wetlands.
Undertake a review of Council's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan.	•	•	•			•				Nil budget required
Continue work with local Wiradjuri community to support and investigate the use of traditional/ecological burning practice on appropriate council owned land.	•	•	•			•				To provide support to Council and other agencies to undertake this practice.

4.0

Focus Area

Community Liaison & Facilitation

to support and engage local communities as part of an Environmental Sustainability partnership

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Council	DES	DIO	ES Committee	
Maintain a community-based committee to advise on Environmental Sustainability issues and projects.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	No extra funding required.
Provide resources and support activities of community groups undertaking environmental restoration work through the Small Environmental grants program.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	Continue the annual environmental incentive fund for small environmental projects.
Provide support and participate with local environmental land care groups.	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	As requested or required.
Continue to participate in the Aussie Bird Count.	•		•	•	•		•			Where budget permits participation.
Continue to participate and promote Environmental Sustainability and environmental educational community events.	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	Some funding may be required.
Continue the development of training programs that focus on environmental management and biodiversity conservation for Council staff, Building Industry Reference Group and the Environmental Sustainability Committee.	•	•	•	•	•		•			These courses are offered as they become available.

Encourage the use of Integrated Sustainable Water Management practices for water treatment, reuse and conservation in the Cowra Shire related to water use by residential, industrial, commercial, community and Council activities.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Investigating options as part of DCP review.
Collaborate with surrounding councils and regional groups to improve the health of the Lachlan River.	•	•		•			•		•	Some funding may be required.
Investigate and implement strategies to mitigate negative impacts to native fish.	•	•		•			•		•	Some funding may be required.
Show leadership by taking action and promoting practices to encourage Cowra Shire to be an environmentally responsible community.	•	•		•			•			No extra funding required.
Improve the understanding and management of groundwater resources.	•	•		•			•		•	Some funding may be required.

5.0

Focus Area

Development of Regional and Local Partnerships

to share ideas and resources to address Environmental Sustainability matters

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Council	DES	DIO	ES Committee	
Establish and maintain partnerships with local schools, community environmental groups, and individual residents to increase improved Environmental Sustainability outcomes – via the small community grants program.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			Existing budget.
Collaborate with other agencies for control of exotic pests, disease and animals as required (E.g. Fruit Fly education program).	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	Ongoing. No additional budget is required.
Continue to support and promote the Kanangra – Boyd to Wyangala Conservation Partnership (K2W link).	•		•	•	•				•	No additional budget is required

6.0

Focus Area

Review Council's Functions & Responsibilities

to embrace a culture for continual improvement in Environmental Sustainability

Action	Source		Timeframe			Responsibility				Cost / Comment
	Internal	External	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Council	DES	DIO	ES Committee	
Regularly review the Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan, and any other strategies, policies or documents developed under it, to ensure continual improvement through the adoption of new information as it becomes available.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			This action is ongoing. No external funding required.
Promote the introduction of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collections in the Cowra LGA, for large food waste generating businesses (e.g. supermarkets) and households.	•		•	•	•	•				Additional funding may be required

7.2 Draft Planning Proposal aiming to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 by reclassifying Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 from Community Land to Operational status.

File Number: D26/726

Author: Larissa Hackett, Director - Environmental Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That Council consents to the preparation of a Planning Proposal which seeks to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 by adding Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 to Schedule 4 of Cowra LEP 2012 and reclassifying the land from Community Land to Operational Land.**

2. **Once the Planning Proposal is finalised that the proposal is submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure for Gateway Determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.**

INTRODUCTION

Consent from Council is sought to proceed with the preparation of a Planning Proposal that seeks to amend the provisions of Cowra Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012 by adding Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219 to Schedule 4 and reclassifying the land from Community land to Operational land.

This report provides Council with an overview of the project, the draft Planning Proposal and justification of the proposed amendments as well as guidance on the process for amending Cowra LEP 2012, as legislated under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Local Government Act 1993.

Following the review of the draft Planning Proposal, consent is sought to proceed with the submission of the draft Planning Proposal to NSW Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) with a request for Gateway Determination.

BACKROUND

Lot 1 DP 1201417 (Lee Street) and Lot 10 DP 1107219 (River Street) are two existing parcels of land which are currently under the ownership of Cowra Council. As public land, these parcels are required to be managed under the Local Government Act 1993 based on their classification. In the case of Lot1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219, the land is currently classified as Community Land and there is no formal authorisation in place for the use of the land.

Historically the land identified above has been utilised for material storage bays by a privately owned landscape materials supply business (Bryant's Concrete) operating at 2-4 Kite Street, Cowra. The business is also operating on adjoining land, Lot 2, DP 557714 (which is owned by Buzzree Pty Ltd) and Lot 3905, DP 1200283 (which is owned by Transport for NSW) and leased to Buzzree Pty Ltd).

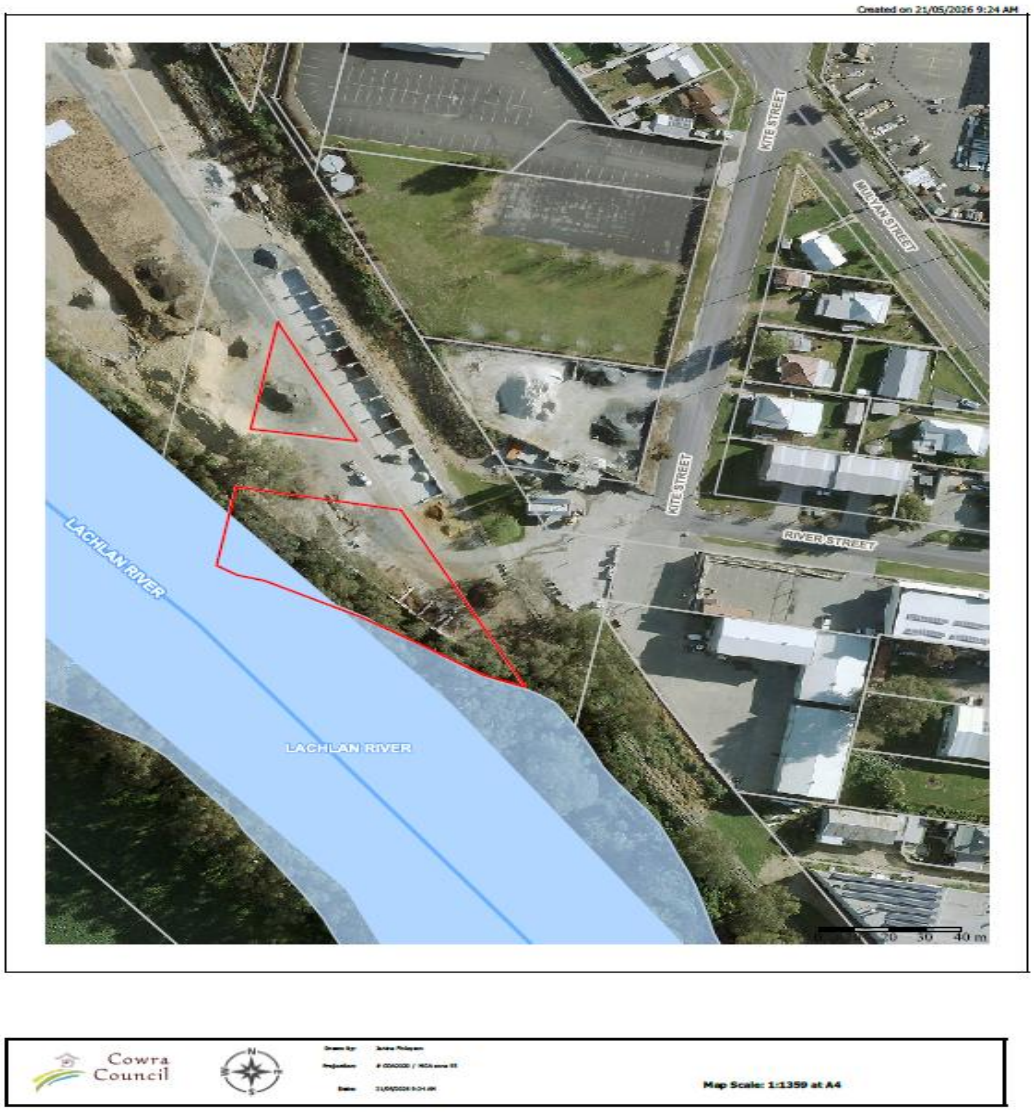
A Development Application (DA 57/2020) was lodged with Council by Buzzree Pty Ltd. on 28 June 2020 for the continued use of and proposed upgrades to the landscape materials supply business at 2-4 Kite Street.

On 11 March 2024, Development Application No. 57/2020 was approved by Cowra Council subject to conditions. Condition No. 13 of the notice of determination reads as follows:

13. The applicant shall obtain written agreement (and any associated permits, leases or purchases required) from Cowra Council for the use of road reserves within the existing project site and two Council owned lots within the site, being Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219.

As a result of Condition 13, the owner of the landscape materials supplies business (Bryant's Concrete) wishes to commence negotiations with the Cowra Council to either purchase or lease Lot 1 DP 1201417 and Lot 10 DP 1107219. Accordingly, the reclassification of the two parcels of land from Community Land to Operational Land would be required to be undertaken to ensure the land is classified according to its current operational use and enable such negotiations to proceed.

An aerial view of the general site is depicted below and included as Attachment 2 (larger scale). The 2 subject lots are highlighted in red:



THE PROPOSAL

The preparation of a draft Planning Proposal will seek to amend the provisions of Cowra LEP 2012 by adding Lot 1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219 to Schedule 4 and to reclassify the land from Community Land to Operational Land.

There are no changes to existing zoning, minimum lot size or other environmental planning controls applying to the land under the current provisions of Cowra LEP 2012.

In order to amend Cowra LEP 2012, the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 requires Council to prepare a Planning Proposal. Planning Proposals are a study that provides a detailed explanation of and justification for the proposed amendments. A draft Planning Proposal has been prepared, and a copy is included in Attachment 1 to this report for the consideration of Council.

POLICY CONTEXT

Classification and Reclassification of Land:

Section 3.1 of the draft Planning Proposal provides information relating to the management of public land under the LG Act 1993 including:

- Definition of public land.
- How public land is managed according to its classification (i.e. Community or Operational)
- Difference between classification and reclassification of land.
- Process for classifying or reclassifying public land.
- Using an LEP to reclassify public land.

In relation to Lot 1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219, a summary of the main considerations is included as follows:

- The lots are currently classified as Community Land under the Local Government Act 1993.
- The land defaulted to a Community classification because a Council resolution was not made to change the classification within 1 year after the commencement of the Local Government Act 1993.
- Because the land defaulted to a Community classification, Council can only reclassify the land through a change to the LEP.
- The reclassification of the land through the LEP is subject to both the local plan-making process in the EPA Act, 1979 and the public land management requirements of the Local Government Act, 1993.
- Council must hold a public hearing when reclassifying public land from Community to Operational to give the community an opportunity to expand on written submissions and discuss issues with an independent person after a public exhibition process has occurred. The public hearing is convened by an independent person appointed by Council.

- The Governor's approval is also required to be obtained as part of the final stages of the plan making process. This is facilitated by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Planning Proposal Requirements

The NSW DPHI "Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline – August 2023' (the Guideline) provides a detailed explanation of the steps of the NSW LEP making process to assist and guide council's, communities, State agencies, proponents, and practitioners.

More specifically, the Guideline sets out the specific requirements for the preparation of a planning proposal as issued by the Planning Secretary under section 3.33(3) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

According to the Guideline, Planning Proposals must contain the following components:

- Part 1 – Objectives and intended outcomes
- Part 2 – Explanation of provisions
- Part 3 – Justification of strategic and site-specific merit
- Part 4 – Maps
- Part 5 – Community Consultation
- Part 6 – Project Timeline

The draft Planning Proposal in Attachment 1 to this report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Guideline.

PLAN-MAKING PROCESS

Subject to Council's endorsement of this draft Planning Proposal, the next steps in the process are described (in general terms) as follows:

1. Submission of the draft Planning Proposal to the NSW DPHI with a request for a Gateway Determination.
2. NSW DPHI to undertake an assessment of the draft Planning Proposal to determine whether to issue a Gateway Determination.
3. Should NSW DPHI issue the Gateway Determination, the Determination is likely to be issued subject to a number of conditions. If the draft Planning Proposal requires modifications, or if additional studies are required to be prepared in support of the draft Planning Proposal, these will need to be undertaken before any community consultation can be arranged.
4. Subject to any conditions of the Gateway Determination, Council will arrange for the public exhibition of the draft Planning Proposal in accordance with the requirements of the Cowra Community Participation Plan, 2024.
5. At the conclusion of the public exhibition period, Cowra Council will afford at least 21 days' notice that a public hearing is intended to be held in relation to the reclassification proposal.

6. In accordance with Section 29 of the Local Government Act 1993, a public hearing will be conducted in relation to the reclassification proposal. The hearing will be chaired by an independent person and report will be prepared by that person providing further recommendations for Council's consideration.

7. Following completion of the public exhibition period a review will be undertaken in relation to any public submissions received (including State Government agency responses) to determine if any changes are required to the draft Planning Proposal. At this stage in the process, a further report on the draft planning proposal will be provided to Cowra Council.

8. Subject to resolution from Cowra Council, the plan making process will be finalised which generally includes preparation of changes to the written instrument (Schedule 4) of Cowra LEP 2012 in accordance with the requirements of NSW DPHI and Parliamentary Counsel.

9. DPHI will organise for the Governor's approval of the Draft LEP.

10. The final step in the plan making process involves notification of the amendment to Cowra LEP 2012. Once notification has occurred, Lot 1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219 will have be classified as Operational Land, and Council can continue with negotiations for the sale (or otherwise) of the land.

By endorsing the recommendations in this report Council is undertaking the first step in the plan-making process. As the draft proposal is progressed in accordance with the steps identified above, Environmental Services will continue to keep Council informed and involved in the decision-making process through further reporting.

CONCLUSION

The consent of Council is sought to initiate the preparation of a draft Planning Proposal which seeks to amend the provisions of Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 by adding Lot 1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219 to Schedule 4 and reclassifying the land from Community land to Operational land.

This report provides Council with detailed background information relating to Lot 1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219. In summary, the two parcels are utilised in association with a number of surrounding lots for an existing landscape materials supplies business (Bryant's Concrete) which has been operating at 2-4 Kite Street since the 1960's. On 11 March 2024, Cowra Council approved Development Application No. 57/2020 for the continued use of the landscape materials supplies business. Condition 13 of the approval requires the owner of the business (Buzzree Pty Ltd) to obtain the written agreement (and any associated permits, leases or purchases required) for the use of Lot 1, DP 1201417 and Lot 10, DP 1107219.

A reclassification of the two parcels from Community Land to Operational Land under the LG Act 1993 is required in order to ensure the land is classified according to its current operational use and would allow Council to resolve to negotiate an offer to lease the land or offer the land for sale.

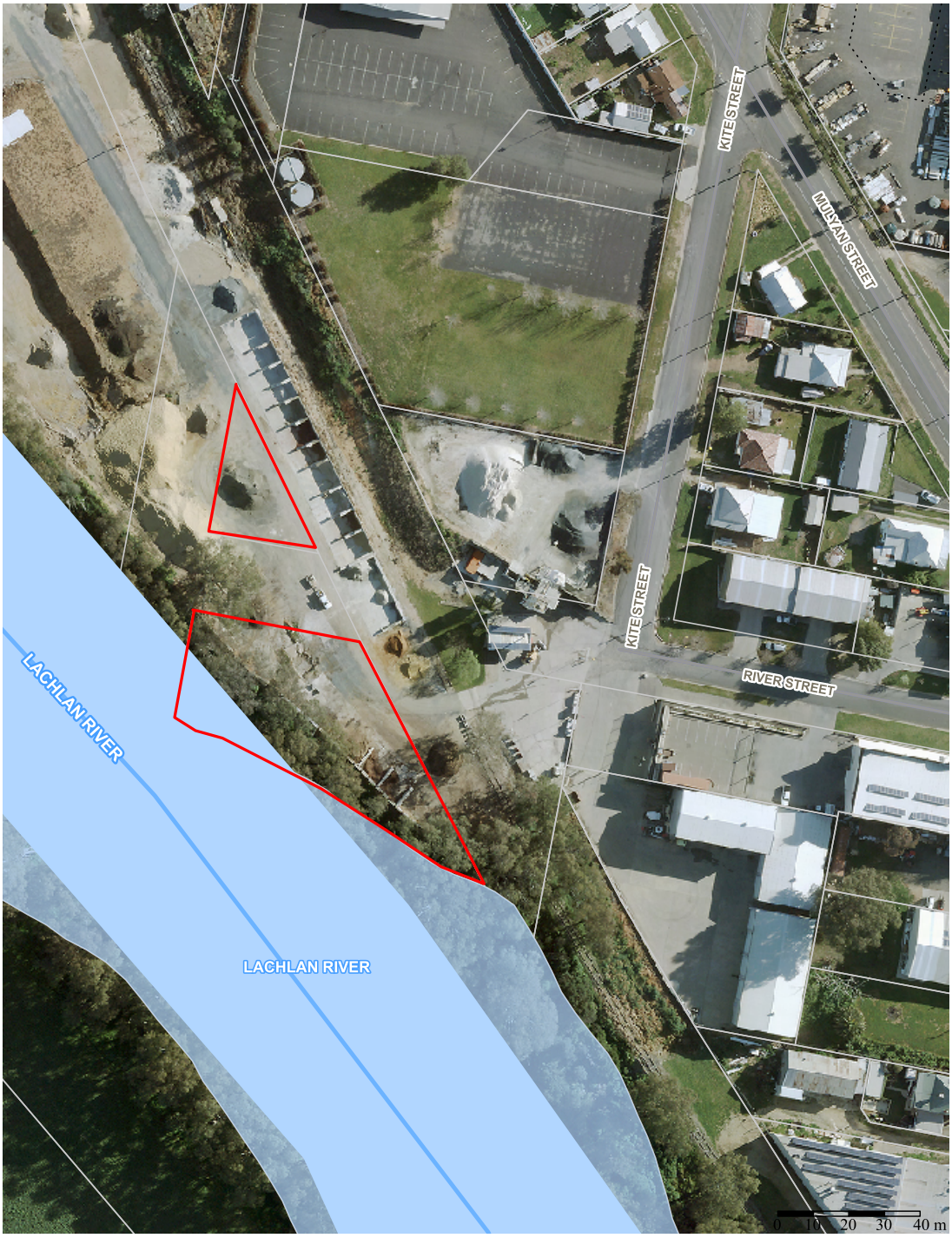
The endorsement of Council is sought to consent to the recommendations contained within the report which will enable the plan-making process to continue, with the first task being a request to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure for a Gateway Determination. The issue of a Gateway Determination would allow for the public exhibition of the draft Planning Proposal.

The plan-making process is expected to take up to eight months to finalise, with key responsibilities tasked to Cowra Council, NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, and the Governor of NSW.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Planning Proposal - reclassification of Operational land to Community - Lot 1 DP1201417 & Lot 10 DP1107219 (under separate cover)
2. Location map - Draft Planning Proposal - Lot 1 DP 1201417 & Lot 10 DP 1107219 ⇩

Created on 21/05/2026 9:24 AM



Cowra Council

Drawn By: Janine Finlayson
Projection: # GDA2020 / MGA zone 55
Date: 21/05/2026 9:24 AM

Map Scale: 1:1359 at A4

7.3 Seeking endorsement for final Section 7.11 & 7.12 2026 Contributions Plans

File Number: D26/764

Author: Larissa Hackett, Director - Environmental Services

Recommendation:

1. **That Council adopt the Cowra Council Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026 in accordance with Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021.**

2. **That Council adopt the Cowra Council Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026 in accordance with Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021.**

3. **That a public notice of Council's decision to approve the plans be placed on its website within 28 days of the decision, pursuant to the requirements of Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021.**

4. **That the Cowra Council Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026 and Cowra Council Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026 come into effect on the day the public notice is placed on Councils website, pursuant to the requirements of Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021.**

Introduction

At Council's Ordinary Meeting held 24 March 2026, the Draft Cowra Council Section 7.11 and Section 7.12 Contributions Plans were endorsed for the purposes of public exhibition.

This report provides Council with the details of the public exhibition period, which has now been completed, and seeks resolution from the Council to formally adopt the new contributions plans.

Public Exhibition Strategy

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, Section 5 of the Cowra Community Participation Plan 2024 and Council resolution 54/26, the following exhibition strategy was implemented by Environmental Services:

- 29-day public exhibition period (Anzac Day inclusive), commencing on 8 April 2026 and finishing on 7 May 2026.

- Written submissions were invited from the public during the 29-day public exhibition period.

- Public notice of the exhibition period was placed on Cowra Council's website, with details of the places, dates and times for inspection of the Draft Contributions Plans, and instructions for making a written submission.

- Draft Plans (hard copy) were available for inspection at Council's Customer Service Centre, 116 Kendal Street Cowra, between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday during this period.

- The draft Contributions Plans were available for download and review from Council's website.
- Social media promotion, Instagram and Facebook
- Council's Noticeboard and Newsletter inclusion

Public Submissions

There were no public submissions received by Council during the public exhibition period. In this regard, there are no amendments required to the Draft Cowra Council Section 7.11 or Section 7.12 Contributions Plans as a result of the public consultation process.

Formal Approval

Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021 provides that a Council may, after considering any submissions about the draft contributions plans:

(a) Approve the plans in the form in which they were publicly exhibited, or

(b) Approve the plans with such alterations as the council thinks fit, or

(c) Decide not to proceed with the plans.

Given there were no public submissions received, there are no modifications to the plans required as a result of any feedback received from consultation.

The draft Contributions plans have been reviewed and minor changes have been made to each plan, specifically relating to applications for a partial or full refund.

Instead of the current wording that applications must be received by the first working day after 31 January within the year following payment, advice received has afforded a modification to enable the wording in the 2026 plans to be simplified to:

Partial or full refund applications must be received within 12 months following payment of the levy.

The only other changes were minor typographical corrections.

The changes that have been made to the Plans are consistent with the requirements of Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 and as a result, re-exhibition of the plan is not considered necessary.

A copy of the final Cowra Council Section 7.11 Contribution Plan 2026 has been included in Attachment 1 to this report.

A copy of the final Cowra Council Section 7.12 Contribution Plan 2026 has been included in Attachment 2 to this report.

Legislative Requirements

Subject to Council's adoption of the new contributions plans, and pursuant to the requirements of Clause 214 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021, a formal notice of Council's decision must be placed on Council's website. The notice must be placed within 28 days of the Council's decision.

Implementation of new plans

Subject to adoption by Council, the new contribution plans will come into effect on 1 July 2026. Council is required to publish a notice of its intention to repeal the existing plans, together with the reasons for the repeal on Council's website for a minimum period of fourteen (14) days. The coming into effect of the new contributions plans will also have the effect of repealing the following existing contribution plans:

- Cowra Section 94 Contributions Plan 2016.
- Cowra Section 94A Contributions Plan 2016.

Development Applications and Complying Development Certificate Applications determined on or after the 1 July 2026 will be subject to the provisions of the new plans.

Conclusion

At Council's Ordinary Meeting held 23 March 2026, the Draft Cowra Council Section 7.11 and Section 7.12 Contributions Plans were endorsed for the purposes of public exhibition.

Public exhibition has now been completed with no submissions received by Council. Changes have been made to the exhibited plans following an internal review by Council staff. The changes are minor and relate to the timing of applications for partial or full refund.

Appropriate recommendations have been included in this report to ensure that Council's legislative obligations are met with regards to the formal approval and implementation of the new contributions plans.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cowra Council Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026 (final) ⇩
2. Cowra Council Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026 (final) ⇩

2026

Prepared by:
COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL
116 Kendal Street
COWRA NSW 2794

COWRA

S7.11
CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN



DOCUMENT CONTROL

PROJECT REPORT DETAILS	
Document Title	Cowra Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026
Principal Author	Janine Finlayson - Land-use Planner
Department	Environmental Services

DOCUMENT STATUS	
Issue	A
Status	FINAL
Date	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In preparing this policy, Cowra Shire Council acknowledge the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people, and pays respect to elders both past, present and emerging.

Prepared by:
COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL
116 Kendal Street
COWRA NSW 2794

Table of Contents

1. Plan Introduction 6

1.1 Overview 7
1.2 About this plan 7
1.2.1 Name of the plan 7
1.2.2 Purpose 7
1.2.3 Commencement of plan 8
1.2.4 Area to which the plan applies 8
1.2.5 Types of development to which the plan applies 8
1.2.6 Other development not specified in the Plan 9
1.2.7 Relationship to other plans and policies 9
1.3 Legislative context 10
1.3.1 What are development contributions? 10
1.3.2 What is a Section 7.11 Contribution? 10
1.3.3 What does Section 7.11 of the Act provide? 11
1.3.4 Application of Legislation / Guideline 12

2. Contribution Framework 13

2.1 Contribution Strategy 14
2.1.1 Nexus 14
2.1.2 Explanation of Contribution Formulae 15
2.1.3 Allowances for existing development 15
2.2 Transport Infrastructure 16
2.2.1 Introduction 16
2.2.2 Nexus 16
2.2.3 Strategy 16
2.2.4 Apportionment 17
2.2.5 Calculation of Contribution 18
2.3 Plan Administration 19
2.3.1 Nexus 19
2.3.2 Strategy 19
2.3.3 Calculation of Contribution 19
2.4 Summary of Contribution Rates 20

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. Administration of the Plan 21

3.1 Authorisation 22
3.2 Types of contributions 22
3.2.1 Monetary contribution 22
3.2.2 Dedication of land 23
3.2.3 Works in Kind / Material Public Benefits 23
3.2.4 Legal agreements pertaining to WIK and MPB 25
3.3 Planning Agreements 26
3.4 Land Values 26
3.5 Payment of contributions 27
3.5.1 Timing of Payments 27
3.5.2 Deferred or Periodic Payments 27
3.6 Adjusting Contribution Rates 29
3.6.1 Indexing of contribution rates 29
3.6.2 Adjusting contributions at time of payment 29
3.7 Refund of contributions 30
3.8 Reassessment of contributions 31
3.9 Complying Development 31
3.10 Construction Certificates 31
3.11 Funding and timing of works 32
3.12 Management Costs of the Plan 32
3.13 Pooling of Contributions 33
3.14 Unspent Section 7.11 funds 33
3.15 Accountability 33
3.16 Goods and Services Tax 33
3.17 Exemptions 34
3.18 Review of the Plan 34
3.19 Condition of Consent 34

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Schedule of Figures

Figure 1 - Contribution Area 1 - North Cowra Industrial Precinct - Location of Works Map 38
Figure 2 - Contribution Area 1 - Apportionment Map 40

Schedule of Tables

Table 1 Contribution Area 1 - Apportionments 17
Table 2 Contribution Area 1 - Calculations 18
Table 3 Plan Administration Calculations - Contribution Area 1 19
Table 4 Plan Administration Contributions Summary - Cowra Contributions Area 1. 20
Table 5 Assessment Criteria for WIK and MPB requests 24

Schedule of Appendices

Appendix A - Works Schedule - Transport Infrastructure 35
Appendix B - Location of Works Maps 37
Appendix C - Apportionment Map 39
Appendix D - Standard Condition 41

01

PLAN INTRODUCTION



1.1 Overview

Section 7.11 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act) provides Council the means to levy contributions towards the cost of public facilities and services to meet the increased demand created by development.

Contributions may be in the form of cash payments, transfer or dedication of land to Council, or the provision of a Material Public Benefit or Works in Kind.

A condition of development consent may be imposed by Council with a requirement that the applicant contribute towards the cost of infrastructure. This is based on the principle that development should fund the infrastructure it necessitates. This is called a section 7.11 contribution - named after the relevant section of the Act. This plan deals with section 7.11 contributions.

Unlike section 7.12 contributions, a section 7.11 contribution must not be levied unless there is a demonstrated relationship (nexus) between the development and the infrastructure demand it generates. Costs are shared fairly between new development and existing community needs, ensuring reasonableness and equity.

The monies collected will assist Council towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public amenities, infrastructure or services.

1.2 About this plan

1.2.1 Name of the plan

This Plan is the Cowra Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026.

1.2.2 Purpose

This Plan enables Council to require a contribution from development towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public services and public amenities that will, or are likely to be, required as a consequence of new development.

The contribution may involve the dedication of land free of cost, or the payment of a monetary contribution, or both.

Other purposes of this Contributions Plan is:

- Provide an overall strategy for the coordinated delivery of public facilities and infrastructure consistent with Council's strategic plans and management plan;
- Provide a comprehensive strategy and administrative framework for the assessment, collection, expenditure, accounting and review of developer contributions towards the equitable provision of public services and amenities;

- Identify the additional services and amenities required to meet the demands of the arising from new development;
- Provide an adequate level of public services and amenities to meet demand arising from development within a reasonable time, as development occurs, and at a reasonable cost, without unduly impacting on the affordability of the proposed development;
- Ensure that the development contributions are based on reasonable estimates of cost;
- Ensure that the existing community is not unduly burdened by the provision of public services and amenities which are needed (either partly or fully) as a result of ongoing development in the Cowra LGA, and that there is a reasonable apportionment of cost between existing demand and new demand for public infrastructure provided by Council, and
- Ensure that contributions are fair and reasonable.

1.2.3 Commencement of plan

This Plan takes effect on1 July 2026.

Rezoning applications (for the purposes of Planning Agreements), development applications and applications for complying development certificates determined on or after this date will be subject to the provisions of this Plan.

1.2.4 Area to which the plan applies

This Plan applies to all land within the North Cowra Industrial Precinct, as shown in the mapping included at **Appendix B** to this plan.

The balance of the Cowra LGA is not included in this plan and is instead subject to the provisions in the Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026.

1.2.5 Types of development to which the plan applies

This Plan applies to new subdivisions that create lots capable of accommodating new industrial developments under Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

For developments involving the erection of a new industrial building, Council will apply the provisions of the Section 7.12 Contributions Plan, provided a contribution has not already been paid in relation to the land upon which the new industrial building is to be erected.

This Plan applies to all applications for development consent and complying development certificates on the land to which the Plan applies.

Where a development contribution has been paid at the time of subdivision in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (or a previous Plan), further contributions will not be required, unless subsequent development increases the intensity of use.

Note: "development" referred to in this clause has the same meaning as shown in section 1.5 the Act, which is repeated as follows:

(1) For the purposes of this Act, development is any of the following—

(a) the use of land,

(b) the subdivision of land,

(c) the erection of a building,

(d) the carrying out of a work,

(e) the demolition of a building or work,

(f) any other act, matter or thing that may be controlled by an environmental planning instrument.

(2) However, development does not include any act, matter or thing excluded by the regulations (either generally for the purposes of this Act or only for the purposes of specified provisions of this Act).

(3) For the purposes of this Act, the carrying out of development is the doing of the acts, matters or things referred to in subsection (1).

1.2.6 Other development not specified in the Plan

This Plan levies contributions predominantly for industrial development in the specified Contribution Area. There may however be other types of development not specified in this Plan that generate a need for new or augmented public services and amenities. In such instances the applicant may be requested to prepare a needs analysis for the development to determine the development contribution requirements. Council will work with the developer to have those requirements addressed to its satisfaction - for example, by way of amended DA plans or negotiation of a Planning Agreement.

1.2.7 Relationship to other plans and policies

This Plan supersedes the Cowra Section 94 Contributions Plan 2016.

Unspent contributions raised and paid under the authority of the previous Plan will be continued to be directed towards the respective facilities and infrastructure described in the Work Schedule of that Plan. Where items from the previous Plan have continued in the Cowra Section 7.11 Plan 2026, those funds have been transferred to that Plan.

This Plan complements the Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026. Development to which this Plan applies is not to be levied contributions under the Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026.

1.3 Legislative context

1.3.1 What are development contributions?

Development contributions are contributions made by those undertaking development approved under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act). Contributions may be in the form of money, the dedication of land or some other material public benefit (or a combination of these):

- In the case of contributions made under sections 7.11 or 7.12 of the Act - toward the provision or improvement of amenities or services (or the recouping of the cost of provision or improvement of amenities or services); or
- In the case of contributions made under a planning agreement prepared in accordance with sections 7.4 to 7.10 of the Act - toward public purposes.

1.3.2 What is a Section 7.11 Contribution?

A Section 7.11 Contribution is named after the relevant section of the Act, which provides Council the means to levy contributions towards the cost of public facilities and services to meet the increased demand created by development.

Section 7.11 of the Act allows Council to impose, as a condition of development consent, a requirement that the applicant contribution towards the cost of public facilities and services to meet the increased demand created by development. Contributions may be in the form of:

- The dedication of land free of cost, or
- The payment of a monetary contribution,
- Provision of a Material Public Benefit
- Works in Kind.

Further details on the above forms of contributions are provided in Section **3.2** of this Plan.

Unlike section 7.12 contributions, a section 7.11 contribution must not be levied unless there is a demonstrated relationship (nexus) between the development and the infrastructure demand it generates. Costs are shared fairly between new development and existing community needs, ensuring reasonableness and equity.

The monies collected will assist Council towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public amenities, infrastructure or services. The expenditure of the money is subject to any relevant provision of this Plan and the works schedule at **Appendix A.**

1.3.3 What does Section 7.11 of the Act provide?

Section 7.11 of the Act provides as follows:

7.11 Contribution towards provision or improvement of amenities or services

(1) If a consent authority is satisfied that development for which development consent is sought will or is likely to require the provision of or increase the demand for public amenities and public services within the area, the consent authority may grant the development consent subject to a condition requiring—

(a) the dedication of land free of cost, or

(b) the payment of a monetary contribution,

or both.

(2) A condition referred to in subsection (1) may be imposed only to require a reasonable dedication or contribution for the provision, extension or augmentation of the public amenities and public services concerned.

(3) If—

(a) a consent authority has, at any time, whether before or after the date of commencement of this Part, provided public amenities or public services within the area in preparation for or to facilitate the carrying out of development in the area, and

(b) development for which development consent is sought will, if carried out, benefit from the provision of those public amenities or public services,

the consent authority may grant the development consent subject to a condition requiring the payment of a monetary contribution towards recoupment of the cost of providing the public amenities or public services (being the cost as indexed in accordance with the regulations).

(4) A condition referred to in subsection (3) may be imposed only to require a reasonable contribution towards recoupment of the cost concerned.

(5) The consent authority may accept—

(a) the dedication of land in part or full satisfaction of a condition imposed in accordance with subsection (3), or

(b) the provision of a material public benefit (other than the dedication of land or the payment of a monetary contribution) in part or full satisfaction of a condition imposed in accordance with subsection (1) or (3).

(6) If a consent authority proposes to impose a condition in accordance with subsection (1) or (3) in respect of development, the consent authority must take into consideration any land, money or other material public benefit that the applicant has elsewhere dedicated or provided free of cost within the area (or any adjoining area) or previously paid to the consent authority, other than—

(a) a benefit provided as a condition of the grant of development consent under this Act, or

(b) a benefit excluded from consideration under section 7.4(6).

(7) If—

(a) a condition imposed under subsection (1) or (3) in relation to development has been complied with, and

(b) a public authority would, but for this subsection, be entitled under any other Act to require, in relation to or in connection with that development, a dedication of land or payment of money in respect of the provision of public amenities or public services or both,

then, despite that other Act, compliance with the condition referred to in paragraph (a) is taken to have satisfied the requirement referred to in paragraph (b) to the extent of the value (determined, if the regulations so provide, in accordance with the regulations) of the land dedicated or the amount of money paid in compliance with the condition

1.3.4 Application of Legislation / Guideline

This Contributions Plan has been prepared in accordance with the following relevant legislation and with reference to the following relevant guideline documents:

- Part 7, Division 7.1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
- Part 9 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.
- NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Guide to Infrastructure Contributions dated May 2025.
- NSW Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Section 7.11 Contributions Practice Note.
- NSW Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Local Infrastructure Contributions System Practice Note.
- NSW Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Administering Contributions Practice Note.
- Relevant Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.

02

CONTRIBUTION FRAMEWORK



2.1 Contribution Strategy

2.1.1 Nexus

This Part of the Plan establishes the relationship (nexus) between the expected types of development in nominated Contribution Area(s) and the demand for additional public services and facilities to meet the needs of that development.

Nexus is the relationship between the expected types of development in the area and the demonstrated need for additional public facilities created by those developments. The concept of nexus is often referred to in the following terms:

Type	Rationale	Description
Casual nexus	What	This is a demonstration that the anticipated development actually creates a need or increases the demand for a particular public facility.
Spatial or physical nexus	Where	Spatial nexus requires that the proposed public facility be located so as to serve the needs of those who created the demand for it.
Temporal nexus	When	Temporal nexus seeks to ensure that the public facility will be provided in a timely manner to benefit those who contributed towards it.

The proposed public facilities identified in this Plan are considered reasonable and are required to satisfy the expected demands of the anticipated types of development in the Plan's Contributions Area(s).

In general, the need for and increased usage of public facilities as a consequence of new development will exceed the capacity of existing public facilities in the area. It will therefore be necessary for new and augmented public facilities to be provided to cater for the anticipated demand of likely development.

The details establishing the nexus between the expected types of development in the Contributions Area(s) and the demand for additional public facilities to meet that development are set out in this Part of the Plan under the headings of:

- Transport - Refer Section **2.2**
- Plan Management and Administration - Refer Section **2.3**

The following types of facilities have been identified as being necessary to meet the needs of new development:

Category	Types of services / facilities
Transport Facilities	Road infrastructure, road drainage upgrading.
Plan Management and Administration	Management of development contributions and works, and Review of the Plan

Details regarding the approximate location, timing and estimated costs for each of the facilities are set out in the Work Schedules included at **Appendix A** and Location of Works Maps included at **Appendix B**.

2.1.2 Explanation of Contribution Formulae

Council applies a contribution formula to each public amenity and service for the purpose of calculating the contribution rate applicable for that service or amenity. The formulae takes into consideration the cost of the works to be undertaken, the cost to Council of acquiring land on which to undertake these works (if applicable) and the total land area relevant to the facility:

$$\text{Contribution (per capita / lot)} = \frac{\text{Cost}}{\text{Benefiting Land Area}}$$

Where:

Cost = Total cost of providing the facility including land and capital costs, and any recoupment costs (if applicable).

Benefiting Land Area = Total area of land in the nominated Contribution Area that is to benefit from the public infrastructure.

2.1.3 Allowances for existing development

Because Section 7.11 contributions can only be levied where development will result in an increased demand for public amenities and services, contributions will not be sought in relation to demand generated by existing (or approved) urban development on the land to which this Plan applies.

As the contribution amounts for Contribution Area No. 1 are levied based on a calculation of site area, credits (or allowances) will be granted for existing site area associated with any residual (existing) lot created by a subdivision of land to which this Plan applies.

2.2 Transport Infrastructure

2.2.1 Introduction

The transport facilities provided for in this Plan are required to meet the increase in transport needs from new development within Contribution Area No. 1.

The key documents supporting these works are identified below:

- Cowra 2036 - Cowra Community Strategic Plan
- Cowra Council Operational Plan 2025-2026
- Cowra Council Delivery Program 2025-2029
- Cowra Council Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035
- Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2025

2.2.2 Nexus

Industrial development within Contribution Area No. 1 - North Cowra Industrial Precinct will create a need for additional road and drainage infrastructure due to the increase traffic and increased permeable surfaces that result from the development of this land for industrial purposes.

Cowra Council has undertaken a technical review of the infrastructure improvements required to meet the demand resulting from the additional industrial development and this review led to identification of the specific infrastructure items detailed in Section **2.2.5** and **Appendix A**.

To address these issues, the most important factors provided for within this Plan relate to:

- Upgrading road infrastructure to cater for increased traffic volumes, and
- Upgrading street drainage (in association with the above drainage measures).

The beneficiaries of the improvements in road infrastructure will be industrial development in Contribution Area No. 1 - North Cowra Industrial Precinct. Accordingly, the cost of the improvements to road and drainage infrastructure that have been included in this Plan have been apportioned on a per square metre basis.

Works programmes will be regularly reviewed and revised depending upon development trends, updated traffic modelling, State, Regional and Local Government policy and available funding.

2.2.3 Strategy

A summary of proposed transport works for which contributions are sought through this Plan, and their costs is provided in the Works Schedule in **Appendix A**.

2.2.4 Apportionment

The transport works detailed in this Plan have been designed to meet the demands of the future development in Contribution Area No. 1 - North Cowra Industrial Precinct.

The identification of the Contribution Area ensures that the nexus between the demand created by new development and contribution levels are as equitably distributed as is reasonable possible and administratively efficient.

In the case of Contribution Area 1, the following apportionments have been applied each of the proposed transport works identified in the Works Schedules to **Appendix A**.

Table 1 Contribution Area 1 - Apportionments

No.	Service / Facilities	Total Cost	Apportionment
1.	Nangar St upgrade - 10m carriageway width and kerb and gutter installation between Mulyan St and Pridham St	$950,000	51% [1]
2.	Pridham St upgrade - 7m width carriageway (no kerb and gutter) between Glen Logan Rd and Nangar St	$235,000	51% [1]
3.	Pridham St / Glen Logan Rd intersection upgrade and box culvert installation	$650,000	51% [1]
4.	Nangar St and Pridham St intersection widening and upgrade	$250,000	51% [1]
5.	Mulyan St and Nangar St intersection widening and kerb and gutter improvements	$750,000	51% [1]

Notes

1. In the case of Works Schedule Items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, the apportionment is 51% of the total cost, because the need for the proposed work is jointly generated by existing development in the E4 General Industrial zone that will also benefit from the improvement. Refer to Appendix C for apportionment calculations.

2.2.5 Calculation of Contribution

The estimated capital costs for the proposed works were prepared by Cowra Council on the basis of Council's standard rates for construction. In the case of Contribution Area No. 1 - North Cowra Industrial Precinct, contributions have been calculated per square metre of land.

Table 2 shows the capitals works for which a Section 7.11 contribution is being levied for Contribution Area No. 1.

Table 2 Contribution Area 1 - Calculations

Item No.	Work	Cost	Apportionment	Benefiting Land Area (ha)	Contribution Rate per m2
1	Nangar St upgrade - 10m carriageway width and kerb and gutter installation between Mulyan St and Pridham St	$950K	51%	95.08	$0.51
2	Pridham St upgrade - 7m width carriageway (no kerb and gutter) between Glen Logan Rd and Nangar St	$235K	51%	95.08	$0.13
3	Pridham St / Glen Logan Rd intersection upgrade and box culvert installation	$750K	51%	95.08	$0.40
4	Nangar St and Pridham St intersection widening and upgrade	$250K	51%	95.08	$0.13
5	Mulyan St and Nangar St intersection widening and kerb and gutter improvements	$750K	51%	95.08	$0.40
	Total Contribution Per Square Metre				$1.57

2.3 Plan Administration

2.3.1 Nexus

The preparation and administration of a Section 7.11 plan requires resources. Council employs staff to undertake the financial accounting of contributions, and implement the Plan and its works. In addition, consultant studies and specialist advice (e.g. legal and valuation) are obtained on an as needed basis to assist with Plan preparation, management and review.

The costs involved with administering contributions plans are an essential component of the efficient provision of facilities necessitated by new development within the nominated Contributions Area(s). New development should therefore pay a reasonable contribution towards the costs associated with the management and administration of the Plan.

2.3.2 Strategy

The Plan aims to provide funds to ensure the efficient management of the contributions planning and financial processes within Council. These processes will be ongoing throughout the life of the Plan.

Council staff that are accountable for facility/service planning and delivery will be involved in reviewing and updating the Plan. This may include review of the works schedules or the latest information on community needs to ensure that facility planning is current and appropriate. This may also include engaging specialist consultants (e.g. planning and engineering specialists) to carry out studies.

2.3.3 Calculation of Contribution

A Council can account for the costs of plan administration by charging a contribution rate of 1.5% of the total capital cost of the infrastructure levied under a Section 7.11 Contributions Plan. Table 3 shows the calculations.

Table 3 Plan Administration Calculations - Contribution Area 1

Item	Description	Cost	Calculation / Ref
A	Total Costs of Works Schedule Items	$2.935,000	Refer Appendix A
B	Plan Establishment Costs	$44,025	1.5% of Item A
C	Benefiting Land Area (hectares)	95.08 ha	Refer Appendix C
D	Benefiting Land Area (square metres)	950,800m2	Item C x 10,000
E	Contribution per square metre	$0.04	Item B / Item D

2.4 Summary of Contribution Rates

A summary of Development Contribution rates for Cowra Contributions Area 1 is included in Table 4 as follows:

Table 4 Plan Administration Contributions Summary - Cowra Contributions Area 1.

Contribution Type	Per square metre of site area
Transport Infrastructure	$1.57
Plan administration	$0.04
Total	$1.61

03

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PLAN



3.1 Authorisation

In determining a development application or issuing a complying development certificate to which this Plan applies, this Plan authorises the Council to impose a condition of consent requiring the payment of a monetary contribution.

Prior to the issue of a Complying Development Certificate for development to which this Plan applies, the issuer of the certificate must impose a condition pursuant to this Plan if such condition may be imposed. In accordance with Section 7.21 of the Act, this Plan:

> "(b) Can only authorise the imposition by an accredited certifier of a condition under Section 7.11 that requires the payment of a monetary contribution,"

Complying Development Certificates must be assessed and issued by Council if the developer wishes Council to consider land dedication, material public benefits or works-in-kind.

3.2 Types of contributions

There are a number of alternative methods which can be used to pay or settle the Section 7.11 developer contributions. These are as follows:

- Monetary contribution;
- Dedication of land;
- Material Public Benefit, or
- Works in Kind.

Where a developer negotiates a material public benefit (for works not in the works schedule), works in kind (for items included in the works schedule), or the dedication of land, in lieu of paying in full or paying a part of the monetary contribution required under this Plan, the applicant must still pay Council's reasonable costs for the management of the Plan (plan management and administration contributions).

The Act also provides the ability for the Council to consider entering into a Planning Agreement (PA) as part of a development application or when rezoning land. Public amenities and services delivered through a PA may be in addition to or instead of the payment of a monetary contribution under Section 7.11.

3.2.1 Monetary contribution

This Plan identifies the monetary contribution required for the provision of public services and amenities, calculated in accordance with the requirements of Section 2 of this Plan. The contribution amount payable will be included as a condition of consent on any development approval issued. Details of how and when the amount will be adjusted will be included in the consent as detailed in this Plan.

3.2.2 Dedication of land

This Plan authorises the Council to consent to the carrying out of development subject to a condition imposed under Section 7.11 of the Act, requiring the dedication of land free of cost to the Council.

Such a condition may be imposed where the land is reasonably required towards the provision, extension or augmentation of a public amenity or public service specified in the Works Schedule accompanying this Plan, in order to meet the demand generated by development.

Dedication of land in lieu of monetary contributions for community facilities, open space or other infrastructure described in this Plan will only be considered when Council deems that the land is locationally appropriate and has physical and servicing characteristics that make it suitable for the designated purpose. All costs of dedication are to be borne by the applicant, including but not limited to, survey, legal and administration costs.

The land is to be in a condition suitable for its intended purpose cleared of all debris, weeds and waste materials to the written satisfaction of Council. The land is to have a compliance certificate from a registered testing authority stating that the land is free from contaminated and hazardous materials and substances.

Land to be dedicated is to be shown on the Final Plan of Subdivision that accompanies the Subdivision Certificate application, and will only come under Council care and control upon registration of the subdivision.

3.2.3 Works in Kind / Material Public Benefits

A works in kind (WIK) is the undertaking of a work or provision of a facility that is scheduled within a Contributions Plan, in lieu of the part or full payment of either a monetary contribution or the dedication of land that would normally apply. WIK are generally offered and assessed as part of the development application process.

Applicants seeking Council's acceptance of a WIK arrangement should initially discuss such a proposal with Council officers to determine whether Council would agree to enter into such agreement as well as to establish Council's requirements.

A material public benefit (MPB) may be offered by the developer in part or full satisfaction of a condition requiring the payment of a monetary contribution or the dedication of land. MPBs can be infrastructure that is specifically listed in the Works Schedule to **Appendix A** or infrastructure that is not included in this Plan. It can not be the payment of money or the dedication of land to Council free of cost.

Council may accept the provision of a MPB that is not nominated in the Works Schedule to **Appendix A**, if it can be justified why it is of equivalent or greater benefit to the community compared to what has been identified under the Plan. For transparency, Planning Agreements are a more appropriate mechanism to deliver a MPB that is not included in this Plan.

Such alternative development contributions arrangements may be negotiated with the Council in connection with the carrying out of development in the following circumstances:

- **Offer made to the Council as part of a development application** - If an applicant does not wish to pay a monetary Section 7.11 contribution in connection with the carrying out of development, the applicant may include in a development application, a proposal to carry out the works towards which a contribution or levy would otherwise have been applied.

  The Council will consider the alternative arrangement as part of its assessment of the development application. If the Council agrees to the arrangement and grants consent to the application, it will impose a condition of consent requiring the works to be carried out. If the Council does not agree to the alternative arrangement, it may grant consent subject to a condition imposed under Section 7.11 requiring payment of the monetary contribution.

- **Offer made to Council following the grant of development consent** - If development consent has been granted to the carrying out of development subject to a condition under Section 7.11 requiring payment of a monetary contribution towards the cost of public amenities and public services, the applicant may request in writing that they instead provide to the Council a material public benefit in part or full satisfaction of the requirements of the relevant condition. This application should be made in the form of a modification of the development consent to be made under section 4.55 of the Act.

  If the Council agrees to the applicant's request, the applicant is required to comply with the alternative arrangement and is not required, in part or whole, as relevant, to comply with the conditions imposed under Section 7.11. If the Council declines the applicant's request, the applicant will be required to comply with the requirements of the conditions imposed under Section 7.11.

In either case, and as recommended by the NSW Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Section 7.11 Contributions Practice Note, Council will have regard to the criteria in Table 4 in order to follow a consistent and transparent approach when deciding whether to agree to the applicant's request:

Table 5 Assessment Criteria for WIK and MPB requests

Criteria	Assessment
Infrastructure Delivery	Any benefits of early delivery of the works to the surrounding area.
Scope and Standard	Consistency of the works with the contributions plan.
Design and Cost	Consistency of the works with the design and estimated cost in the contributions plan.

Financial Implications	Impact of accepting works instead of revenue, on forecast cash flow and the contributions plan works program.
Timing	Impact on the contributions plan delivery program, and whether the alternative will prejudice the timing or manner of the provision of the public facility for which the contribution was required
Handover	Proposed dedication and ongoing management arrangements,

The acceptance of a WIK agreement or a MPB will be at Council's absolute discretion, and aside from any exceptional circumstances, no credits will be granted for in-kind works carried out by the developer that are in excess of the approved contribution amount. Where the value of the WIK, MPB or dedication of land is less than the value of the required contribution, the applicant will be required to settle the balance of the contribution by way of a monetary contribution and/or land dedication.

The value of an offer to provide WIK or a MPB towards which the levy is to be applied, in lieu (in full or in part) of satisfying a condition of consent relating to payment of a Section 7.11 contribution will be valued utilising the following mechanism:

- Any credit will be calculated based on the actual cost of works or the agreed cost estimate, whichever is the lesser. The agreed cost estimate will be determined by a review of the costs submitted by the applicant via Council's Infrastructure & Operations Department (or a Registered Quantity Surveyor at Councils discretion);
- The agreed cost estimate can be amended by submission of a variation request by the applicant which will be reviewed and certified by a registered Quantity Surveyor;
- The actual cost of works is required to be evidenced and verified by a registered Quantity Surveyor;
- The Quantity Surveyor to act on the project will be chosen by Council from a list of 3 recommended by the applicant all of whom are to be members of Panels for The NSW Department of Finance, Services and Innovation or Local Government Procurement; and
- Quantity Surveyor service costs are to be borne by the applicant.

3.2.4 Legal agreements pertaining to WIK and MPB

All offers, should they be accepted, to provide WIK, or a MPB towards which the levy is to be applied, in lieu (in full or in part) of satisfying a condition of consent relating to payment of a Section 7.11 contribution will be subject to a legal agreement between Council and the applicant. All agreements will include, but not limited to, the following:

- The works to be undertaken;
- The timing of the works;

- The quality of the works;
- The costs of the works;
- Handover and sign-off by Council;
- The applicant's rights and responsibilities; and
- Council's rights and responsibilities.

3.3 Planning Agreements

An applicant may offer to enter into a Planning Agreement with the Council in connection with a development application or a rezoning application. Provision is made for Planning Agreements under Section 93F of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as amended.

Under a Planning Agreement, the applicant may offer to pay money, dedicate land, carry out works, or provide other material public benefits for public purposes. The applicant's provision under a Planning Agreement may be additional to, or instead of, making contributions under Section 7.11 of the Act.

The offer to enter into a Planning Agreement, together with the draft Agreement, will generally need to accompany the relevant development or rezoning application. The Council will publicly notify the draft Agreement and explanatory note relating to the draft Agreement along with the relevant application and will consider the Agreement as part of its assessment of the relevant application. If the Council agrees to enter into the Agreement, it may impose a condition of development consent requiring the Agreement to be entered into and performed.

3.4 Land Values

Council's objective is to ensure that the funds Council receives for land acquisition from Section 7.11 contributions are equivalent to the amount required to fund the purchase of all the land identified for acquisition in the Plan.

The estimated value (of the land to be acquired) used for determining contribution rates is the englobo value of the land (identified for acquisition) assuming that the land is available for immediate development and that all necessary services are available. Englobo land is land that is:

- undeveloped, or has minimal development.
- largely unserviced.
- zoned to allow for subdivision into smaller parcels.

The value assigned does not necessarily represent the current market value of any particular parcel of land. Costs associated with land acquisition are also included in the determination of contribution rates. The costs include administration, valuation, negotiations, survey, legal and conveyancing, and are accounted for in the contribution framework for Plan Administration detailed in Section 2.3 of this Plan.

When land is to be acquired, the current market value of this land would be assessed at the time of acquisition or determination of compensation with regard to current market conditions, the availability of services, appropriate heads of compensation and the provisions of the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act, 1991.

3.5 Payment of contributions

3.5.1 Timing of Payments

The time of payment of contributions shall be as follows:

- Development applications involving subdivision only – prior to the release of the Subdivision Certificate.
- Development involving both subdivision and building work – prior to the release of the Construction Certificate, or the release of the Subdivision Certificate, whichever occurs first.

Where an application is dealt with by an Accredited Certifier other than Council, the development consent shall not operate unless and until the amount required by the consent under this Contributions Plan is paid to Council.

The amount of any monetary contribution to be paid will be the contribution payable at the time of consent, and depending upon the time of payment will be subject to reasonable adjustment due to movements in the Consumer Price Index and/or changes to the rates indicated within this Plan (refer to Section 3.6).

3.5.2 Deferred or Periodic Payments

Council may consider the deferred payment of contributions or payments made by periodic installments. This will be a merit based decision, considered on a case by case basis and subject to approval by Council.

A request for deferral or periodic payment must be made in writing to Council, stating the proposed length of deferral, and may only be accepted where:

- There are valid reasons for the deferral or periodic payment;
- The deferral will not prejudice the efficiency and operation or cash flows of the Plan;
- The granting of the request for deferred payment will not jeopardise the timely provision of works or land identified within the Plan;
- A suitable bank guarantee (or equivalent security) can be, and is, provided in the event that the request is accepted by Council;

- The applicant intends to make a contribution by way of a planning agreement, works-in-kind or land dedication in lieu of a cash contribution and Council and the applicant have a legally binding agreement for the provision of the works or land dedication, and
- The periodic or deferred contributions are paid, including interest, at no cost to Council.

The conditions under which Council may accept deferred payment by way of a bank guarantee are that:

- The bank guarantee is by an Australian Bank.
- Indexing will be calculated from the date the contribution was due until the date of payment.
- The bank guarantee is for a maximum period of twelve months.
- The amount of the bank guarantee is the sum of the total contribution or the amount of the outstanding contribution at the time of deferring payment, plus an amount equal to thirteen months interest.
- The bank unconditionally pays the guaranteed sum to Council if Council so demands in writing, no earlier than 12 months from the provision of the guarantee or completion of the work, whichever occurs first.
- The bank must pay the guaranteed sum without reference to the applicant or landowner or other person who provided the guarantee, and without regard to any dispute, controversy, issue or other matter relating to the development consent or the carrying out of development in accordance with the development consent.
- The bank's obligations are discharged when payment to the Council is made in accordance with the approved bank guarantee or when Council notifies the bank in writing that the guarantee is no longer required, and
- Council's registration and release of bank guarantee fee is paid.

Any outstanding component of the contribution shall be indexed quarterly in accordance with the Consumer Price Index movements. Indexing will be calculated from the date the contribution was due until the date of payment.

The conditions under which Council may accept periodic payment for a staged development are:

- That the installments are paid before the work commences on each relevant stage of the development, and
- The amount to be paid at each stage is to be calculated on a pro-rata basis in proportion to the demand for the relevant facility being levied by the overall development, including CPI if required.

3.6 Adjusting Contribution Rates

3.6.1 Indexing of contribution rates

To ensure that the value of contributions are not eroded over time by movements in the Consumer Price Index, land value increases, the capital costs of construction of facilities and administration of the plan or through changes in the costs of studies to support the Plan, the Council will index the contribution rates indicated in this Plan, on a yearly basis. This Plan authorises Council to undertake these indexed based changes without the necessity of preparing a new or amending contributions plan.

The contribution rates will be reviewed and subsequently indexed by reference to the Construction costs by the Consumer Price Index (All Groups – Sydney) as published quarterly by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

In accordance with Clause 32(3)(b) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulations, the following sets out the means by which Council will index contribution rates that are set out in this Plan:

For changes to the Consumer Price Index (Sydney All Groups), the contributions will be reviewed quarterly in accordance with the following formula:

$$\text{New Contribution Rate} = \frac{C \times CPI\ 2}{CPI\ 1}$$

Where:

C	=	is the initial contribution rate at the time of adoption of the Plan, expressed in dollars
CPI 2	=	is the Consumer Price Index Number (Sydney All Groups) available at the time of the review
CPI 1	=	is the Consumer Price Index Number (Sydney All Groups) at the date of adoption of the Plan, or its subsequent amendment

3.6.2 Adjusting contributions at time of payment

Contribution amounts will initially be calculated and regularly updated in accordance with the terms of Clause 3.6.1 at the time development consent is granted. The current contribution rates are published by Council and are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, or from Council's website.

The contributions amounts included in a development consent are to be adjusted at the date of payment on the basis of the contribution rates that are applicable at the time of the payment, and not at the date of the approval of the development.

Contributions required as a condition of development consent will be adjusted at the time of payment using the following formula.

$$CP = \frac{CDC \times (CDC \times (CRP - CRC)}{CRC}$$

Where:

CP = is the amount of the contribution calculated at the time of payment.

CDC = is the amount of the original contribution as set out in the development consent.

CRP = is the contribution rate at the time of payment

CRC = is the contribution rate at the time of the original consent.

3.7 Refund of contributions

As a general rule, Council will not support requests for the refund of contributions already paid to Council in accordance with the conditions of a development consent. This is because it is not possible to refund contributions (that have already been paid) from the relevant contribution fund(s) of Council.

Where a partial or full refund of contribution is requested, applicants will instead need to apply in writing to Cowra Council for a donation in accordance with the Donation Policy, a copy which can be accessed from Council upon request.

Council will take the following matters into account when assessing the refund request:

- The criteria in the Council's Donation Policy.
- Whether or not the development has been commenced.
- Whether or not it is proposed to surrender the consent that applied the contribution.

Applications must be received within 12 months following payment of the levy.

The decision to provide part or full refunds will always be the subject of a report to an appropriate monthly committee meeting of Council.

3.8 Reassessment of contributions

Council may consider an application for the reassessment of the development monetary contribution payable. This may result in the contribution being reduced or waived or modified.

Where a condition of development consent has already been imposed requiring the payment of a contribution, the applicant will be required to lodge an application to review the consent in accordance with Sections 8.2 to 8.5 of the Act, as amended, to reassess the rate of contribution charged.

The request shall be in writing and provide sufficient information to satisfy Council of the inappropriate nature of the contribution and the implications to Council of reducing or waiving the contribution in the particular circumstances.

The Act provides that Council cannot review a determination or decision after the period within which any appeal may be made to the Court has expired if no appeal was made, or after the Court has disposed of an appeal against the determination or decision.

3.9 Complying Development

In accordance with Clause 156 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, a certifying authority must not issue a complying development certificate for a particular purpose unless it includes a condition requiring the payment of a monetary section 7.11 contribution, where such a payment is required by a council's contribution plan.

The amount of the contribution is to be determined in accordance with the formulas contained in this Plan. The conditions imposed must be consistent with Council's standard Section 7.11 consent conditions and be in accordance with this Plan. It is the responsibility of accredited certifiers to correctly calculate the contribution and apply the Section 7.11 contribution.

Complying Development Certificates must be assessed and issued by Council if the developer wishes Council to consider land dedication, material public benefits or works-in-kind.

3.10 Construction Certificates

In accordance with Clause 20 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021, a certifying authority must not issue a construction certificate for building work or subdivision works under development consent unless it has verified that each condition requiring the payment of monetary contributions has been satisfied.

In particular the certifier must ensure that the applicant provides a receipt(s) confirming that contributions have been fully paid and copies of such receipts must be included with copies of the certified plans provided to the Council in accordance with clause 20(b) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021. Failure to follow this procedure may render such a certificate invalid.

The only exception to this requirement is where a WIK, MPB, dedication of land or deferred arrangement has been agreed by the Council. In such cases the Council will issue a letter confirming that an alternative payment method has been agreed with the applicant.

3.11 Funding and timing of works

The contributions made to Council under the Plan may fully or partially fund the public amenities and services identified in this Plan. The contribution rates have been determined on the basis of apportionment between the expected development and other sources of demand. In circumstances where public amenities and services are not fully funded by contributions, the remaining funds will be supplied from other Council sources.

Public amenities and services are required at the time demand is created, which may be before completion of development and before sufficient contributions are received. Council's ability to forward fund these services and amenities is very limited, and consequently their provision is largely contingent upon the availability of contributions. Pooling of funds to assist with the provision of infrastructure, as detailed in Section 3.13 will be considered and used when necessary.

To provide a strategy for the implementation of the services and amenities levied for in this Plan, and to use contributions in the most effective manner, the individual work schedules may be reprioritised. This will take into account development trends, population characteristics, existing funds, funds from other sources (where required) and anticipated revenue flows.

It is expected that the development of the Contributions Area(s) will occur over the next 10 to 15 years. The scope and timeframe for the delivery of the infrastructure identified in this Plan is for the same duration. However, as the projections and time-frames for development are uncertain, the Work Schedules in the Plan are subject to staged implementation and / or will be completed on an as required basis. Furthermore management of the Plan incorporates ongoing monitoring of development trends, actual population growth rates and regular review processes.

3.12 Management Costs of the Plan

There is a substantial time and cost overhead associated with this Plan and its implementation.

Accordingly costs associated with the preparation, administration and management of this Plan will be levied on all applications in a nominated Contribution Area(s). These costs will appear as a separate element in the rates schedule and the method of calculation is described in Section 2.3 and covers the implementation review, monitoring and updating procedures set out in the Plan. In addition, studies are undertaken to determine the design and costing of works as well as to review the development and demand assumptions of the Plan.

Where a MPB or WIK agreement is negotiated between a developer and the Council, the Plan Administration and Management Contribution levy will still apply. This amount will cover plan review costs and also Council's costs associated with negotiating the MPB or PA and supervision of the work undertaken.

3.13 Pooling of Contributions

This Plan expressly authorises monetary Section 7.11 Contributions paid for different purposes to be pooled and applied (progressively or otherwise) for those purposes. The priorities for the expenditure of the contributions are shown in the Works Schedule in **Appendix A**.

3.14 Unspent Section 7.11 funds

This Plan also authorises that unspent monies collected through previous Section 7.11 Plan is to be expended on works identified in the Works Schedules in **Appendix A**, or the Works Schedule of the Cowra Section 7.12 Plan as appropriate.

3.15 Accountability

Financial management and accountability are important components of Section 7.11, and Council is obliged to maintain an accurate and up to date register of all Section 7.11 contributions.

Monetary contributions received under the authority of this Plan must be recorded and kept through a separate account specifically established for this Plan. The records must indicate the contributions received, contributions expended and must include the interest, if any, earned on invested funds for each account.

These records are updated on a monthly basis.

Separate accounting records are maintained for both the Cowra Section 7.11 Contributions Plan and the Cowra Section 7.12 Contribution Plans. Information on Section 7.11 accounts and funds relating to this Plan will be provided in a condensed format within Cowra Council's Annual Report/s in accordance with requirements of the Act and associated Regulation.

Information is also available in Council's contribution register relating to this Plan, which can be inspected at Council's Customer Service Centre during normal business hours, or downloaded from the Council's website.

3.16 Goods and Services Tax

Monetary Section 7.11 development contributions are exempt from the Federal Government Goods and Services Tax (GST).

3.17 Exemptions

Under section 7.17 of the Act a contribution under section 7.11 cannot be imposed:

- on development consents to carry out development for the purposes of housing development by a social housing provider for seniors or people with a disability within the meanings of State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021.
- if a development contribution under section 7.11 of the Act has been required in respect of the subdivision of land (initial subdivision), unless that other development will, or is likely to, increase the demand for public amenities or services beyond the increase in demand attributable to the initial subdivision.

For all other circumstances where an exemption is sought to the payment of a Section 7.11 Levy, an application must be submitted to Council at development assessment stage, giving reasons and providing any necessary evidence for the exemption.

3.18 Review of the Plan

This Plan may be reviewed in full, or in respect of particular parts, when considered appropriate having regard to the rate and type of development, cost of facility provision, and community response to service and facility provision.

A complete review of this Plan is anticipated every five (5) years from the date of commencement of the Plan.

3.19 Condition of Consent

Unless otherwise determined by the Council, the standard condition described in **Appendix D** will be used on Development Application determinations and Complying Development Certificates for monetary contributions levied under this plan.

A
APPENDIX
Works Schedule - Transport Infrastructure



Works Schedule

Service / Facilities	Apportioned Capital Cost [1]	Estimated Land Cost $	Council / Other Cost [2]	Total Cost	Timing [3]
Nangar St upgrade - 10m carriageway width and kerb and gutter installation between Mulyan St and Pridham St	$484,500	Nil	$465,500	$950,000	As required.
Pridham St upgrade - 7m width carriageway (no kerb and gutter) between Glen Logan Rd and Nangar St	$119,850	Nil	$294,000	$235,000	As required.
Pridham St / Glen Logan Rd intersection upgrade and box culvert installation	$331,500	Nil	$318,500	$650,000	As required.
Nangar St and Pridham St intersection widening and upgrade	$127,500	Nil	$122,500	$250,000	As required.
Mulyan St and Nangar St intersection widening and kerb and gutter improvements	$382,500	Nil	$367,500	$750,000	As required.

Notes

[1] Apportioned capital cost is the apportioned cost to be funded under this Plan by Section 7.11 Contributions. Refer to Table 1 for further details

[2] Council / other cost is the proportion of the total cost of augmentation or provision of a complete facility to be funded by Council / other contributors / grants etc, as each case determines.

[3] Timing is the anticipated delivery date for the provision of the relevant infrastructure.

B

APPENDIX

Location of Works Maps



Figure 1 - Contribution Area 1 - North Cowra Industrial Precinct - Location of Works Map

- Contribution Area Boundary
- Nangar St upgrade - 10m carriageway width and kerb and gutter installation between Mulyan St and Pridham St
- Nangar St stormwater improvement works
- Pridham St upgrade - 7m width carriageway (no kerb and gutter) between Glen Logan Rd and Nangar St
- Pridham St / Glen Logan Rd intersection upgrade and box culvert installation
- Mulyan Street and Redfern Street intersection upgrade
- Nangar St and Pridham St intersection widening and upgrade
- Mulyan St and Nangar St intersection widening and kerb and gutter improvements

C
APPENDIX
Apportionment Map

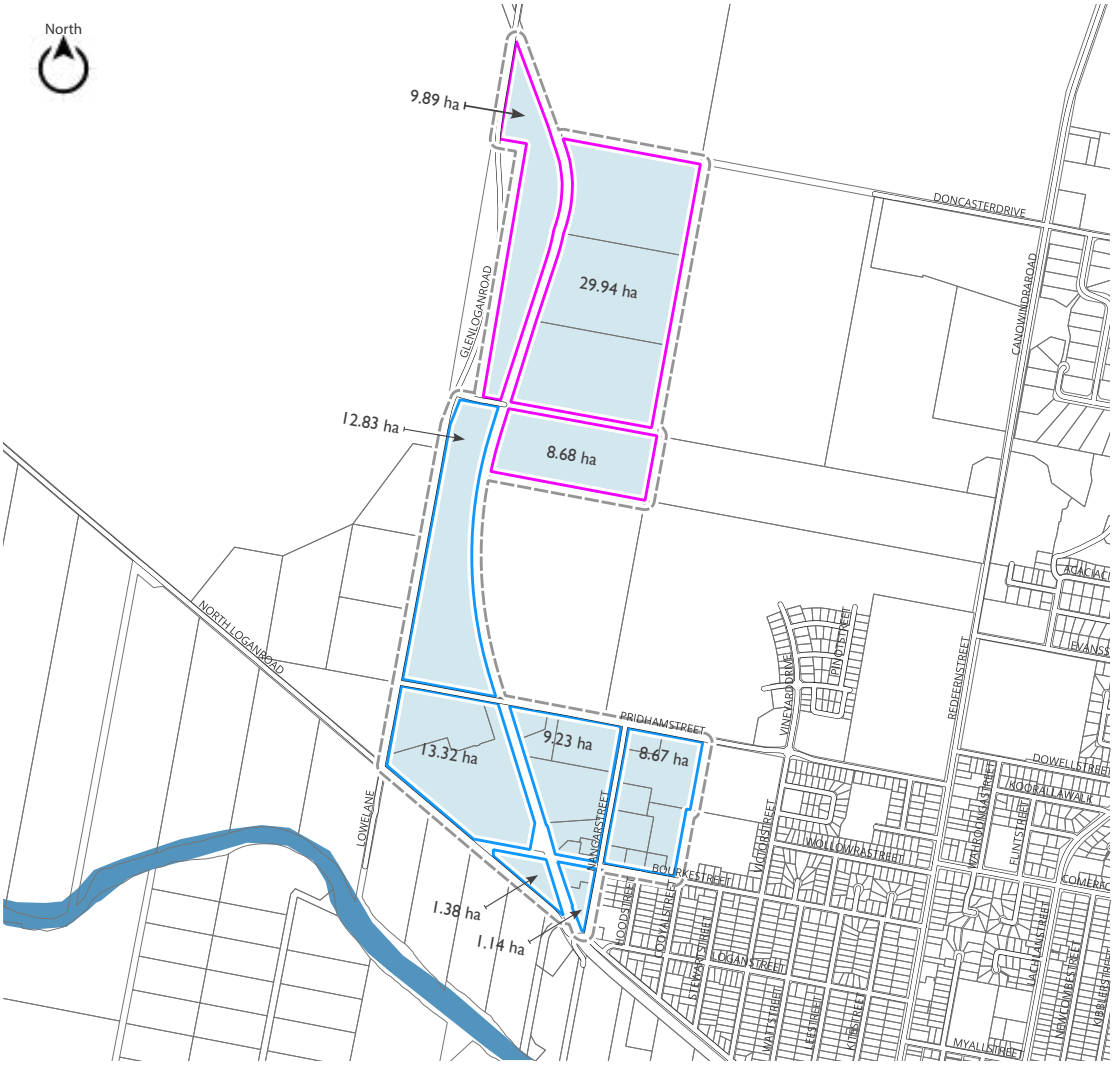


Figure 2 - Contribution Area 1 - Apportionment Map

Legend	Item	Description	Area	Ref / Calculation	Apportionment
	A	Existing Developed Area	46.57 ha	Sum of all blue precincts	49%
	B	Existing Undeveloped Area	48.51 ha	Sum of all purple precincts	51%
	C	Contribution Area Boundary	95.08 ha	Item A + Item B	100%

D

APPENDIX

Standard Condition



Standard Condition

Pursuant to Section 7.11 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, the monetary contribution set out in the following table is to be paid to Council prior to the issue of a Subdivision Certificate or Construction Certificate. The contribution is current as at the date of this consent and is levied in accordance with the Cowra Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026, adopted on 1 July 2026, which may be viewed during office hours at Council's Customer Service Centre, 116 Kendal Street Cowra, or on Council's website www.cowracouncil.com.au.

The contribution payable will be calculated in accordance with the contributions plan current at the time of payment, and will be adjusted at the time of payment in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (All Groups Index for Sydney) published by the Australian Bureau of Statistic (ABS). Contribution amounts will be adjusted by Council each financial year.

Contribution Type	Rate [1]	Rate Amount	No. of Lots [2]	Total Contribution	Rate remains current until
Transport Infrastructure					
Plan Administration					
Total Contribution Payable					
Total Contribution Payable per Lot					

Notes

[1] Per square metre site area

[2] No. of additional lots created. The original lot is discounted from the calculations

[3] Council's Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026 may be viewed during office hours at Council's Customer Service Centre, 116 Kendal Street Cowra, or on Council's website www.cowracouncil.com.au

Standard Condition - Working Example

The table below has been completed showing the calculations for a 16 lot subdivision in the E4 General Industrial zone to which Contribution Area No. 1 applies.

Contribution Type	Rate [1]	Rate Amount	No. of Lots [2]	Total Contribution	Rate remains current until
Transport Infrastructure	128,300m^2	$1.57	16	$201,431	30/06/2026
Plan Administration	128,300m^2	$0.04	16	$5,132	30/06/2026
Total Contribution Payable				$206,563	30/06/2026
Total Contribution Payable per Lot				$12,910	30/06/2026

Notes

[1] Per square metre site area

[2] No. of additional lots created. The original lot is discounted from the calculations

[3] Council's Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026 may be viewed during office hours at Council's Customer Service Centre, 116 Kendal Street Cowra, or on Council's website www.cowracouncil.com.au

2026

Prepared by:
COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL
116 Kendal Street
COWRA NSW 2794

COWRA COUNCIL

S7.12
CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN



DOCUMENT CONTROL

PROJECT REPORT DETAILS	
Document Title	Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026
Principal Author	Janine Finlayson - Land-use Planner
Department	Environmental Services

DOCUMENT STATUS	
Issue	A
Status	FINAL
Date	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In preparing this policy, Cowra Shire Council acknowledge the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people, and pays respect to elders both past, present and emerging.

Prepared by:
COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL
116 Kendal Street
COWRA NSW 2794

Table of Contents

1. Plan Introduction 5

1.1 Overview 6
1.2 About this plan 6
1.2.1 Name of the plan 6
1.2.2 Purpose 6
1.2.3 Commencement of plan 7
1.2.4 Area to which the plan applies 7
1.2.5 Types of development to which the plan applies 7
1.2.6 Relationship to other plans and policies 7
1.3 Legislative context 8
1.3.1 What are development contributions? 8
1.3.2 What is a Section 7.12 Contribution? 8
1.3.3 What does Section 7.12 of the Act provide? 9
1.3.4 Application of Legislation / Guideline 9

2. Contribution Framework 11

2.1 Scale of future development 12
2.2 Contribution rates 13
2.3 Calculation of the contribution 13
2.4 Contribution expenditure 13
2.4.1 Public Services and Facilities 13
2.4.2 Work Schedule 13
2.4.3 Work Schedule Maps 14

3. Administration of the Plan 15

3.1 Payment of the contribution 16
3.2 Calculating Development Cost 16
3.3 Cost Estimate Reports 17
3.4 Complying Development 18

3.5 Construction Certificates 18
3.6 Alternatives to Payment 18
3.6.1 Planning Agreements 19
3.7 Reassessment of contributions 19
3.8 Refund of contributions 20
3.9 Payment of contributions 20
3.9.1 Timing of Payments 20
3.9.2 Deferred or Periodic Payments 21
3.10 Adjusting contributions at time of payment 22
3.11 Goods and Services Tax 23
3.12 Exemptions 23
3.13 Review of the Plan 25
3.14 Accountability 25
3.15 Unspent Section 7.12 funds 26
3.16 Application of the Funds 26
3.17 Pooling of Contributions 26
3.18 Condition of Consent 26

Schedule of Figures

Figure 1 - Location of Works Map 30

Schedule of Tables

Table 1 - Section 7.12 Contribution Rates 13
Table 2 - Works Schedule Timescales 14
Table 3 - Cost Estimate Report Requirements 17
Table 4 - Contribution Exemptions 23

Schedule of Appendices

Appendix A - Works Schedule 27
Appendix B - Location of Works Maps 29
Appendix C - Cost Summary Report 31
Appendix D - Standard Condition 33

01

PLAN INTRODUCTION



1.1 Overview

Section 7.12 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act) provides Council the means to levy contributions towards the cost of public facilities and services to meet the increased demand created by development.

Contributions may be in the form of cash payments, transfer or dedication of land to Council, or the provision of a Material Public Benefit or Works in Kind.

A condition of development consent may be imposed by Council with a requirement that the applicant pay a levy based on a percentage of the proposed cost of carrying out the development. This is called a section 7.12 contribution after the relevant section of the Act. This Plan deals with section 7.12 contributions.

Unlike section 7.11 contributions, there does not have to be a nexus between the development being levied under section 7.12 and the need for the public amenity or service for which the levy is required.

The monies collected will assist Council towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public amenities or public services.

1.2 About this plan

1.2.1 Name of the plan

This Plan is the Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026.

1.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Contributions Plan is:

- To authorise the Council to impose a condition on certain development consents and complying development certificates requiring the payment of a contribution pursuant to section 7.12 of the Act.
- To require a certifying authority (the Council or an accredited private certifier) to impose, as a condition of issuing a complying development certificate, a requirement that the applicant pay to Council a levy determined in accordance with this Plan.
- To assist the Council to provide public facilities and amenities which are required to maintain and enhance amenity and service delivery within the area.
- To state the purposes for which the levies are required.
- To provide for the governance of the contributions and their application in accordance with the Act and Regulations.

1.2.3 Commencement of plan

This Contributions Plan takes effect on 1 uly 2026.

Rezoning applications (for the purposes of Planning Agreements), development applications and applications for complying development certificates determined on or after this date will be subject to the provisions of this Plan.

1.2.4 Area to which the plan applies

This Contributions Plan applies to all land within the Cowra Shire Local Government Area.

1.2.5 Types of development to which the plan applies

This Plan applies to all applications for development consent and complying development certificates on the land to which the Plan applies.

Note: "development" referred to in this clause has the same meaning as shown in section 1.5 the Act, which is repeated as follows:

(1) For the purposes of this Act, development is any of the following—

(a) the use of land,

(b) the subdivision of land,

(c) the erection of a building,

(d) the carrying out of a work,

(e) the demolition of a building or work,

(f) any other act, matter or thing that may be controlled by an environmental planning instrument.

(2) However, development does not include any act, matter or thing excluded by the regulations (either generally for the purposes of this Act or only for the purposes of specified provisions of this Act).

(3) For the purposes of this Act, the carrying out of development is the doing of the acts, matters or things referred to in subsection (1).

1.2.6 Relationship to other plans and policies

This Plan supersedes the Cowra Section 94A contributions Plan 2016.

Unspent contributions raised and paid under the authority of the previous Contributions Plan(s) will be continued to be directed towards the respective facilities and infrastructure described in the Work Schedule of that Plan. Where items from the previous Contributions Plan(s) have continued in the Cowra Council Section 7.12 Plan 2026, those funds have been transferred to that Plan.

1.3 Legislative context

1.3.1 What are development contributions?

Development contributions are contributions made by those undertaking development approved under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act). Contributions may be in the form of money, the dedication of land or some other material public benefit (or a combination of these):

- in the case of contributions made under sections 7.11 or 7.12 of the Act - toward the provision or improvement of amenities or services (or the recouping of the cost of provision or improvement of amenities or services); or
- in the case of contributions made under a planning agreement prepared in accordance with sections 7.4 to 7.10 of the Act - toward public purposes.

1.3.2 What is a Section 7.12 Contribution?

A Section 7.12 Contribution is named after the relevant section of the Act, which provides Council the means to levy contributions towards the cost of public facilities and services to meet the increased demand created by development.

Section 7.12 of the Act allows Council to:

- impose, as a condition of development consent, a requirement that the applicant pay a levy based on a percentage of the proposed cost of carrying out the development.

Section 7.12 of the Act does not allow Council to:

- impose, as a condition of the same development consent, a condition under section 7.12 as well as a condition under section 7.11.
- Impose, as a condition of development consent in relation to development on land within a special contributions area without the approval of the Minister.

Unlike section 7.11 contributions, there does not have to be a nexus (link) between the development being levied under section 7.12 and the need for the public amenity or service for which the levy is required.

The monies collected will assist Council towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public amenities or public services. The expenditure of the money is subject to any relevant provision of the contribution plan and the works schedule at Appendix A.

A condition under section 7.12 that is allowed by and determined in accordance with a contributions plan may not be disallowed or amended by the Court on appeal.

1.3.3 What does Section 7.12 of the Act provide?

Section 7.12 of the Act provides as follows:

7.12.Fixed development consent levies

(1) A consent authority may impose, as a condition of development consent, a requirement that the applicant pay a levy of the percentage, authorised by a contributions plan, of the proposed cost of carrying out the development.

(2) A consent authority cannot impose as a condition of the same development consent a condition under this section as well as a condition under section 7.11.

(2A) A consent authority cannot impose a condition under this section in relation to development on land within a special contributions area without the approval of:

a) the Minister, or

b) a development corporation designated by the Minister to give approvals under this subsection.

(3) Money required to be paid by a condition imposed under this section is to be applied towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public amenities or public services (or towards recouping the cost of their provision, extension or augmentation). The application of the money is subject to any relevant provisions of the contributions plan.

(4) A condition imposed under this section is not invalid by reason only that there is no connection between the development the subject of the development consent and the object of expenditure of any money required to be paid by the condition.

(5) The regulations may make provision for or with respect to levies under this section, including:

a) the means by which the proposed cost of carrying out development is to be estimated or determined, and

b) the maximum percentage of a levy.

1.3.4 Application of Legislation / Guideline

This Contributions Plan has been prepared in accordance with the following relevant legislation and with reference to the following relevant guideline documents:

- Part 7, Division 7.1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
- Part 9 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.

- NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Guide to Infrastructure Contributions dated May 2025.
- NSW Planning - Section 7.11 Contributions Practice Note.
- NSW Planning - Local Infrastructure Contributions System Practice Note.
- NSW Planning - Administering Contributions Practice Note.
- Relevant Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.

02

CONTRIBUTION FRAMEWORK

2.1 Scale of future development

As population growth drives demand for new housing, this Section 7.12 Contributions Plan must align with the population projections outlined in the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 to ensure infrastructure contributions are adequate and appropriately targeted.

Section 4.3 of the Cowra Housing Strategy includes detailed consideration of the population forecasts for the Cowra LGA. The forecasts are based on the latest data released by NSW Department of Planning in 2022 and 2024. This data is summarised (and compared) in the table below.

	Low Growth Scenario	High Growth Scenario
	2024 Projections	2022 Projections
Existing Population	12,759 [1]	12,759 [1]
2031 Population	13,715 [2]	13,030 [2]
2036 Population	14,034 [2]	13,145 [2]
2041 Population	14,265 [2]	13,243 [2]

Notes

[1] ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2021
[2] NSW Government Population Projections 2022 - Cowra LGA
[3] NSW Government Population Projections 2024 - Cowra LGA

The Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 has developed a housing framework for the Cowra LGA that is based around the NSW Department of Planning's 2024 projections, which are considered to representant a high growth scenario. Under this scenario, it is anticipated that the population in the Cowra LGA would increase by 1,275 persons over the next 10 year period to 2036.

The population growth is expected to be focused on Cowra Township, and surrounding large lot residential areas, with our Villages also provided important supporting locations for growth.

Council recognises that demographic change in the existing and new population is driving changes in the demand for public services and amenities, and accordingly this Plan seeks to respond to these future needs.

2.2 Contribution rates

The contribution rate is calculated as a percentage of the cost of development, as per Table 1. Certain exemptions apply to the Contributions. Further details can be found in Section 2.13 of this plan.

Table 1 - Section 7.12 Contribution Rates

Cost of Development	Contribution Levy Rate (%)
All development valued at $100,000 or less	0.0%
All development valued at $100,001 up to $200,000	0.5%
All development valued in excess of $200,000	1.0%

2.3 Calculation of the contribution

This contribution will be calculated based on the following formula:

Levy payable = %C x$C

Where: %C is the levy rate applicable

$C is the proposed cost of carrying out the development as certified.

2.4 Contribution expenditure

2.4.1 Public Services and Facilities

This Plan will be used to levy contributions towards to one or more of the following categories of public services and facilities:

- Urban, village and or rural roads and related infrastructure.
- Pedestrian and cycling Infrastructure.
- Stormwater Drainage.
- Open Space and Recreation.
- Civic and community facilities.

2.4.2 Work Schedule

This Plan aims to cater for development over a 10 year horizon to the year 2036.

The Work Schedules can be found in **Appendix A** and include a list of projects which satisfy one or more of the categories of public services and facilities described in Section 2.4.1. The Works Schedules is subject to period review and update by Council.

The works identified in **Appendix A** are also grouped according to the timescales shown in Table 2. The timescales provide guidance only and nominated work may be completed by Council outside of these priorities depending on actual growth and / or infrastructure priorities.

Table 2 - Works Schedule Timescales

	Period From	Period to
High	2025	2028
Medium	2029	2032
Low	2033	2036

2.4.3 Work Schedule Maps

Appendix B includes a series of maps which show the location of relevant public services and facilities.

03

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PLAN



3.1 Payment of the contribution

This Plan authorises Council to require the payment of a monetary contribution as a condition of development consent in accordance with the provisions of this Plan.

Contributions will be determined on the basis of the proposed cost of development.

3.2 Calculating Development Cost

Planning Circular PS 25-004, issued by NSW Government in October 2025, provides guidance on how estimated development costs are calculated for planning purposes. A summary of key information is included as follows:

- There is now a single definition for cost - Estimated Development Cost (EDC), which can be used for different planning purposes. In accordance with Section 6 of the EPA Regulation, EDC means 'the estimated cost of carrying out the development, including the design and erection of a building and associated infrastructure, the carrying out of a work, the demolition of a building or work, and fixed or mobile plant and equipment'. EDC does not include (among other things) GST.
- EDC does not apply to the estimation or determination of the 'proposed cost of carrying out development' for the purposes of Section 7.12(5) of the EPA Act relating to contributions. For calculating development costs related to contributions, the existing terms and methods outlined under Section 208 of the EPA Regulation continue to apply.
- In accordance with Clause 208 of the EPA Regulation, the cost of carrying out development include the costs of, and costs incidental to, the following:
    - If the development involves the erection of a building or the carrying out of engineering or construction work -
        - erecting the building or carrying out the work, and
        - demolition, excavation and site preparation, decontamination or remediation,
    - if the development involves a change of use of land—doing anything necessary to enable the use of the land to be changed,
    - if the development involves the subdivision of land—preparing, executing and registering—
        - the plan of subdivision, and
        - the related covenants, easements or other rights.

Clause 208(4) provides a list of the costs and expenses which must not be included in an estimate or determination of the proposed cost. The cost of GST is not excluded and must therefore be incorporated into the estimated cost of development for the purpose of calculating a contribution amount under this plan.

3.3 Cost Estimate Reports

Further to the advice provided in Section 3.2 of this plan, a Cost Estimate Report must accompany a development application or a complying development certficate application in order to enable the amount of the contribution to be accurately determined.

Table 3 below details the requirements for preparing a Cost Estimate Report based on different cost thresholds.

Table 3 - Cost Estimate Report Requirements

Cost Threshold	Requirements
< $100K	The Estimated Development Cost should be estimated by the applicant or a suitably qualified person[1], and the methodology used to do this be submitted with the application.
$100K - $3 Million	The Estimated Development Cost should be estimated by a suitably qualified person[2], and the methodology used to do this be submitted with the application.
> $3 Million	For all cost estimates for development cost exceeding $3 million, an Estimated Development Cost Report verifying the cost of development should be submitted with the application that is: • prepared by a qualified quantity surveyor who is a member of a relevant professional body[3]. • prepared using the AIQS practice standard for estimating development costs. • in the standard form of quantity surveyor report available on the NSW Planning Portal. • based on cost estimates current as of that date and should be dated no earlier than 30 days from when the application is submitted.

For development costed up to $3 million, an example cost estimate report has been included in **Appendix C**. Applicants can use alternate cost estimation methods as agreed to by Council.

1 A suitably qualified person is a builder who is licensed to undertake the proposed works, a registered architect, a qualified and accredited building designer, a quantity surveyor or a person who is licensed and has the relevant qualifications and proven experience in costing of development works at least to a similar scale and type as is proposed.

2 A suitably qualified person is a builder who is licensed to undertake the proposed works, a registered architect, a qualified and accredited building designer, a quantity surveyor or a person who is licensed and has the relevant qualifications and proven experience in costing of development works at least to a similar scale and type as is proposed

3 For example, the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (AIQS) or Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

Without limitation to the above, Council may review the valuation or works and may seek the services of an independent person to verify the costs. In these cases, all costs associated with obtaining such advice will be at the expense of the applicant and no further approvals will be issued until such time that the levy has been paid.

3.4 Complying Development

In accordance with Clause 156 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, a certifying authority must not issue a complying development certificate for a particular purpose unless it includes a condition requiring the payment of a monetary section 7.12 contribution, where such a payment is required by a council's contribution plan.

The amount of the contribution is to be determined in accordance with the formulas contained in this Plan. The conditions imposed must be consistent with Council's standard Section 7.12 consent conditions and be in accordance with this Plan. It is the responsibility of accredited certifiers to correctly calculate the contribution and apply the Section 7.12 contribution.

Complying Development Certificates must be assessed and issued by Council if the developer wishes Council to consider land dedication, material public benefits or works-in-kind.

3.5 Construction Certificates

In accordance with Clause 20 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021, a certifying authority must not issue a construction certificate for building work or subdivision works under development consent unless it has verified that each condition requiring the payment of monetary contributions has been satisfied.

In particular the certifier must ensure that the applicant provides a receipt(s) confirming that contributions have been fully paid and copies of such receipts must be included with copies of the certified plans provided to the Council in accordance with clause 20(b) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021. Failure to follow this procedure may render such a certificate invalid.

The only exception to this requirement is where works in kind, material public benefit, dedication of land or deferred arrangement has been agreed by the Council. In such cases the Council will issue a letter confirming that an alternative payment method has been agreed with the applicant.

3.6 Alternatives to Payment

The Act allows for a Council to accept the provision of a 'Material Public Benefit' (MPB) instead if a monetary contribution. Land can also be accepted in some circumstances. The term Works in Kind (WIK) is used for mechanism to deliver this land or MPB.

WIK agreements cannot be used for Section 7.12 contributions as there is no provision in the Act to satisfy a Section 7.12 contribution through the dedication of land or provision of a MPB. However, Council and developers may decide to enter into planning agreement before development consent is issued. Refer Section 3.5.1 for further details.

3.6.1 Planning Agreements

An applicant may offer to enter into a Planning Agreement with the Council in connection with a development application or a rezoning application that is made for the purposes of being able to subsequently make a development application. The applicant's provision under a Planning Agreement may be additional to, or instead of, making contributions under Section 7.12 of the Act.

Provision is made for Planning Agreements under Section 7.4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as amended.

Under a Planning Agreement, the applicant may offer to pay money, dedicate land, carry out works, or provide other material public benefits for public purposes.

The offer to enter into a Planning Agreement, together with the draft Agreement, will generally need to accompany the relevant development or rezoning application. The Council will publicly notify the draft Agreement and explanatory note relating to the draft Agreement along with the relevant application and will consider the Agreement as part of its assessment of the relevant application. If the Council agrees to enter into the Agreement, it may impose a condition of development consent requiring the Agreement to be entered into and performed.

3.7 Reassessment of contributions

Council may consider an application for the reassessment of the development monetary contribution payable. This may result in the contribution being reduced or waived or modified.

Where a condition of development consent has already been imposed requiring the payment of a contribution, the applicant will be required to lodge an application to review the consent in accordance with Sections 8.2 to 8.5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as amended, to reassess the rate of contribution charged.

The request shall be in writing and provide sufficient information to satisfy Council of the inappropriate nature of the contribution and the implications to Council of reducing or waiving the contribution in the particular circumstances.

The Act provides that Council cannot review a determination or decision after the period within which any appeal may be made to the Court has expired if no appeal was made, or after the Court has disposed of an appeal against the determination or decision.

3.8 Refund of contributions

As a general rule, Council will not support requests for the refund of contributions already paid to Council in accordance with the conditions of a development consent. This is because it is not possible to refund contributions (that have already been paid) from the relevant contribution fund(s) of Council.

Where a partial or full refund of contribution is requested, applicants will instead need to apply in writing to Cowra Council for a donation in accordance with the Donation Policy, a copy which can be accessed from Council upon request.

Council will take the following matters into account when assessing the refund request:

- The criteria in the Council's Donation Policy.
- Whether or not the development has been commenced.
- Whether or not it is proposed to surrender the consent that applied the contribution.

Applications must be received within 12 months following payment of the levy. The decision to provide part or full refunds will always be the subject of a report to an appropriate monthly committee meeting of Council.

3.9 Payment of contributions

3.9.1 Timing of Payments

The time of payment of contributions shall be as follows:

- Development applications involving subdivision only – prior to the release of the Subdivision Certificate.
- Development applications involving building work only – prior to the release of the Construction Certificate.
- Development involving both subdivision and building work – prior to the release of the Construction Certificate, or the release of the Subdivision Certificate, whichever occurs first.
- Development applications where no Construction Certificate is required – prior to the issue of an Occupation Certificate.

Where an application is dealt with by an Accredited Certifier other than Council, the development consent shall not operate unless and until the amount required by the consent under this Contributions Plan is paid to Council.

The amount of any monetary contribution to be paid will be the contribution payable at the time of consent, and depending upon the time of payment will be subject to reasonable adjustment

due to movements in the Consumer Price Index and/or changes to the rates indicated within this Plan (refer to Section 3.10).

3.9.2 Deferred or Periodic Payments

Council may consider the deferred payment of contributions or payments made by periodic instalments. This will be a merit based decision, considered on a case by case basis and subject to approval by Council.

A request for deferral or periodic payment must be made in writing to Council, stating the proposed length of deferral, and may only be accepted where:

- There are valid reasons for the deferral or periodic payment;
- The deferral will not prejudice the efficiency and operation or cash flows of the Plan;
- The granting of the request for deferred payment will not jeopardise the timely provision of works or land identified within the Plan;
- A suitable bank guarantee (or equivalent security) can be, and is, provided in the event that the request is accepted by Council;
- Where the applicant intends to make a contribution by way of a planning agreement, works-in-kind or land dedication in lieu of a cash contribution and Council and the applicant have a legally binding agreement for the provision of the works or land dedication, and
- The periodic or deferred contributions are paid, including interest, at no cost to Council.

The conditions under which Council may accept deferred payment by way of a bank guarantee are that:

- The bank guarantee is by an Australian Bank.
- Indexing will be calculated from the date the contribution was due until the date of payment.
- The bank guarantee is for a maximum period of twelve months.
- The amount of the bank guarantee is the sum of the total contribution or the amount of the outstanding contribution at the time of deferring payment, plus an amount equal to thirteen months interest.
- The bank unconditionally pays the guaranteed sum to Council if Council so demands in writing, no earlier than 12 months from the provision of the guarantee or completion of the work, whichever occurs first.
- The bank must pay the guaranteed sum without reference to the applicant or landowner or other person who provided the guarantee, and without regard to any dispute, controversy, issue or other matter relating to the development consent or the carrying out of development in accordance with the development consent.



- The bank's obligations are discharged when payment to the Council is made in accordance with the approved bank guarantee or when Council notifies the bank in writing that the guarantee is no longer required, and
- Council's registration and release of bank guarantee fee is paid.

Any outstanding component of the contribution shall be indexed quarterly in accordance with the Consumer Price Index movements. Indexing will be calculated from the date the contribution was due until the date of payment.

The conditions under which Council may accept periodic payment for a staged development are:

- That the instalments are paid before the work commences on each relevant stage of the development, and
- The amount to be paid at each stage is to be calculated on a pro-rata basis in proportion to the demand for the relevant facility being levied by the overall development, including CPI if required.

3.10 Adjusting contributions at time of payment

This Plan authorises Council to undertake these indexed based changes without the necessity of preparing a new or amending contributions plan.

This is to ensure that that the value of contributions is not eroded over time by movements in the Consumer Price Index, land value increases, the capital costs of construction of facilities and administration of the Plan, or through changes in the costs of studies to support the Plan.

Contributions required as a condition of development consent will be adjusted at the time of payment using the following formula.

$$CP = CDC \times \frac{\text{Current Index}}{\text{Base Index}}$$

Where:

CP	=	is the amount of the contribution calculated at the time of payment.
CDC	=	is the amount of the original contribution as set out in the development consent.
Current Index	=	is the Consumer Price Index: All Groups Index for Sydney (as currently available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics at the time of payment).
Base Index	=	is the Consumer Price index: All Groups Index for Sydney which applied at the time of calculation as shown on the development consent.

3.11 Goods and Services Tax

Monetary Section 7.12 development contributions are exempt from the Federal Government Goods and Services Tax (GST).

3.12 Exemptions

Under section 7.17 of the Act a contribution under section 7.12 cannot be imposed:

- on development consents to carry out development for the purposes of housing development by a social housing provider for seniors or people with a disability within the meanings of State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021.
- if a development contribution under sectiion 7.11 of the Act has been required in respect of the subdivision of land (initial subdivision), unless that other development will, or is likely to, increase the demand for public amenities or services beyond the increase in demand attributable to the initial subdivision.

Council also does not impose a Section 7.12 levy on the categories of development described in Table 4, which also includes a rationale for excluding these types of development from contribution payments under this plan.

Table 4 - Contribution Exemptions

Type of Development	Rationale
Development for the purpose of a single dwelling on a single allotment where a contribution under Section 7.11 of the Act was paid at subdivision stage.	The proposed single dwelling is consistent with the anticipated residential yield created by the original subdivision. The new single dwelling does not generate additional demand for local infrastructure.
The fit out or refurbishment of an existing development, where there is no enlargement or intensification of the current land use.	The proposed development does not result in an increase in gross floor area, a change of land use, additional population or employment capacity or intensification of the existing use. As such, the development does not generate additional demand for local infrastructure.

Development for the purposes of disabled access.	The development does not generate additional demand for local infrastructure. Instead, it enhances the inclusitivity and functionality of existing development in line with broader planning and social equity objectives.
An application on or behalf of Council (or another public authority) for community infrastructure, such as but not limited to libraries, community facilities, recreation areas, recreation facilities and car parks.	Development for the purpose of community infrastructure directly contributes to the public amenity and wellbeing of the local population. This kind of development is often publicly funded or delivered by not-for-profit entities. Imposing a levy on such development may discourage investment in essential public infrastructure.
An application by a NSW Government Department to enable development defined as an 'Infrastructure Facility' under State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.	An exemption is appropriate for NSW Government Departments as this supports the timely and cost-effective delivery of public infrastructure.
An application for development that involves rebuilding or repair after natural disasters such as flooding or bushfires, or another event outside of the control of the landowner (such as a building fire).	Rebuilding or repair works following a disaster do not increase the intensity of land use or population, and are intended to restore existing development, not create new demand. These developments are often undertaken by landowners under financial hardship or emergency conditions.
An application for demolition (where there is no replacement building or development)	An exemption is appropriate for demolition-only development where no replacement building or use is proposed, as contributions are fairly applied only where development generates additional infrastructure demand.
Development for the sole purpose of the adaptive reuse of an item of environmental heritage listed in Schedule 5 of Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.	Adaptive use of heritage items supports the conservation of culturally significant buildings and places. Imposing a levy on such developments may discourage heritage conservation efforts.

Development for the purpose of reducing the consumption of mains-supplied potable water, or reducing the energy consumption of a building.	Development that reduces water or energy consumption does not increase the intensity of land use, and is typically undertaken to improve environmental performance and reduce resource demand. It may also result in reduced demand on public infrastructure.
Where Council considers an exemption is warranted, and the decision is made by formal resolution of council at an Ordinary Council meeting.	Outside of the exemptions specifically identified in this plan, Council may identify specific circumstances where applying a levy would be unreasonable or disproportionate to the nature or impact of the development, or would be financially burdensome to community-servicing or public-interest developments. Allowing exemptions by formal Council resolution ensures transparency and accountability in decision making.

To apply for an exemption to the payment of a Section 7.12 Levy, an application must be submitted to Council at development assessment stage, giving reasons and providing any necessary evidence for the exemption.

3.13 Review of the Plan

This Plan may be reviewed in full, or in respect of particular parts, when considered appropriate having regard to the rate and type of development, cost of facility provision, and community response to service and facility provision.

A complete review of this Plan is anticipated every five (5) years from the date of commencement of the Plan.

3.14 Accountability

Financial management and accountability are important components of Section 7.12, and Council is obliged to maintain an accurate and up to date register of all Section 7.12 contributions. Council is required to comply with a range of financial accountability and public access to information requirements in relation to section 7.12. These are addressed in Division 4 of Part 9 of the Regulation and include:

- maintenance of, and public access to, a contributions register;

- maintenance of, and public access to, accounting records for contributions received and spent;
- annual financial reporting of contributions; and
- public access to contributions plans and supporting documents.

Monetary contributions received under the authority of this Plan must be recorded and kept through a separate account specifically established for this Plan. The records must indicate the contributions received, contributions expended and must include the interest, if any, earned on invested funds for each account.

These records are updated on a monthly basis.

Separate accounting records are maintained for all Council's Section 7.11 and Section 7.12 Contribution Plans. Information on Section 7.11 accounts and funds relating to this Plan will be provided in a condensed format within Cowra Shire Council's Annual Report/s in accordance with requirements of the Regulation

Information is also available in Council's contribution register relating to this Plan, which can be inspected at Council during normal business hours.

3.15 Unspent Section 7.12 funds

This Plan also authorises unspent monies collected through the previous Section 7.12 Plan to be expended on projects identified in the Works Schedule to **Appendix A** of this Plan.

3.16 Application of the Funds

Money paid to the Council under a condition authorised by this plan is to be applied by the Council towards meeting the cost of the public amenities or services that will be or have been provided within the area as listed in the Works Schedule to **Appendix A**.

3.17 Pooling of Contributions

This Plan expressly authorises monetary Section 7.12 Contributions paid for different purposes to be pooled and applied (progressively or otherwise) for those purposes. The priorities for the expenditure of the contributions are shown in the Works Schedules.

3.18 Condition of Consent

Unless otherwise determined by the Council, the standard condition described in **Appendix D** will be used on Development Application determinations and Complying Development Certificates for monetary contributions levied under this plan.

A

APPENDIX

Works Schedule



Works Schedule

Map Ref	Item	Total Cost	Priority
1	Civic Centre Solar Install & Battery Storage	$21,187	High
2	Library / Art Gallery Solar Install & Battery Storage	$20,585	High
3	Materials Recycling Facility Solar & Battery Storage	$73,110	High
4	Cowra Aquatic Centre Upgrade	$319,996	HIgh
5	Civic Centre Refurbishment (Recoupment)	$108,280	Medium
6	Cowra Street Constructions	$105,333	Medium
7	Rural Road Constructions (Gravel)	$156,998	Medium
8	Rural Road Constructions (Sealed)	$121,937	Medium
9	Village Street Constructions	$52,406	Medium
10	Adventure Playground Enhancements	$39,604	Medium
11	Playground Asset Renewals	$92,789	Medium
12	Cowra Peace Precinct Enhancements	$113,702	Medium
13	Cowra Aerodrome Improvements	$125,858	Low
14	Mulyan Oval Amenities Upgrade (Loan No. 242b)	$32,391	Low
15	Village Cemeteries Expansions	$110,940	Low
	Total Capital Cost of Works Schedule	$1,495,115	

B

APPENDIX

Location of Works Maps

6 Various Locations - Cowra Street and Lane Constructions
7 Various Locations - Rural Road Constructions
8 Various Locations - Rural Road Constructions
9 Various Locations - Village Street Contructions
11 Various Locations - Playground Asset Renewals



Figure 1 - Location of Works Map

North

C
APPENDIX
Cost Summary Report



Sample Cost Summary Report
Development between $150K and $3M

Date _____

DA / CC / CDC No. _____

APPLICANT NAME _____

APPLICANT ADDRESS _____

PROPERTY ADDRESS _____

Analysis of Development Costs

Demolition and Alterations	$	Hydraulic services	$
Structure	$	Mechanical services	$
External walls, windows and doors	$	Fire services	$
Internal walls, screens and doors	$	Lift services	$
Wall finishes	$	External works	$
Floor finishes	$	External services	$
Ceiling finishes	$	Other related work	$
Fittings and equipment	$	Sub-total	$

Sub-total above carried forward	$
Preliminaries and margin	$
Consultant fees (PM services excluded)	$
Other related development costs	$
Goods and Services Tax (GST)	$
Total Development Cost	$

I certify that I have:

- Inspected the plans the subject of the application for development consent or construction certificate.
- Calculated the development costs in accordance with the definition of development costs in clause 208(2) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 2021 at current prices.
- Included GST in the calculation of development cost

SIGNED _____

NAME _____

POSITION _____

QUALIFICATION _____

D

APPENDIX

Standard Condition

Standard Condition

Pursuant to Section 7.12 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, the monetary contribution set out in the following table is to be paid to Council prior to the issue of a Subdivision Certificate or Construction Certificate. The contribution is current as at the date of this consent and is levied in accordance with the Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026, adopted on 1st July 2026, which may be viewed during office hours at Council's Customer Service Centre, 116 Kendal Street Cowra, or on Council's website www.cowracouncil.com.au.

The contribution payable will be calculated in accordance with the contributions plan current at the time of payment, and will be adjusted at the time of payment in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (All Groups Index for Sydney) published by the Australian Bureau of Statistic (ABS). Contribution amounts will be adjusted by Council each financial year.

Contribution Type	Proposed Cost of Development [1]	Levy %	Total Contribution	Contribution Rate Valid Until
S7.12				

Notes

[1] As shown on the Development Application / Construction Certificate Application / Complying Development Certificate Application

7.4 Development Application No. 10.2026.37.1, Lot 4 DP 1135952, 2 Amie Street Cowra, two dwellings and 2 lot subdivision, lodged by N Aghili-Josheghani. The property owner is R Dagher.

File Number: D26/780

Author: Larissa Hackett, Director - Environmental Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That Council notes that the reason for the decision is that the proposal largely complies with Section 4.15 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The variations to E.1.5, E.1.9, and E.1.11 of Part E of Council's Development Control Plan 2021 are sufficiently justified. The application was publicly notified with one submission received; and**

2. **That Council approves variations to E.1.5, E.1.9, and E.1.11 of Part E of Council's Development Control Plan 2021 for this development to allow a retaining wall on the boundary, Dwelling one to have a front setback to Amie Street of 4.599m, a side boundary setback to a secondary road (Binni Lane) of 2.303m, Dwelling Two will have a front setback to Binni Lane of 3.7m, and a rear setback of 1.910m; and**

3. **That Development Application No. 10.2026.37.1, for the construction of two dwellings and a 2-lot subdivision on Lot 4 DP 1135952, 2 Amie Street Cowra be approved subject to the following conditions:**

GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. **Development is to be in accordance with approved plans.**

   The development is to be implemented in accordance with the plans and supporting documents stamped and approved and set out in the following table except where modified by any conditions of this consent.

Plan No./ Supporting Document	Prepared by/Reference Details	Cowra Shire Council Reference
Site Survey Drawing A1001	Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026	Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)
Proposed Site Plan Drawing A1002	Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026	Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)

Ground Floor (Dwelling 1) Drawing A2001	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Ground Floor (Dwelling 2) Drawing A2002	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Elevations (Dwelling 1 – North West and North East) Drawing A3001	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Elevations (Dwelling 1 – South East and South West) Drawing A3002	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Elevations (Dwelling 2 – North West and North East) Drawing A3003	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Elevations (Dwelling 2 – South East and South West) Drawing A3004	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Window / Door Schedule Drawing A5001	**Architectural Design & Creations 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
Stormwater Drawing A0	**Architectural Design & Creations 27/5/2026**	**Received 27/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (C)**
Landscape Drawing A0	**Architectural Design & Creations 27/5/2026**	**Received 27/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (C)**

Statement of Environmental Effects Rev G 28th May 2026	**Matt Holt Architect 28/5/2026**	**Received 28/05/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1 (D)**
BASIX Certificate No. 1825291S_02 (Or as revised)	**Matthew Holt Issued: 5 March 2026**	**Received 7/04/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1**
BASIX Certificate No. 1825292S_02 (Or as revised)	**Matthew Holt Issued: 5 March 2026**	**Received 7/04/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1**
Draft Plan of Subdivision Reference: 072.26	**Geoffrey Allan Golledge 05/03/2026**	**Received 7/04/2026 Stamped No. 10.2026.37.1**

In the event of any inconsistency between conditions of this development consent and the plans/supporting documents referred to above, the conditions of this development consent prevail.

2. **The applicant shall comply with all relevant prescribed conditions of development consent under Part 4, Division 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (see attached Advisory Note).**

3. **The development is to be undertaken in the following stages in accordance with the approved Statement of Environmental Effects:**

   Stage 1 – The construction of two new dwellings and associated infrastructure including access crossings, driveways, landscaping and all service connections.

   Stage 2 – Two lot Torrens Title subdivision.

4. **Pursuant to Section 4.17(4) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, the outcome that this development must achieve is the establishment of a single dwelling on each allotment. This is to be achieved by ensuring that all stages of the development are completed in accordance with condition 3.**

5. **Any cutting and filling on the site shall be either battered at a maximum slope of one vertical to two horizontal (1V:2H) and revegetated or suitably retained by a retaining structure, designed and constructed to appropriate engineering standards. A retaining wall that does not comply with State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt & Complying Development Codes) 2008 will require the prior consent of Council. The erection of retaining walls may require the approval and certification of a suitably qualified structural engineer. All works are to be carried out within the boundaries of the property and without affecting**

the structural integrity of boundary fencing or neighbouring structures.

6. Where the proposed building works necessitate the cutting-in of new stormwater outlets into the existing street kerb, the Applicant and plumbing/drainage contractor shall ensure that the following procedures are carried out:

(i) A kerb adaptor suitable for the particular kerb profile and capable of withstanding vehicle loadings is to be utilised;

(ii) The opening in the kerb is created by either a saw cut or bored hole only. Breaking out the kerb by impact methods is not permitted;

(iii) The kerb adaptor is to be kept flush with the top and outside face of the kerb; and

(iv) The fixing of the kerb adapter and filling in of side gaps is to be undertaken by the use of an epoxy resin. Mortar or concrete is not to be used.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLIED WITH PRIOR TO THE ISSUE OF A CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATE

7. Prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate, a separate application is to be made to Council, with the appropriate fee being paid, for the provision of suitably sized metered water services to the development.

8. Pursuant to Section 7.12 (formerly Section 94A) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, the monetary contribution set out in the following table is to be paid to Council prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate. The contribution is current as at the date of this consent and is levied in accordance with the Cowra Section 94A Contributions Plan 2016 adopted on 26 April 2016. The contribution payable will be calculated in accordance with the contributions plan current at the time of payment and will be adjusted at the time of payment in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (All Groups Index for Sydney) published by the Australian Bureau of Statistic (ABS). Contribution amounts will be adjusted by Council each financial year.

Contribution Type	Proposed Cost of Development[1]	Levy Percentage	Total Contribution	Contribution Rate Remains Current Until
Section 94A Contribution[2]	$800,000.00	1%	$8,000.00	30 June 2027

Notes

[1] As shown on the Development Application/Construction Certificate Application/Complying Development Certificate Application

[2] Council's Section 94A Contributions Plan 2016 may be viewed during office hours at Council's Customer Service Centre, 116 Kendal Street Cowra, or on Council's website www.cowracouncil.com.au

9. Prior to the issue of the Construction Certificate, the Applicant must obtain consent from Council pursuant to Section 138 of the Roads Act 1993 for the construction of a driveway crossing to the development site from Amie Street &

Binni Lane, in accordance with Cowra Shire Council's Engineering Standards.

10. In order to formalise the required inter-allotment drainage over adjoining properties, documentary evidence of the lodgement with NSW Land Registry Services of a Section 88B instrument is to be submitted to Council prior to the issue of the Construction Certificate. Prior to the issue of the Occupation Certificate, a copy of the registered Certificate of Title is to be submitted to Council verifying the creation of the drainage easement.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLIED WITH PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS

11. The Applicant is to obtain a Construction Certificate from either Council or an Accredited Certifier, certifying that the proposed works are in accordance with the Building Code of Australia and applicable Council Engineering Standards prior to any building and or subdivision works commencing. No building, engineering or excavation work is to be carried out in relation to this development until the necessary construction certificates have been obtained. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the development complies with the Building Code of Australia and applicable engineering standards in the case of building work and the applicable Council Engineering Standards in the case of subdivision works. This may entail alterations to the proposal so that it complies with these standards.

12. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the development complies with the Building Code of Australia and applicable engineering standards in the case of building work.

13. The Applicant is to submit to Cowra Shire Council, at least two days prior to the commencement of any works, a 'Notice of Commencement of Building or Subdivision Works' and 'Appointment of Principal Certifier'.

14. Prior to the commencement of work on the site, all erosion and sediment control measures shall be implemented and maintained prior to, during and after the construction phase of the development. The erosion and sediment control measures are to comply with Part B of Cowra Shire Council Development Control Plan 2021 at all times.

15. Prior to the construction of the footings a 'peg-out' survey plan is to be submitted to the Principal Certifier which establishes the position of the property boundary and demonstrates that the development will be constructed entirely within the boundaries of the property.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLIED WITH DURING CONSTRUCTION

16. While building work is being carried out, any such work must not continue after each critical stage inspection unless the principal certifier is satisfied the work may proceed in accordance with this consent and the relevant construction certificate.

17. Any damage caused to footpaths, roadways, utility installations and the like by reason of construction operations shall be made good and repaired to a standard equivalent to that existing prior to commencement of construction. The full cost

of restoration/repairs of property or services damaged during the works shall be met by the Applicant.

18. **All storage of goods and building materials and the carrying out of building operations related to the development proposal shall be carried out within the confines of the property. All vehicles must be parked legally and no vehicles are permitted to be parked over the public footpath. The unloading of building materials over any part of a public road by means of a lift, hoist or tackle projecting over the footway will require separate approval under Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1993.**

19. **Building activities and excavation work involving the use of electric or pneumatic tools or other noisy operations shall be carried out only between 7.00 am and 6.00 pm on weekdays and 8.00 am and 1.00 pm on Saturdays. No work on Sundays or Public Holidays is permitted.**

20. **All building rubbish and debris, including that which can be windblown, shall be contained on site in a suitable container for disposal at an approved Waste Landfill Depot. The container shall be erected on the building site prior to work commencing and shall be maintained for the term of the construction to the completion of the project. No building rubbish or debris shall be placed or permitted to be placed on any adjoining public reserve, footway or road. The waste container shall be regularly cleaned to ensure proper containment of the building wastes generated on the construction site.**

21. **All roofed and paved areas are to be properly drained in accordance with the Plumbing Code of Australia and discharged to Council's stormwater management system on Amie Street.**

22. **As soon as is practical, and within a maximum of 7 days following the placement of any roofing material, all guttering and downpipes must be installed and connected to Council's drainage system. If no Council drainage system is available, the guttering and downpipes must be discharged away from the building site onto a stable vegetated area in a manner that does not discharge concentrated storm water flow and cause nuisance or erosion to adjoining properties.**

23. **All plumbing work shall be carried out by a licensed plumber and drainer and to the requirements of the Plumbing Code of Australia. The licensed plumber or drainer must submit a Notice of Works form to Council prior to the commencement of any plumbing and drainage works and a Certificate of Compliance at the completion of the works. The plumbing and drainage works must be inspected by Council at the time specified below:**

    (a) Internal Drainage: When all internal drainage work is installed and prior to concealment. Pipes should be under water test.

    (b) External Drainage: When all external drainage work is installed and prior to concealment. Pipes should be under water test.

    (c) Water Supply: Hot and cold water supply pipework, when the pipework is installed and prior to concealment. Pipes should be under pressure test.

(d) Stormwater: When the stormwater and roof water drainage system has been completed.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLIED WITH PRIOR TO OCCUPATION OR COMMENCEMENT OF USE

24. The Applicant must not commence occupation or use of the dwellings until a Whole or Partial Occupation Certificate has been issued from the Principal Certifier appointed for the subject development.

25. Prior to issue of any Occupation Certificate, the Applicant shall construct the access crossings to the development site from Amie Street and Binni Lane in accordance with consent from the road's authority pursuant to Section 138 of the Roads Act 1993 for the carrying out of works in a road reserve. The driveway is to be constructed in accordance with the Section 138 Permit. All costs associated with the construction of the access driveway(s) shall be borne by the Applicant.

26. Prior to the issue of a Whole Occupation Certificate, all landscape works shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans including the installation of fencing dividing private open space areas.

27. The Applicant is required to obtain a Certificate of Compliance pursuant to Section 64 of the Local Government Act 1993 certifying that all works, fees and charges required in connection with the provision of water and sewer supply to the development have been undertaken and complied with in full. The certificate shall include all relevant works verified by appropriate inspections, fees and charges that are currently being applied at the time of the issue of any Occupation Certificate.

Water reticulation mains and metered services and sewer reticulation mains must be physically provided to the development in accordance with Cowra Infrastructure and Operations Engineering Standards. Council will not issue any Occupation Certificate until a Compliance Certificate has been issued, verifying that all works have been satisfactorily completed. All monetary contributions in relation to the augmentation of reticulated water and sewer supply must be paid in full to Cowra Shire Council before any Occupation Certificate will be issued. Necessary inspections must be arranged at least 48 hours in advance. Contact Cowra Infrastructure and Operations on (02) 6340 2070.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLIED WITH PRIOR TO THE ISSUE OF A SUBDIVISION CERTIFICATE

28. The Applicant is to lodge with Cowra Shire Council a Subdivision Certificate Application together with the original plan. All necessary information to support the certificate release and the necessary fee is required to be included with the Subdivision Certificate Application.

29. Prior to the issue of a Subdivision Certificate, the applicant must provide to Council a Notification of Arrangement from Essential Energy confirming that satisfactory arrangements have been made for the provision of power with respect to all lots in the subdivision.

30. Prior to the issue of the Subdivision Certificate, the applicant is to provide evidence to Council that arrangements have been made for:

(a) The installation of fibre-ready facilities (or equivalent) to all individual lots and/or premises in a real estate development project so as to enable fibre to be readily connected to any premises that is being or may be constructed on those lots. Demonstrate that the carrier has confirmed in writing that they are satisfied that the fibre ready facilities are fit for purpose, and

(b) The provision of fixed-line telecommunications infrastructure in the fibre-ready facilities to all individual lots and/or premises in a real estate development project demonstrated through an agreement with a carrier.

31. Prior to issue of the Subdivision Certificate, the Applicant shall include on the final plan of subdivision all necessary easements required for water, sewer, and stormwater.

ADVICE

- **If, during work, an Aboriginal object is uncovered then WORK IS TO CEASE IMMEDIATELY and the Office of Environment & Heritage is to be contacted urgently on (02) 6883 5300. Under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 it is an offence to harm an Aboriginal object or place without an 'Aboriginal heritage impact permit' (AHIP). Before making an application for an AHIP, the applicant must undertake Aboriginal community consultation in accordance with clause 80C of the NPW Regulation.**

- **If excavating, it is recommended you go to Before You Dig Australia at www.byda.com.au and lodge a free enquiry that helps keep people safe and protect underground infrastructure.**

INTRODUCTION

Development Application No. 10.2026.37.1 proposes the construction of two dwellings and a 2-lot subdivision on Lot 4 DP 1135952, 2 Amie Street Cowra. The application was lodged by N Aghili-Josheghani on 7 April 2026. The property owner is R Dagher.

The application is being reported to Council because of variations proposed to the Cowra Development Control Plan and the receipt of one objection.

A copy of the site and elevation plans of the proposed two dwellings and 2 lot subdivision are included in Attachment '1' to this report and a copy of the Statement of Environmental Effects is included in Attachment '2'.

Description of Site

Lot 4 DP 1135952, 2 Amie Street Cowra is a rectangular allotment of approximately 792.6m². The lot is located in the R1 General Residential zone under Cowra Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012. The site is currently vacant.

A location map is included in Attachment '3' and an aerial photograph is included in Attachment '4' to this report.

Description of Proposal

The applicant proposes to construct two dwellings with Torrens title subdivision into two lots. Lot One 412.7m2 and Lot Two 379.9m2. Both dwellings would be single storey, with 4 bedrooms and double car garages. They would have brick walls and Colorbond steel roofs.

Environmental Impact Assessment

In determining a development application, a consent authority is to take into consideration such of the matters as are of relevance to the development in accordance with Section 4.15(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The following section provides an evaluation of the relevant Section 4.15 Matters for consideration for DA 10.2026.37.1:

Section 4.15(I) Evaluation Matters

S 4.15(1)(a)(i) provisions of any environmental planning instrument(s)

Local Environmental Plan (LEP)

The applicable LEP is the Cowra LEP 2012 (CLEP) and the relevant provisions of the LEP are discussed as follows.

1.2 Aims of Plan

The development is consistent with the aims of the LEP.

1.4 Definitions

The proposed development is defined as dwelling houses and subdivision under the LEP.

1.6 Consent authority

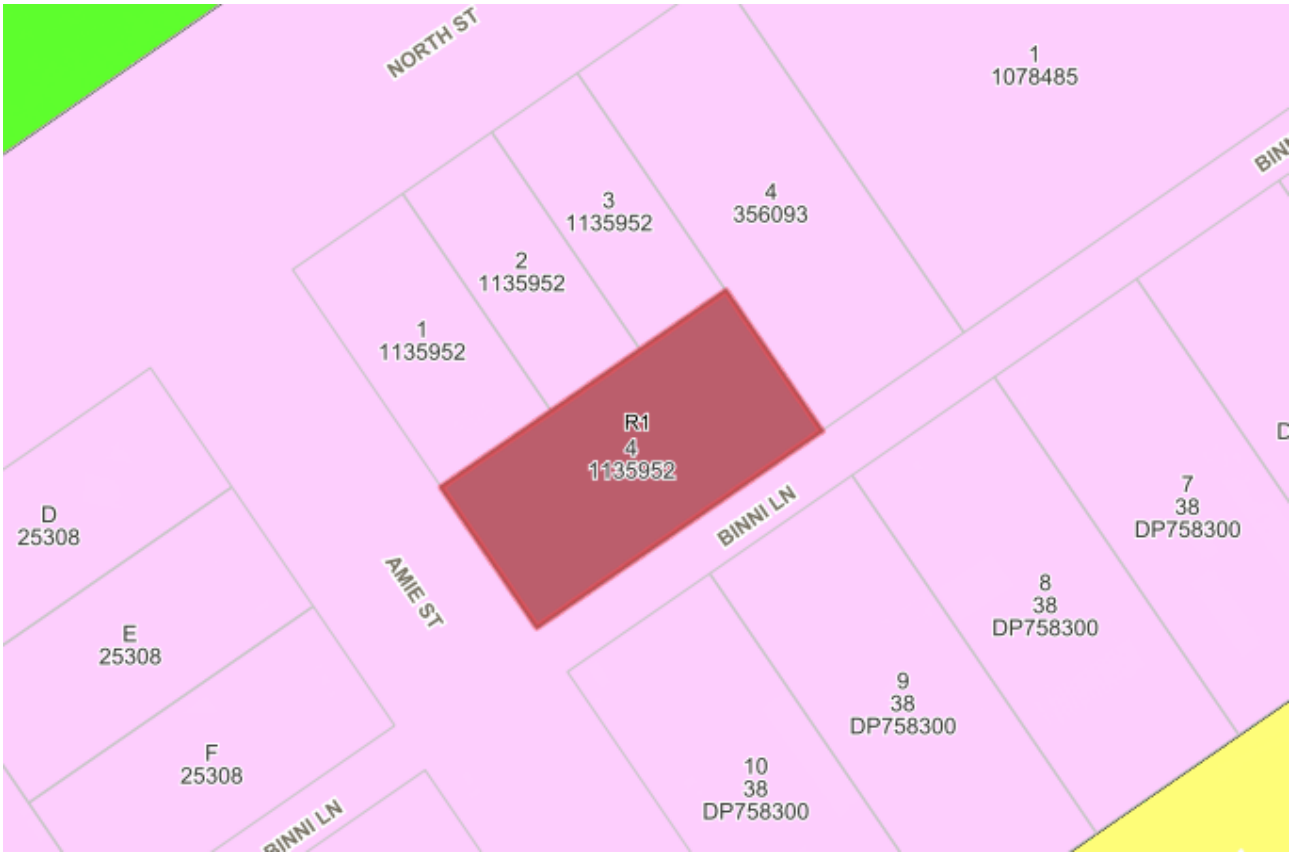
The consent authority for the purposes of this Plan is (subject to the Act) the Council.

1.9A Suspension of covenants, agreements and instruments

Any agreement, covenant or other similar instrument that restricts the carrying out of that development does not apply to the extent necessary to serve that purpose. There are no covenants imposed by Council or that Council require to be imposed affecting the subject lot.

2.1 Land use zones

The site is zoned R1 General Residential, and the proposed development is permitted in the zone with consent.



2.3 Zone objectives

Objective	Comment
• To provide for the housing needs of the community.	Consistent
• To provide for a variety of housing types and densities.	Consistent
• To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day-to-day needs of residents.	Not inconsistent
• To provide attractive, affordable, well located and market-responsive residential land.	Not inconsistent
• To ensure that any non-residential land uses permitted within the zone are compatible with the amenity of the area.	Not applicable
• To ensure that housing densities are broadly concentrated in locations accessible to public transport, employment, services and facilities.	Consistent
• To maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.	Not inconsistent

2 Permitted without consent

Environmental protection works; Home occupations.

3 Permitted with consent

Attached dwellings; Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Centre-based child care facilities; Community facilities; ***Dwelling houses***; Food and drink premises; Group homes; Home industries; Hostels; Kiosks; Multi dwelling housing;

Neighbourhood shops; Oyster aquaculture; Places of public worship; Pond-based aquaculture; Residential flat buildings; Respite day care centres; Roads; Semi-detached dwellings; Seniors housing; Shop top housing; Tank-based aquaculture; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 4

4 Prohibited

Agriculture; Air transport facilities; Airstrips; Amusement centres; Animal boarding or training establishments; Biosolids treatment facilities; Boat building and repair facilities; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Car parks; Charter and tourism boating facilities; Commercial premises; Correctional centres; Crematoria; Depots; Extractive industries; Farm buildings; Farm stay accommodation; Forestry; Freight transport facilities; Heavy industrial storage establishments; Helipads; Highway service centres; Industrial retail outlets; Industrial training facilities; Industries; Jetties; Local distribution premises; Marinas; Mooring pens; Moorings; Mortuaries; Open cut mining; Public administration buildings; Recreation facilities (major); Research stations; Restricted premises; Rural industries; Rural workers' dwellings; Service stations; Sewage treatment plants; Sex services premises; Signage; Storage premises; Transport depots; Truck depots; Vehicle body repair workshops; Vehicle repair stations; Warehouse or distribution centres; Waste or resource management facilities; Water treatment facilities; Wharf or boating facilities; Wholesale supplies

Comment:

The proposed the development is permitted with consent.

2.6 Subdivision – consent requirements

The proposed development requires consent and would not result in a secondary dwelling being located of a separate lot.

2.8 Temporary Use of land

The proposal does not involve the temporary use of the land.

4.1C Exceptions to minimum subdivision lot sizes for certain residential development

The proposed subdivision is permissible under Clause 4.1C as the proposed subdivision includes a dwelling on each lot and each lot would be above 300m² which is the minimum lot size under Clause 4.1C.

5.10 Heritage conservation

There are no heritage items identified on either the State Heritage Register or in the LEP located on the site, and the site is not located in a Heritage Conservation Area.

5.11 Bushfire

Bush fire hazard reduction work authorised by the Rural Fires Act 1997 may be carried out without development consent.

5.21 Flood planning

The land is not in the flood planning area.

Part 6 Urban release areas

This Part applies to land that is identified as Urban Release Area on the Urban Release Area Map. The land is not mapped as being affected; accordingly, this clause is not applicable.

7.1 Earthworks

Minimal earthworks are required. It is considered that there will be no adverse impact or environmental risk from the earthworks required.

7.3 Terrestrial biodiversity

This clause applies to land that is identified as biodiversity land on the Terrestrial Biodiversity Map. The land is not mapped as being affected; accordingly, this clause is not applicable.

7.4 Riparian land and watercourses

This clause applies to land that is identified as a watercourse on the Watercourses Map or is within 40 metres of a mapped watercourse. The land is not mapped as being affected; accordingly, this clause is not applicable.

7.5 Wetlands

This clause applies to land identifies on the wetlands map. The land is not mapped as being affected; accordingly, this clause is not applicable.

7.6 Groundwater vulnerability

This clause applies to land that is identified as groundwater vulnerable on the Groundwater Vulnerability Map. The land is not mapped as being affected; accordingly, this clause is not applicable.

7.7 Airspace operations

This clause applies to developments that penetrate the Limitation or Operations Surface of the Cowra Airport. Works carried out on the site will not project into the Airport airspace.

7.8 Essential Services

Water	The proposed development would connect to Council's reticulated water service.
Electricity	The proposed development will be connected to electricity supply to the requirements of the relevant energy provider.
Sewage	The proposed development will connect to Council's reticulated sewer service.
Stormwater	Each dwelling would direct stormwater to a rainwater tank with overflow to connect to Council's reticulated stormwater service in Amie Street.
Access	It is proposed that dwelling 1 would be accessed by a new driveway and crossover to Amie Street, and dwelling 2 would be accessed by new driveway and crossover to Binni Lane. A condition for a S138 application

	has been imposed.

7.11 Development on land in karst areas

This clause applies to land that is identified as karst environment on the Natural Resources Sensitivity Map. The land is not mapped as being affected; accordingly, this clause is not applicable.

State Environmental Planning Policies

SEPP	COMMENTS
SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	Not applicable
SEPP (Housing) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Industry and Employment) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Precincts – Central River City) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Precincts – Eastern Harbour City) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Precincts - Regional) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Precincts – Western Parkland City) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Primary Production) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021	Includes the former SEPP 55 – Remediation of Land. See comment below.
SEPP (Resources and Energy) 2021	Not applicable
SEPP (Sustainable Buildings) 2022	A BASIX certificate has been provided for each dwelling
SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021	Not applicable

SEPP (RESILIENCE AND HAZARDS) 2021

Under Clause 4.6 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

There are no known prior land-uses on the site that are likely to have resulted in the contamination of the land. Site inspection carried out did not reveal any evidence of contamination of the site. The proposal does not involve any demolition or works likely to result in contamination of the site. The SEE submitted with the application does not mention any previous land use that is likely to have resulted in contamination of the site. No further investigation is warranted in this instance.

S 4.15(1)(a)(ii) provisions of any draft Environmental Planning Instrument(s)

There are no draft Environmental Planning Instrument(s) that are relevant to the site.

S 4.15(1)(a)(iii) provisions of any Development Control Plan(s)

Cowra Shire Council Development Control Plan 2021

PART A – PLAN INTRODUCTION

Consent is required for the proposed 2 dwellings, and Torrens title subdivision.

PART B – LAND MANAGEMENT

Appropriate erosion and sediment controls to be implemented prior to the commencement of works. The soil disturbance area is relatively minor.

PART C – BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The development area is clear of vegetation – no further assessment required relating to Biodiversity.

PART D – SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT

Section	Comments
D.3.1. Application of this part	The development proposes subdivision of land located in the R1 General Residential zone under the LEP. Part D.3 is applicable to the development.
D.3.2. Objectives	The development is consistent with the objectives contained in D.5.2.
D.3.3. Lot Size, Layout and Dimensions	The land is shown on the LEP lot size map as having a minimum lot size of 700 square metres. However, the proposed development would utilise Clause 4.1C of the LEP to subdivide into 2 lots of over 300^{2}m as a new dwelling is proposed on each lot.
D.3.4. Street Design	No new roads will be created as part of the development.
D.3.5. Access Provision	All proposed lots have direct and lawful access to the public road network.
D.3.6. Utility Provision	The proposed lots would include new water and sewer connections for each dwelling.
D.3.7. Stormwater, Drainage &	Each dwelling would drain into the proposed stormwater management system in Amie Street.

Waterways	

PART E – URBAN AND VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Part E.1 Single Dwellings

Section	Comments
E.1.1 Application of Section	The subject land is zoned R1 General Residential and two dwelling houses and subdivision is proposed which is permissible with consent in the zone.
E.1.2 Objectives	The proposed development meets these objectives.
E.1.3 Site Analysis	There are no significant environmental constraints on the land.
E.1.4. Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control	Appropriate controls to be put in place.
E.1.5. Cut and Fill Controls	**Variation requested.** The proposed development would include a retaining wall on the eastern boundary, contrary to the 900mm setback required per E.1.5.c The variation is considered at the end of this section.
E.1.6. Streetscape Controls	The development would present to the public domain as single dwellings and would be consistent with the scale and character of the surrounding environment.
E.1.7. Height Controls	Complies.
E.1.8. Solar Access Controls	No overshadowing impacts have been identified.
E.1.9. Front setback controls	**Variation requested.** Dwelling 1 has a front setback to Amie Street of 4.599m, contrary to the 7.5m required per E.1.9.1.a.iii **Variation requested.** Dwelling 1 has a setback to a secondary road of 2.303m contrary to the 4.5m required per E.1.9.4.a **Variation requested.** Dwelling 2 has a front setback of 3.7m contrary to the 4.5m required per E.1.9.1.a.i The variations are considered at the end of this section.
E.1.10 Side Setbacks	Complies. The minimum side setback for each dwelling is 900mm.
E.1.11. Rear Setbacks	**Variation requested.** Dwelling 1 would have an inconsistent rear setback of 3.350m to the east, contrary to the 5m required per E.1.11 **Variation requested.** Dwelling 2 would have an inconsistent rear setback of 1.910m to the north, contrary to the 5m required per E.1.11 The variations are considered at the end of this section.
E.1.12. Visual & Acoustic Privacy Controls	Complies. No visual or acoustic impacts identified.
E.1.13 Landscaped Area Controls	Complies. There is sufficient area available for landscaping.
E.1.14. Sustainable Building Design Controls	A BASIX Certificate has been provided for each dwelling, and the application is assessed to be generally satisfactory with regard to the

	controls in this section.

Variations:

E.1.5 Cut and Fill Controls

By managing the extent of cut and fill used on building sites, it is possible to maintain the integrity of natural topography and minimise impacts on drainage, soil stability and structural integrity.

The applicant provides the following planning justifications for the variation request:

> *"The retaining wall on the eastern boundary does not comply as it cannot be moved in 900mm without re positioning the dwelling. Given that it is only a small wall at 6m long and a maximum height of 600mm we ask that this non compliance be assessed on its merit."*

Comment

The proposed retaining wall would be a maximum of 600mm high within 900mm of the boundary, with minimal impact on soil stability and drainage. The proposed retaining wall would allow for maintenance on the eastern wall of dwelling 2 without compromising private open space or amenity and privacy. A condition for a peg out survey has been included to ensure the proposed retaining wall is constructed wholly on the subject lot.

It is considered the proposed cut can meet the objectives of this section and the proposed variations can be supported.

E.1.9 Front Setback controls

Front setbacks are important as they establish the building's location in relationship to neighbouring buildings and the streetscape in general. Front setbacks also allow space for landscaping in residential areas.

The applicant provides the following planning justifications for the variation request:

> *"The front setback of unit 1 and unit 2 still allow for ample landscaping and privacy. The front setback of unit 1 also complies with the 4.5m requirement for houses with no neighbours within 40m. unit 1 does not have a neighbour on the same side of the street within 40m.*
>
> *Regarding the setback of unit 1 to the secondary road. the secondary road is just a lane and sees very little traffic other than that of local residences accessing their property."*

Comment

The proposed setback to Amie Street is generally consistent with the setback of the dwelling to the north, and the proposed setbacks to Binni Lane are also generally consistent with that provided by 5 Amie Street across the road. As such it is considered the proposed setback would not detract from the streetscape. Adequate space is provided for landscaping in both frontages.

It is considered the proposed front setbacks meet the objectives of this section and the proposed variations can be supported.

E.1.11 Rear Setbacks

Rear setbacks are important for achieving open space to the rear of the lot for private recreation and relaxation. Rear setbacks allow separation distances between neighbouring dwellings to ensure visual and acoustic privacy.

The applicant provides the following planning justifications for the variation request:

> *"Despite* the *non-compliance adequate private open space has still been provided and privacy to neighbouring dwellings is still achieved."*

Comment

It is considered the rear setbacks are acceptable as the proposed development would provide usable rear private open space to each dwelling while maintaining privacy for occupants with the provision of a 1.8m fence. It is noted that without the subdivision the proposed development would be considered a dual occupancy and therefore be compliant with the rear setbacks requirements under Clause 2.13. It is considered the proposed development would meet the objectives of this clause and the variation is accepted.

It is considered the proposed rear setbacks meet the objectives of this section and the proposed variations can be supported.

PART K – LAND USE BUFFERS

Cowra Airport Obstacle Limitation Surface

The subject land is located outside of the OLS.

PART M – PARKING, ACCESS AND MOBILITY

The proposed development includes a 2 car parking spaces per dwelling consistent with Part M. Visitor parking is not required.

The proposal will require new driveways and crossover, and a S138 has been conditioned accordingly.

PART N – LANDSCAPING

Landscaping shown on the Site Plan is assessed to be compliant with Section N.3.1. of the DCP.

PART O – ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD MANAGEMENT

The subject land is not mapped as flood prone.

The subject land is not mapped as bushfire prone.

There is no identified contamination on the subject land.

PART P – CPTED PRINCIPLES

The applicant has not provided a CPTED Assessment. However, the development is of a minor scale and involves the construction of 2 detached dwellings and Torrens title subdivision. The proposed dwellings will provide a surveillance role with regard to the streetscape. There are no identified blind corners or entrapment areas. It is assessed that the development is suitable with regard to the CPTED principles.

The development, as conditioned, will comply with the remaining relevant DCP controls.

S 4.15(1)(a)(iiia) provisions of any Planning Agreement(s)

There is no planning agreement that has been entered into under Section 7.4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 by the applicant in relation to the development proposal. Similarly, the applicant has not volunteered to enter into a draft planning agreement for the development proposal.

S 4.15(1)(a)(iv) any matters prescribed by the regulations

Section 4.15(1)(a)(iv) requires the Council to also consider Clauses 61, 62, 63 and 64 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation. The following provides an assessment of the relevant Clauses of the Regulation:

- Clause 61 – The proposal does not involve demolition of a building and therefore the requirements of AS 2601-2001 are not required to be considered in accordance with Clause 61(1).

- Clause 62 – The proposal does not involve the change of a building use for an existing building and therefore the requirement to consider fire safety and structural adequacy of buildings in accordance with Clause 62 is unnecessary.

- Clause 63 – The proposal does not involve the erection of a temporary structure and therefore the requirements to consider fire safety and structural adequacy is unnecessary.

- Clause 64 – The proposal does not involve the rebuilding, alteration, enlargement or extension of an existing building and therefore the requirement to consider the upgrading of buildings into total or partial conformity with the Building Code of Australia is not required to be undertaken.

S 4.15(1)(b) the significant likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments and social and economic impacts on the locality

Section 4.15(1)(b) requires the consent authority to consider the significant likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments and social and economic impacts on the locality. The following provides an assessment of the significant likely impacts of the development:

<u>Context and Setting</u>

The area is characterised by single storey residential developments. This proposal would present as 2 single dwellings and is consistent with the existing character of the locality.

<u>Access, Parking, traffic</u>

The site has access to Amie Street and Binni Lane. Amie Street is a local sealed road with kerb and guttering on both sides, while Binni Lane is a sealed laneway with no kerb and guttering. 2 new driveways and crossovers are proposed and an application under Section 138 of the Roads Act 1993 has been conditioned. No other traffic or parking concerns are identified.

<u>Public Domain</u>

The proposal will not have a negative impact on public recreational opportunities or public spaces in the locality.

Utilities

The site is serviced by adequate utilities to cater for the development.

Heritage

There are no items listed in schedule 5 of the LEP 2012 as present on the land and a search of the AHIMS records did not reveal any items or places of Aboriginal Cultural Significance identified as present on the land.

Other Land Resources

The land does not contain any recorded mineral deposits and the proposal will not negatively impact any water catchment areas.

Water, Sewerage and Stormwater

The proposed development would connect to Council's water, sewer and stormwater services.

Soils

The development will not have a negative impact on soils. A recommended condition will apply to require compliance with Council's DCP 2021 with regard to sedimentation and erosion controls.

Air and Microclimate

Minimal amounts of dust may be generated during the construction period. Once construction works are complete the development will not impact on air quality.

Flora and Fauna

The development does not require removal of any significant vegetation. There will be no significant impact on native flora & fauna.

Waste

Any construction waste and ongoing domestic waste will be removed from the site and appropriately recycled or catered for at a licensed waste management facility.

Energy

A BASIX Certificate has been provided for each of the proposed dwellings.

Noise and Vibration

Some noise will occur during the construction period but is not expected to adversely impact on any surrounding land uses. Council's standard condition regarding construction hours is recommended. The constructed development will not result in any ongoing noise or vibration.

Natural Hazards

The land is not identified as bushfire or flood prone land.

Technological Hazards

Council's records and inspection of the site did not reveal any technological hazards affecting the site. Council is not aware of, and the SEE submitted with the application did not make reference to any previous land use likely to have resulted in contamination.

Safety, Security and Crime Prevention

It is considered this development will not generate any activity likely to promote any safety or security problems to the subject land or surrounding area.

Social and Economic Impacts on the locality

The proposed development will not result in any negative social or economic impacts.

Site Design and Internal Design

The design of the development is satisfactory for the site and without any identified adverse impacts.

Construction

The proposed development will be built in accordance with the Building Code of Australia. No adverse impacts are anticipated to occur as a result of the development.

Cumulative impacts

The proposal is not expected to generate any ongoing negative cumulative impacts. A minimal increase in traffic activity to the site will occur during the construction phase. This will be limited by a condition of consent and will not continue once construction is completed.

S4.15(1)(c) The Suitability of the Site for the Development

The development is consistent with the zone objectives and consideration has been given to the impacts the development will have within the locality. It is considered that the proposed development will not create adverse impacts within its local setting. It is assessed that the development will not impact upon any existing services. The development site is not identified as bushfire or flood prone or otherwise unsatisfactorily constrained by natural features. The site is considered suitable for the development subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions of consent.

S 4.15(1)(d) any submissions made in accordance with the Regulation(s)

Public Notification:

The subject Development Application was notified to adjoining owners in writing from 9 April 2026 to 30 April 2026, in accordance with Cowra Community Participation Plan 2024. One submission was received in relation to the proposed development, which was an objection. The submission is included in Attachment '5' to this report. Below is a summary of the submission's planning and development related concerns followed by assessment comments:

Objection:

1. **Visual Amenity / Privacy**

Assessment Comment:

The windows overlooking the street are not considered high usage rooms. The nearest window would be located over 20 metres from the nearest dwelling across the road.

2. Traffic Flow / Safety

Assessment Comment:

Amie Street has a 9m carriageway which is standard for an Access Place (>15 lots), which is considered sufficient for the anticipated traffic volumes. The construction of two dwellings on this lot is not considered high traffic generating development, and the provision of double garages exceeds the requirement of the 2021 Development Control Plan.

3. Suitability of Binni Lane

Assessment Comment:

(i) The proposed development would direct stormwater to water tanks, with overflow to Amie Street. No stormwater is proposed to be directed to Binni Lane. The direction of hardstand (roof) water to the existing stormwater management system in Amie Street would result in less overland flow into the Lane and may potentially result in less flooding issues in the lane and downslope properties.

(ii) It is a standard condition of consent that any damage caused to the roadways during construction is to be made good to the standard equivalent prior to when works commenced. Binni Lane has been sealed to Council standards that would allow standard ongoing residential traffic usage.

4. Construction Impacts

Assessment Comment:

The construction of the dwellings would be managed through standard conditions of consent. The construction of 2 new dwellings with permanent occupants would better facilitate sustained land management as compared to the currently vacant block.

Summary:

It is assessed that the concerns expressed by the objector have been adequately addressed by the design of the development and/or the recommended conditions of consent.

S4.15(1)(e) The Public Interest

The proposed development is permissible on the subject land and is not expected to adversely impact on the community interests of the area. The proposed development has been considered in terms of the context and setting of the locality in previous sections to this report. The proposed alterations will positively contribute to the development within the locality and will not impose any identified adverse economic or social impacts on the local community.

S7.12 Fixed development consent levies

The proposed development is not within a growth area identified under the Cowra Council s94 Contributions Plan 2016. No evidence of any prior 7.11 Development Contributions being levied

has been identified. Therefore, the recommended conditions include S7.12 (formerly S94A) development contributions to be levied in accordance with Cowra Council S94A Contributions Plan 2016.

Conclusion

Development Application No. 10.2026.37.1 proposes the construction of two dwellings and a 2 lot subdivision on Lot 4, DP 1135952, 2 Amie Street Cowra. The application was lodged by N Aghili-Josheghani on 7 April 2026. The property owner is R Dagher.

The application was supported by a Statement of Environmental Effects and development plans prepared by the applicant, which provide sufficient information to allow assessment of the proposal.

The proposed development has been assessed to be consistent with the requirements of Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012, relating to development in the R1 General Residential zone and is consistent with existing land-use activities of the locality. The variations to Section No. E.1.5, E.1.9, and E.1.11 of Cowra Development Control Plan 2021 are sufficiently justified.

The development application was notified in accordance with Cowra Community Participation Plan 2024. One submission was received following the consultation process. Submission concerns are addressed in this report.

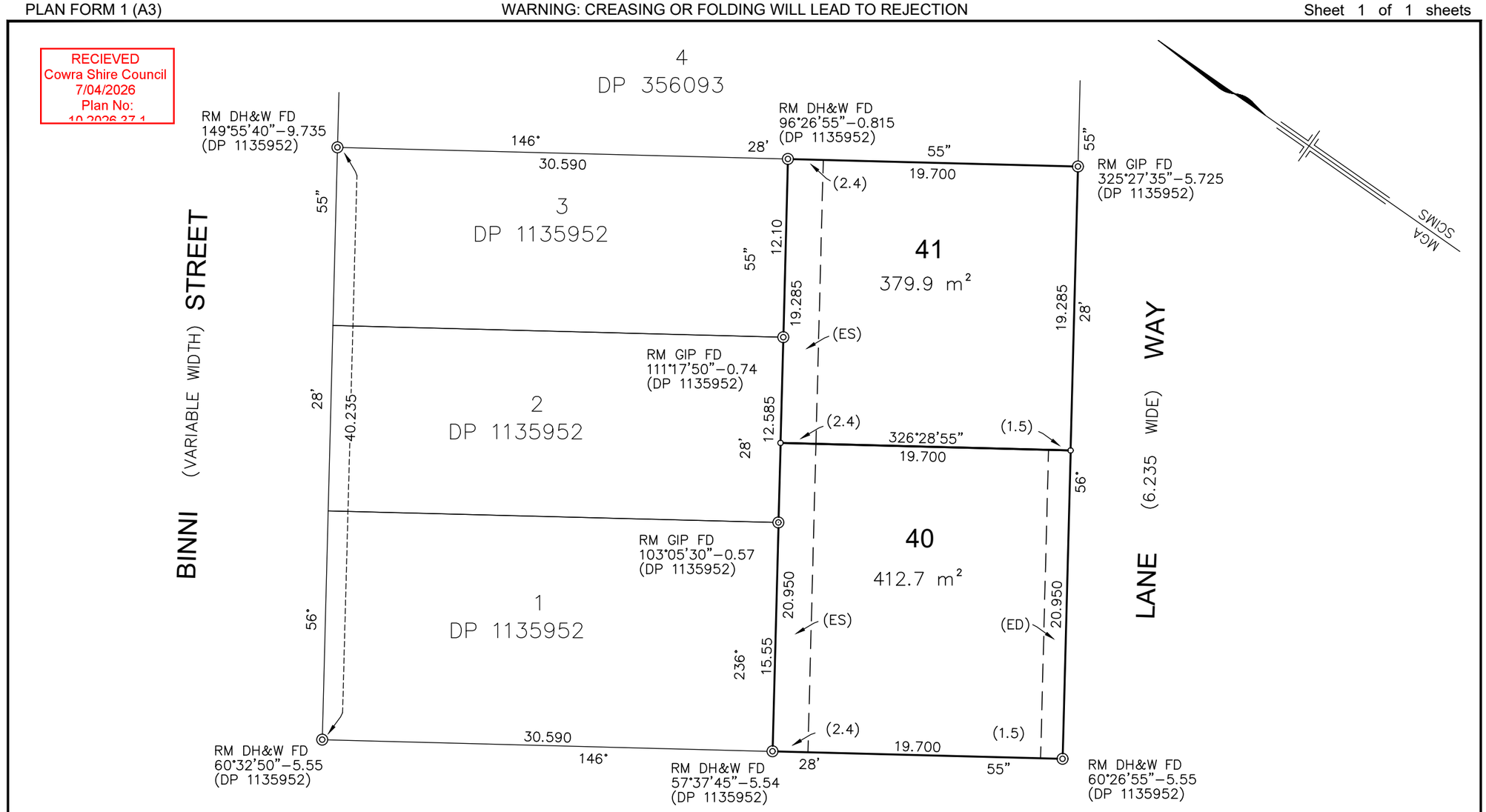
Having considered the documentation supplied by the applicant, the findings of site inspection(s) and the comments made from consultation, it is assessed that the impacts of the proposal and the likely environmental interactions between the proposed development and the environment are such that Council should not refuse the development application. Accordingly, a recommendation of conditional approval is listed in the recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. DA 10.2026.37.1 - 2 Amie Street, Cowra - Development Plans ⇩
2. DA 10.2026.37.1 - 2 Amie Street, Cowra - Statement of Environmental Effects ⇩
3. DA 10.2026.37.1 - 2 Amie Street, Cowra - Location Map ⇩
4. DA 10.2026.37.1 - 2 Amie Street, Cowra - Aerial Map ⇩
5. 2 Amie Street Cowra, Objection in Response to Neighbour Notification ⇩

PLAN FORM 1 (A3) WARNING: CREASING OR FOLDING WILL LEAD TO REJECTION Sheet 1 of 1 sheets

RECIEVED
Cowra Shire Council
7/04/2026
Plan No:
10.2026.37.1



(ES) – EASEMENT TO SEWAGE 2.4 WIDE (DP 1135952)
(ED) – EASEMENT TO DRAIN WATER 1.5 WIDE

SURVEYOR	PLAN HEADING			
Name: GEOFFREY ALLAN GOLLEDGE RENNIE GOLLEDGE PTY LTD PO BOX 132 MAITLAND NSW 2320 Date: 05/03/2026 Reference: 072.26	PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 4 DP 1135952	LGA: COWRA Locality: COWRA Reduction Ratio : 1: Lengths are in metres	Registered	DRAFT

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 Table of mm

RECIEVED
Cowra Shire Council
28/05/2026
Plan No: 10.2026.37.1 (D)

STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Proposed 2 Lot Torrens Title Subdivision and Two Dwellings
2 Amie Street
Cowra, NSW, 2794

Produced by

Matt Holt Architect
B. Arch No 4650
Architectural Design & Creations

Rev G 28th May 2026

1 Property Details

1.1 Summary

Landowner:	Ramez Dagher
Property Address:	Lot 4, DP 1135952 2 Aime Street, Cowra, NSW, 2794.
Local Government:	Cowra Council
Zone:	R1 General Residential

1.2 Site Description



Six maps

The subject site, Lot 4 DP 1135952, commonly known as 2 Amie Street, Cowra, is located within the residential area of Cowra. The site is bound by existing residential development on all boundaries. The allotment is a relatively flat block and is 793 square metres in size.

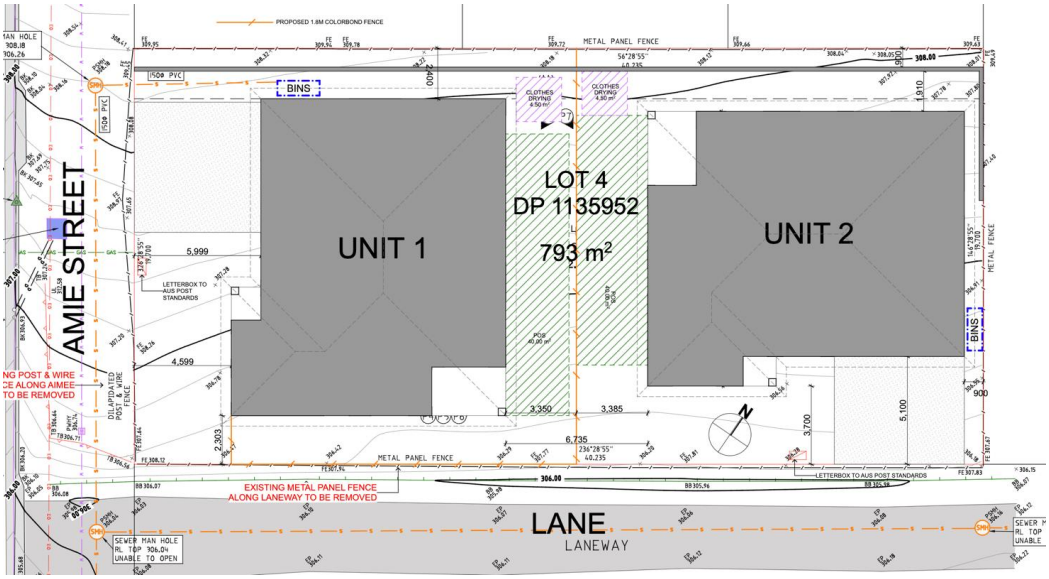
At the present, the lot is vacant and is clear of all shrubs and trees.



View from Amie Street

2 Proposed Development

The proposal is to create a Torrens title subdivision and build a detached single storey brick veneer residence with attached double garage on each lot. Each dwelling will have a master bedroom with ensuite and walk in robe as well as 3 other bedrooms, an open plan kitchen dining living area, rumpus, bath, laundry and alfresco.



Site Plan

3 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN (LEP)

Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 (CLEP 2012)

The Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 is the comprehensive Local Environmental Plan applying to the site.

3.1.1 2.1.1 Land Use Table

The site is zoned R1 General Residential.

The objectives of the zone are:

- *To provide for the housing needs of the community.*
- *To provide for a variety of housing types and densities.*
- *To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.*
- *To provide attractive, affordable, well located and market-responsive residential land.*
- *To ensure that any non-residential land uses permitted within the zone are compatible with the amenity of the area.*
- *To ensure that housing densities are broadly concentrated in locations accessible to public transport, employment, services and facilities.*
- *To maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.*

The proposal is considered consistent with the objectives of the R1 zone.

3.1.2 2.1.2 Permitted with consent

The proposed development is defined as a Dwelling house. The proposed works are permissible with consent under the zone.

3.1.3 4.1C Exceptions to minimum subdivision lot size for certain residential development

1. *The objective of this clause is to encourage housing diversity without adversely impacting on residential amenity.*
2. *This clause applies to development on land in the following zone—*
    a. *R1 General Residential.*
3. *Development consent may be granted to a single development application for development to which this clause applies that is both of the following—*
    a. *the subdivision of land into 2 or more lots,*
    b. *the erection of a dwelling house, an attached dwelling or a semi-detached dwelling on each lot resulting from the subdivision, if the size of each lot is equal to or greater than 300 square metres.*

The proposed subdivision results in 2 lots, each being greater than the required 300 square metres.

3.1.4 5.10 Heritage conservation

The subject property:

a) Is not listed as a heritage item under the LEP.

b) Is not located within a heritage conservation area.

c) Is not located within vicinity to any heritage items.

4 Cowra Development Control Plan 2021

4.1 Part E.1 Single Dwellings

E.1.5 Cut and Fill Controls

The site will be cut with a retaining wall a maximum of 1m tall. The retaining wall on the northern boundary will be 900mm from the boundary. The retaining wall on the eastern boundary will be on the boundary and a maximum of 600mm tall tapering down to 0 from north to south. It is approximately 6m long.

The retaining wall on the eastern boundary does not comply as it cannot be moved in 900mm without re positioning the dwelling. Given that it is only a small wall at 6m long and a maximum height of 600mm we ask that this non compliance be assessed on its merit.

E.1.6 Streetscape Controls

Complies.

E.1.7 Height Controls

Complies.

E.1.8 Solar Access Controls

Both dwellings are single storey and the only close neighbouring dwellings are to the north west. Complies.

E.1.9 Front Setback Controls

The two closest dwellings are across the road and are approximately 7.5m and 8.5m back respectively. Unit 1 does not comply.

Unit 1 does not comply with the setback to the secondary road requirement of 4.5m. a setback of 2.3m is provided.

No houses within 40m front the lane. Unit 2 does not comply with the 4.5m setback. Unit 2 is setback 3.7m but only 40% is 3.7m back. The other 60% is 5.1m back. The average setback is 4.54m.

We request that these non-compliances be assessed on their merit. The front setback of unit 1 and unit 2 still allow for ample landscaping and privacy. The front setback of unit 1 also complies with the 4.5m requirement for houses with no neighbours within 40m. unit 1 does not have a neighbour on the same side of the street within 40m.

Regarding the setback of unit 1 to the secondary road. the secondary road is just a lane and sees very little traffic other than that of local residences accessing their property.

It is also worth considering the need of modern housing in this area and allowing this development to proceed despite these non-compliances allows for two new modern family size homes.

E.1.10 Side Setbacks

Complies.

E.1.11 Rear Setbacks

Neither dwelling complies with the rear setback requirement of 5m. a rear setback of 3.38m and 3m respectively. Despite the non-compliance adequate private open space has still been provided and privacy to neighbouring dwellings is still achieved. We request this non-compliance be assessed on its merit.

E.1.12 Visual & Acoustic Privacy Controls

A 1.8m colorbond fence will be constructed between the two dwellings and will provide visual and acoustic privacy.

E.1.13 Landscaped Area Controls

Landscaped area of greater than 40% is provided..

E.1.14 Sustainable Building Design Controls

Both dwellings will comply with the BASIX.

E.1.15 Liveable Housing Design

Both dwellings will be constructed to comply with silver level requiriements.

5 Areas

AREAS

SITE = 792

UNIT 1

LOT = 412
DWELLING = 172
PORCH = 2
ALFRESCO = 8
DRIVEWAY = 37

COVERAGE = 219/412 = 53%

UNIT 2

LOT = 380
DWELLING = 172
PORCH = 2
ALFRESCO = 8
DRIVEWAY = 31

COVERAGE = 213/380 = 56%

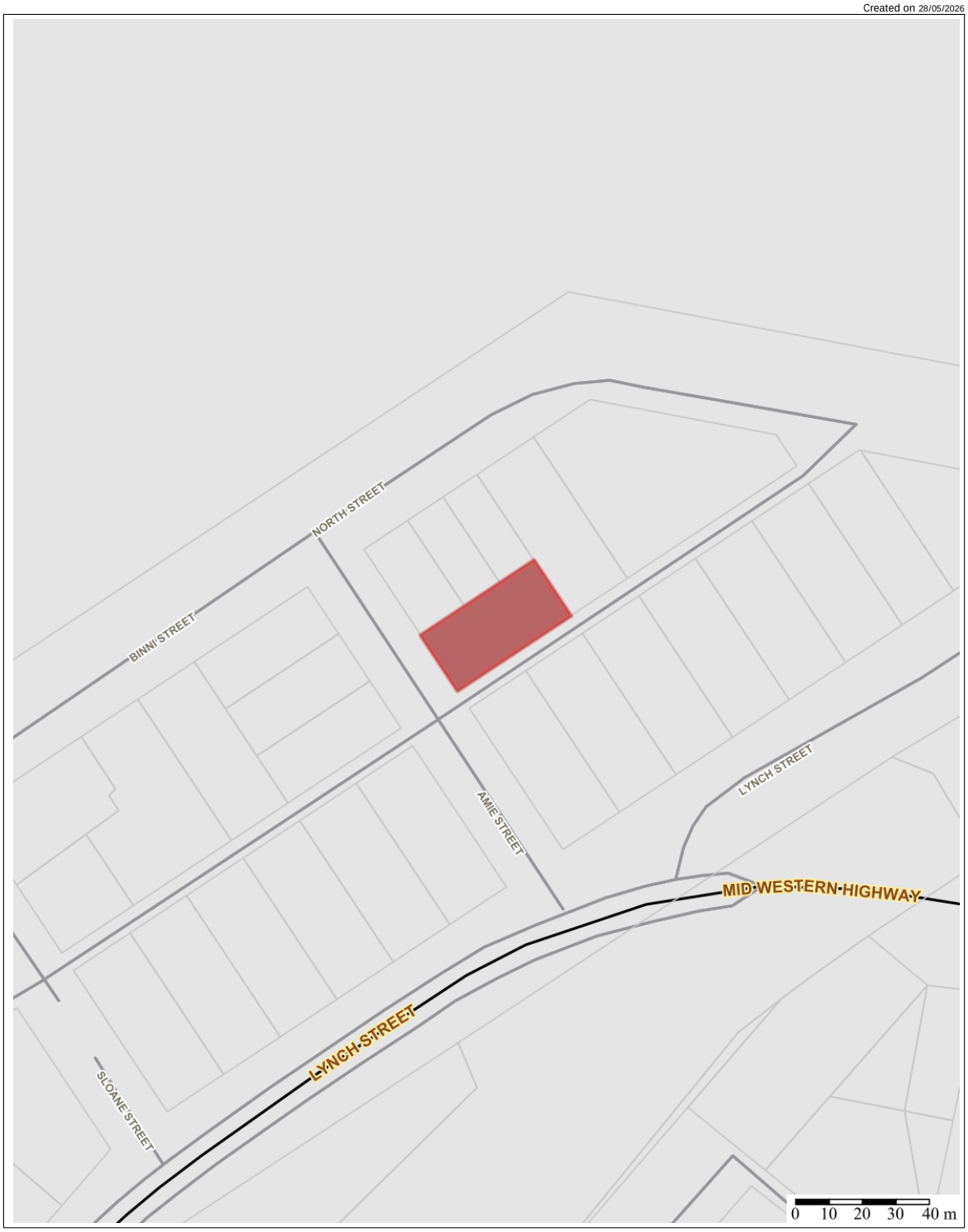
TOTAL COVERAGE = 432/792 = 54%

Hoping that all the above meets with your approval and if you have any further queries please do not hesitate in contacting our Office.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Matt Holt Architect
B. Arch No 4650
Architectural Design & Creations

Created on 28/05/2026



Cowra Council

Cowra Council
Private Bag 342
116 Kendal Street
COWRA NSW 2794
Ph: (02) 6340 2000
Web: www.cowracouncil.com.au

Important Notice!
This map is not a precise survey document. Accurate locations can only be determined by a survey on the ground.
This information has been prepared for Council's internal purposes and for no other purpose. No statement is made about the accuracy or suitability of the information for use for any purpose (whether the purpose has been notified to Council or not). While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this data, neither the Cowra Council nor the SS makes any representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability for any particular purpose and disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which you might incur as a result of the data being inaccurate or incomplete in any way and for any reason.
© The State of New South Wales (Spatial Services), © Cowra Council.

Drawn By: Joshua Neuer

Projection: # GDA2020 / MGA zone 55

Date: 28/05/2026 3:12 PM

DA 10.2026.37.1 - 2
Amie Street, Cowra

Map Scale: 1:1500 at A4

Created on 28/05/2026



Cowra Council

Cowra Council
Private Bag 342
116 Kendal Street
COWRA NSW 2794
Ph: (02) 6340 2000
Web: www.cowracouncil.com.au

Important Notice!

This map is not a precise survey document. Accurate locations can only be determined by a survey on the ground.

This information has been prepared for Council's internal purposes and for no other purpose. No statement is made about the accuracy or suitability of the information for use for any purpose (whether the purpose has been notified to Council or not). While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this data, neither the Cowra Council nor the SS makes any representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability for any particular purpose and disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which you might incur as a result of the data being inaccurate or incomplete in any way and for any reason.

© The State of New South Wales (Spatial Services), © Cowra Council.

Drawn By: Joshua Neuer

Projection: # GDA2020 / MGA zone 55

Date: 28/05/2026 3:17 PM

DA 10.2026.37.1 - 2 Amie Street, Cowra

Map Scale: 1:1500 at A4

From: Lewis Medlock
To: Cowra Council
Subject: Comments - DA 10.2026.37.1 - Attention Josh
Date: Thursday, 23 April 2026 4:37:18 PM

You don't often get email from onemorethingypsythief51@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

Hello Josh

Thankyou for your prompt reply to my query and making time to meet with me.

The following is an outline of our discussion.

1. VISUAL AMENITY / PRIVACY

Photo 2 (Page 3) in the document is essentially from my footpath. Unit 1 will overlook my entire backyard, and, the windows and door of the rear of my dwelling.

The extent of this intrusion into my privacy will be mediated by the windows on the West aspect of Unit 1. Of concern is the size of the windows, and, how the rooms behind these windows will be used (high usage rooms such as kitchen or lounge will heighten any effect). Also of concern is whether the "al fresco" area will provide a viewing area over my property.

Of particular concern is the height the building will be out of the ground on the Southern side. Despite the assertion that the block is "relatively flat" there is a considerable slope and if "minimal cut and fill" is used, then the Southern side of the building will be raised significantly out of the ground. This is not indicated on the document.

Any increase of the height, from the ground, of the Southern windows will increase the effects on my property.

2.TRAFFIC FLOW / SAFETY

The traffic on the Binni St (called North St in document) and Amie St "loop" is set to greatly increase with the building of the new Child Care Centre. A rough suggestion is (probably) 150 to 200 extra movements a weekday (80 children plus staff). Already this road has local traffic, 2 school buses and the town bus a number of times a day. Two 4 bedroom units, despite 2 double garages, have the potential to add to the on- street parking. Current residents try to avoid any longterm parking in Amie St as much as possible.

3. SUITABILITY OF BINNI LANE (Eastern side of Amie St)

(i) Currently this section of the lane causes flooding in the properties to its south. Any extra development (site runoff and storm water discharge) will increase this. If the development were to proceed Curb and Gutters and storm water control would need to be provided.

(ii) The condition of this section of Binni Lane is such that any heavy equipment such as Cement Trucks or brick deliveries would irrevocably damage its surface and structure. Probably longterm use of the Lane to access Unit 2's garage would have detrimental effects on the current surface.

4. CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

I am aware that there exist Council guidelines to limit the impact of any construction on existing neighbours. However, the current evidence is that the new owners are not 'good neighbours' as the block is overgrown (and has remained so during the recent fire season) and excellent reptile habitat (a real problem in this area of Cowra).

Duncan McEvoy
58 Lynch St. Cowra.

Thankyou, again Josh.

8 LATE REPORTS

9 NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nil

10 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:

11 CONFIDENTIAL DIRECTOR-INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS

11.1 Request for Tender 3/2026 - Replacement of Plant 100 - One Telescopic Handler

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2)(d(i)) of the Local Government Act, 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 commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

11.2 Request For Tender 4/2026 - Design, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Solar Photovoltaic, Battery Energy Storage and Power Factor Correction Systems

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2)(d(i)) of the Local Government Act, 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 commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.