Richmond Valley Council

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

I hereby give notice that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on:

Date: **Tuesday, 21 April 2026**

Time: **6:00 pm**

Location: **Council Chambers**
10 Graham Place, Casino

Vaughan Macdonald
General Manager

Statement of Ethical Obligations

In accordance with Clause 3.23 of the Model Code of Meeting Practice, Councillors are reminded of their Oath or Affirmation of Office made under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* and their obligations under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Oath or affirmation of office

The Oath or Affirmation is taken by each Councillor whereby they swear or declare to:

Undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of the Richmond Valley and Richmond Valley Council, and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.

Conflicts of interest

All Councillors must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at Council meetings in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor will provide an Acknowledgement of Country by reading the following statement on behalf of Council:

"Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung Nations as Custodians and Traditional Owners of this land and we value and appreciate the continuing cultural connection to lands, their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region in the past, present and future."

2 PRAYER

3 APOLOGIES

4 MAYORAL MINUTES

Nil

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 17 March 2026.

REPORT

Refer to attached Minutes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **Unconfirmed Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 17 March 2026 (under separate cover)**

6 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

7 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(Councillors to specify details of item and nature of interest)

8 NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

9 MAYOR'S REPORT

9.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 11 MARCH - 13 APRIL 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 11 March – 13 April 2026.

March

- 11th Aged and Disability Expo – Casino
- 14th Casino & District Historical Society Annual General Meeting
- 17th Citizenship Ceremony
- 17th Richmond Valley Council Ordinary meeting
- 18th Rous County Council - Councillor Strategy/Policy Discussion
- 19th Flood Risk Management Plan Committee - Presentation of Draft Study & Plan
- 20th Casino Greyhound Race Club 90th birthday
- 21st Former Richmond Valley Councillor Norma Wise memorial service
- 26th Casino & District Hospital - Celebration of the Poles (totem pole art installation)
- 27th NSW Reconstruction Authority CEO visit
- 27th Casino CWA Branch 100 Year Celebration
- 31st Funeral service - former Lismore mayor Jenny Dowell

April

- 2nd Northern Rivers Agriculture Drainage reset program inspection
- 2nd Australian Red Cross NRRRP Community-led Resilience Team project wrap-up.
- 7th Tatham Bridges Official opening

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

10 DELEGATES' REPORTS

Nil

11 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

Each Councillor is given the opportunity to indicate which items they wish to debate or question. Item numbers identified for debate or questioning will be read to the Meeting.

Following identification of the above items a motion will be moved in regard to the balance of items being determined without debate.

11.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

RECOMMENDATION

That items identified be determined without debate.

12 GENERAL MANAGER

Nil

13 OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Nil

14 PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

14.1 DRAFT RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Tony McAteer**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Work on the *Draft Richmond Valley Council Flood Risk Management Study & Plan* (the Draft Plan) has now been completed and is presented for Council's consideration and endorsement for public exhibition. The Draft Plan represents Stages 3 & 4 in the NSW Government's Flood Risk Management Framework, and builds upon the Richmond Valley Flood Study 2023. It uses the latest available information and guidance to deliver informed contemporary recommendations to manage flood risk.

The project involved consultation with key stakeholders and the wider community via information sessions and a community questionnaire, and was provided with strategic oversight and guidance by a Flood Risk Management Committee (the Committee). The Committee contained representation from Councillors, Richmond Valley Council, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water (DCCEEW), the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA), State Emergency Services (SES), Rous, and the community. It has held regular meetings since its inception in June 2025 and most recently voted to endorse the Draft Plan.

The Draft Plan has considered the consequences of flooding on the community; quantified economic cost of flooding; and incorporates a proportionate and risk-based approach to future development, changes in land use, and altered climate conditions. It aims to develop a range of appropriate flood management measures broadly grouped into:

- Flood Modification Options – physical engineering solutions that can change flood behaviour.
- Property Modification Options – such as planning controls and flood resilience measures.
- Response Modification Options – such as education and awareness, along with improved emergency services and early warning systems, aimed at helping the community respond to flood risk.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the *Draft Richmond Valley Council Flood Risk Management Study & Plan* for public exhibition for a minimum period of 30 days.
2. Prepares minor amendments to the Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021 for transitional flood planning provisions for exhibition concurrently with the *Draft Richmond Valley Council Flood Risk Management Study & Plan.*

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 2: Adapt to regional challenges & build resilience

2A2 Improve community preparedness and awareness of natural disasters

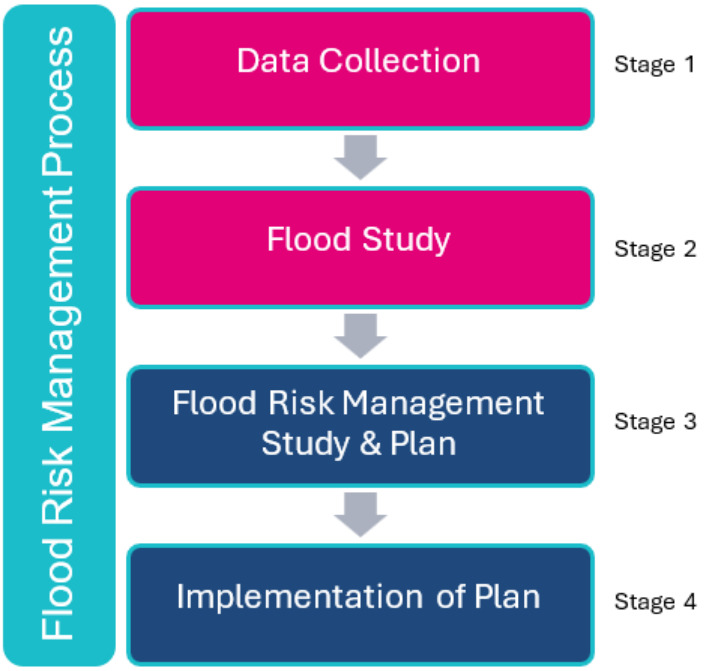
2A2.1 Support disaster preparedness, community education programs, and community resilience teams

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the final Plan will have budgetary implications, however, many of the mitigation options explored by the Plan are to be completed with significant financial assistance from the Federal and/or State government due to their magnitude.

REPORT

Richmond Valley Council was successful in securing a grant from the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), in the 2024/25 funding round of the Floodplain Management Program. The grant supported Council as it prepared a draft Flood Risk Management Study & Plan (the Draft Plan), which represents Stages 3 and 4 of the NSW Flood Risk Management Framework.



Following the completion and adoption of the Richmond Valley Flood Study 2023 (the Flood Study), work commenced on the Flood Risk Management Study & Plan, with the engagement of BMT Commercial Australia in September 2024. This was followed by community engagement, including an online questionnaire, conducted in December 2024, and the formation of the Flood Risk Management Plan Committee (the Committee) in June 2025. The Committee provided strategic oversight and guidance for the project and contained representation from Richmond Valley Council's project Technical Working Group (TWG), Councillors, Rous, community representatives, SES, DCCEEW, and NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA). The Committee held eight meetings at regular intervals throughout the project, culminating with a presentation on the Draft Plan on 19 March 2026, and its endorsement (subject to minor amendments) at a meeting on 25 March 2026.

The amended Draft Plan is now presented to Council for its in-principle endorsement with a view to public exhibition.

Draft Richmond Valley Council Flood Risk Management Study & Plan

The Draft Plan uses the latest available information and guidance to deliver contemporary and informed recommendations to manage flood risk within Richmond Valley. The first phase of the study collated and derived a comprehensive set of flood information outputs to inform the Draft Plan. This includes:

- Simulation of additional design flood events including extreme flood events.
- Assessing the sensitivity of flood levels to updated LiDAR data, design rainfall data and application of vegetated riparian buffers.
- Dam failure assessments for Toonumbar Dam and Rocky Creek Dam.
- Levee failure assessments for the Bungawalbin and East Coraki levees.
- Consideration of how climate change may impact on flood behaviour.
- Assessing the cumulative impact of floodplain development.
- Mapping of flood hazard.
- Categorising the floodplain by its hydraulic (flood) function.

- Classifying floodplain communities by giving consideration of potential isolation and access/egress impacts to assist in emergency response planning and management.
- Identifying critical and vulnerable facilities and the initial flood event at which they become inundated.
- Mapping the flood planning area.
- Quantifying property and agricultural annual average flood damage across the LGA and using this as a baseline to understand how effective certain management measures may be in reducing this damage.

The analysis and associated maps have been used to inform the selection of options to manage flood risk. The measures can be broadly grouped into:

- Flood Modification Options – physical engineered solutions designed to alter flood behaviour such as levees, drainage canals and dredging.
- Property Modification Options – modifications to existing buildings and the imposition of planning controls.
- Response Modification Options – aimed at increasing the ability for people and emergency services to respond appropriately in times of flood through education and awareness and having enhanced flood warning and evacuation procedures.

A preliminary list of flood risk management options was reviewed and shortlisted to include options from all three categories. These were assessed further using modelling (if applicable) and a multi-criteria analysis (MCA) undertaken. The table below shows the results of the review and analysis process.

Flood Modification Options	Supported by the Plan + Comments
FM01B – Coraki Levees: Seele's Creek (20% AEP level) and Richmond River (5% AEP level)	Yes – reasonable reduction in 1% AEP flood damages although may result in flood impacts elsewhere - further investigation needed.
FM02B – Dredging along the Richmond River (Coraki to Broadwater) FM02E – Dredging along the Richmond River (Coraki to Ballina)	No - due to the extensive excavation required, high capital and ongoing maintenance costs, and the significant water quality and ecological impacts.
FM05B – Automatic Flood Gate at Tuckombil Canal (1% AEP level)	No - unlikely to provide meaningful flood mitigation benefits in a 1% AEP and may cause increased flood damages to downstream areas.
FM07A – Boundary Gully Opening; Wide channel, non-tidal FM07B – Boundary Gully Opening; Wide channel, tidal FM07C – Boundary Gully Opening; Narrow channel, non-tidal FM07D – Boundary Gully Opening; Narrow channel, tidal	No - The non tidal channel options FM07A and FM07C are not recommended for further consideration, as they demonstrate minimal measurable benefit. While the tidal channel options FM07B and FM07D show comparatively greater benefits, they are unlikely to be environmentally feasible. In addition, the substantial costs associated with land acquisition, construction, and ongoing maintenance may render these options economically prohibitive.

Property Modification Options	Supported by the Plan + Comments
PM01 – Voluntary House Purchase (VP) PM02 – Voluntary House Raising (VHR)	Yes – but not while the RA Resilient Homes Program is operable.
PM03 – Voluntary Flood Proofing	Yes - inform and encourage flood proofing. Incorporate a DCP requirement for the flood proofing of buildings for new development on the floodplain.
PM04 – Flood Planning Levels (FPL)	Yes – noting the FPL (1% AEP + climate change and a 500mm freeboard (for residential premises) has not been changed from those levels adopted by the 2023 Flood Study.
PM05 – Update Section 10.7 Certificate Information	Yes – update certificate templates to reference updated design flood information.
PM06 – DCP Updates	Yes – review and update the DCP based on the findings and recommendations of the Plan.

Response Modification Options	Supported by the Plan + Comments
RM01A – Installation of Flood Warning Signs	Yes - consider installation of flood warning signs where suitable.
RM01B – Improved Council Disaster Dashboard	Yes - ensure the dashboard provides necessary information that is clear and readily accessible.
RM01C – Standardised Stream Gauges to Common Datum	Yes - standardise gauges to the common vertical AHD datum.
RM02 – Local Flood Plan Updates	Yes - Update the Local Flood Plan to incorporate new flood intelligence from the Plan.
RM03 – Flood Intelligence Card Updates	Yes - Update all Flood Intelligence Cards for key gauges within the study area to align with results from this FRMSP. Prepare new flood intelligence cards for any water level gauges proposed to be used as triggers for communities/users (NSW SES).
RM04 – Evacuation Route Upgrades	Yes - Investigate targeted upgrades to key road corridors to increase flood immunity and support safer, more reliable evacuation and access during flood events.
RM05 – Enhancement of Community Education and Awareness	Yes - Develop flood awareness messages, undertake LGA-wide and/or more localised and tailored

Response Modification Options	Supported by the Plan + Comments
	flood education and awareness campaigns for high flood risk areas.
RM06 – Aged Care Facility Flood Emergency Response Plans	Yes - Assist aged care facilities to prepare or update their own site-specific flood emergency response plans.
RM07 – Council Flood Mapping Online System	Yes - Council to develop an online flood mapping system to allow residents to better understand flood risk across the Richmond Valley LGA.

A new approach to development assessment - Flood Planning Constraints Categorisation (FPCC)

The Draft Plan utilises the Flood Planning Constraints Classification (FPCC) to guide development decisions. This is backed by both the *Guideline 7-5 of the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook* and the *NSW Understanding and Managing Flood Risk Guideline FB01*, which emphasis the importance of land use planning in managing and limiting the growth of flood risk within floodplains.

FPCC classifies land within the floodplain according to flood extent, hazard, frequency, evacuation risk, flood function, flood planning areas and emergency response considerations. The purpose of this framework is to distinguish areas suitable for more intensive development from those where constraints are significant. The four FPCCs and recommended criteria are provided in the below table and depicted in the map at Figure 1 (with relaxed flood storage criterion). Compared to the Floodplain Hazard Categories currently used in planning matrices, the FPCC framework enables clearer differentiation of risk levels and more targeted development regulation. As such they can be used to inform controls relating to the LEP and DCP and are consistent with the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual (2023).

FPCC	Constraint Subcategory
1	a) Floodway or key storage areas in the DFE * # b) Flood hazard H6 in the DFE
2	a) Floodway in events larger than the DFE b) Flood hazard H5 in the DFE c) Emergency response (isolated and submerged areas) d) Emergency response (isolated but elevated areas) e) Flood hazard H6 in floods larger than the DFE
3	Remaining area below the DFE plus freeboard
4	Remaining area below the PMF or Extreme Flood

* Defined Flood Event (DFE) – Committee voted to set this to the 1%AEP with climate change allowances (10% increased rainfall intensity with a sea level rise of 0.9m)

\# The FPCC1a was further examined for the influence of flood storage on this classification. This resulted in the exclusion of the flood storage criterion presented in Figure 1.

LEP and DCP Amendments

The Draft Plan recommends amendments to the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) which include-

- LEP Height of Building (cl.4.3) – to include flexibility for building height where appropriate to achieve flood immunity.
- Amend the DCP Flood Chapter to-
  - reference “flood risk” rather than “floodplain risk”.
  - adopt Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) rather than Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) (ie. 1% AEP v 1 in 100 year ARI).

- adopt the FPCC flood planning matrix in lieu of the Flood Hazard (H1-H6) planning matrix, currently used. The FPCC matrix and map are to be hosted in the DCP.
- specify requirements for Flood Impact and Risk Assessment (FIRA), including FPCC1 and FPCC2 areas providing a level of baseline information on flood emergency management considerations.
- specify requirements for storage of goods or hazardous materials.
- include consideration of climate change.
- acknowledge the application of a merit-based approach to development assessment expanded beyond flood planning level to encompass emergency response and additional planning controls.

LEP and DCP amendments will be prepared to support the implementation of the Plan. However, as a transitional provision, a minor DCP amendment will be prepared for public exhibition to enable the existing flood planning matrices to continue to apply until such time as the FPCC land use matrix be prepared for Council endorsement.

The intent of the transitional provision will continue to apply the Casino and Mid Richmond Flood Risk Management Plan Land Use Planning Matrices, with consideration of the FPCC mapping to test site suitability.

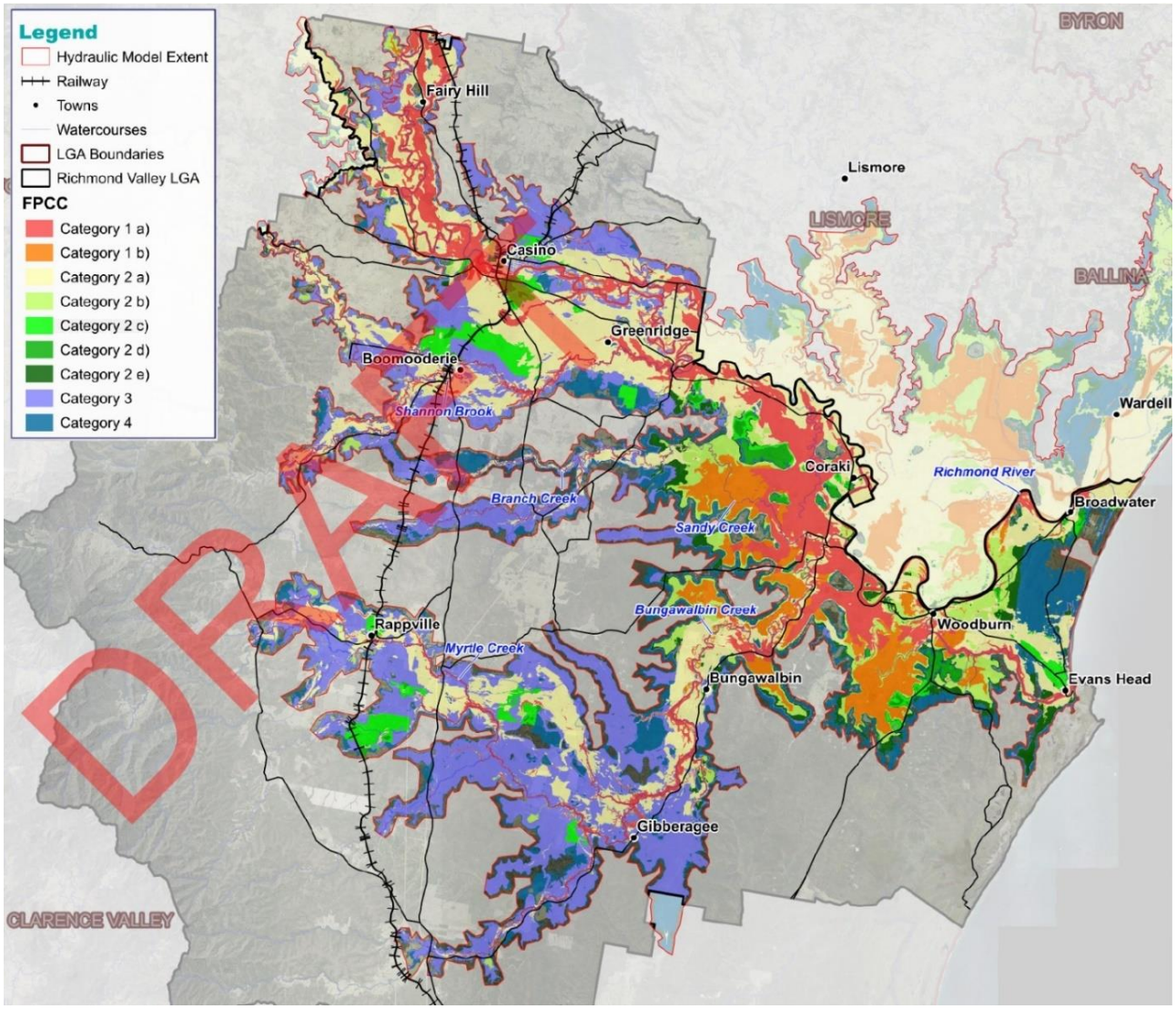


Image 1 – FPCC with relaxed Flood Storage Criteria (more detailed FPCC Mapping is contained within the Draft Plan)

CONSULTATION

Chapter 4.4 of the Draft Plan includes a summary of Community Consultation undertaken within Stages 2 and 4 of the project. This will be updated in the final Plan to include details of the public exhibition, submissions received, and recommendations for issues raised.

Should council endorse the Draft Plan, it will be publicly exhibited for a minimum period of 30 days. During this time, further community information sessions will be provided by Council, with representatives of the consultant team attending to answer questions.

CONCLUSION

The *Draft Richmond Valley Council Flood Risk Management Study and Plan* has been prepared by BMT in collaboration with Council, and the Flood Risk Management Plan Committee, and in accordance with the NSW State Government's Flood Risk Management Manual.

The Draft Plan is presented to Council, with the endorsement of the Committee, with a recommendation seeking in-principle endorsement so that it may be publicly exhibited.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

14.2 CLAUSE 4.6 HEIGHT VARIATION TO THE RICHMOND VALLEY LEP 2012 - 40 RICHMOND STREET, WOODBURN

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Francis Eyndhoven**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The applicant has lodged a written request (DA2026/0173) for alterations and additions including the raising of a flood affected dwelling located at 40 Richmond Street, Woodburn (Lot 43 DP 828607). The proposal requires a variation to the maximum height of the building by more than 10% and therefore requires referral to Council, in accordance with the provisions of *Clause 4.6 Exceptions to Development Standards* of *Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan (RVLEP) 2012*. The subject site is zoned R1 General Residential pursuant to the *RVLEP 2012*. The development is permissible with development consent.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, pursuant to Clause 4.6 of *Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012,* approves a variation in respect of Clause 4.3 Height of Buildings for DA2026/0173.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 2: Adapt to regional challenges & build resilience

2A2 Improve community preparedness and awareness of natural disasters

2A2.1 Support disaster preparedness, community education programs, and community resilience teams

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

REPORT

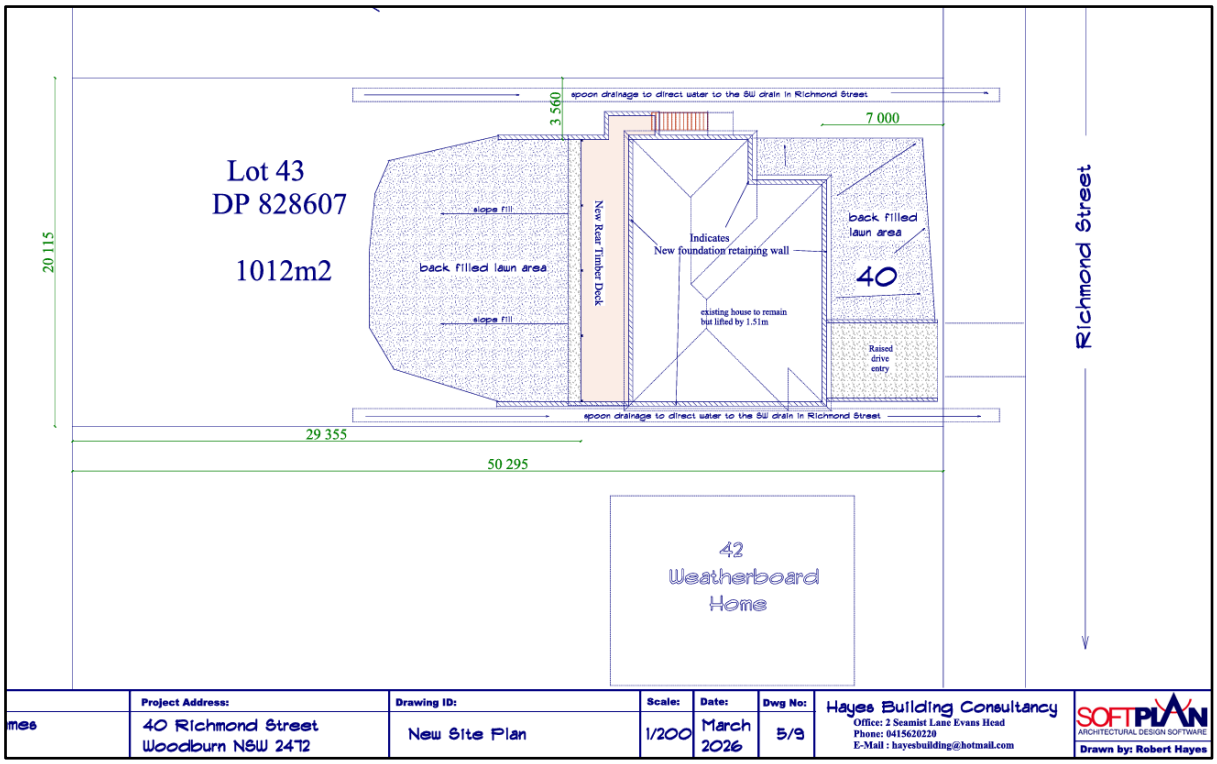
The purpose of the Height of Buildings Development Standard is to ensure the building compliments the streetscape and character of the area and to minimise visual impacts, disruption of views, loss of privacy and loss of solar access to existing development.

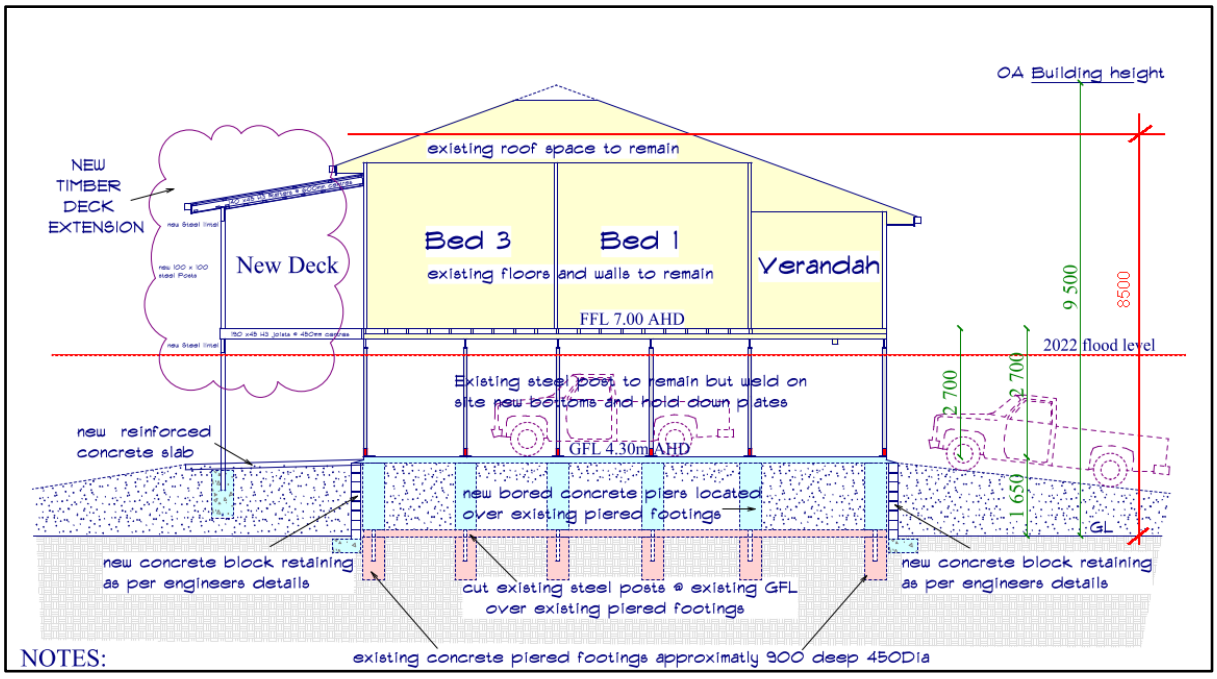
The Application proposes a variation to the building height limit of 8.5 metres set by Clause 4.3 of the *RVLEP 2012*. The proposal is to raise the dwelling by 1.5m which will mean the peak of the dwelling's roof will be 1.0m (or 9.5m above ground level) above the maximum building height of 8.5m in this zone. The lot requires a minimum habitable floor level (HFL) of 5.9m AHD and the dwelling will have a proposed HFL of 7.0m AHD upon completion of works. The dwelling meets the required setbacks for the proposed height in this zone.

The variation request submitted by the applicant outlined the additional height is required to enable the habitable floor level of the dwelling to exceed the nominated AHD for flooding. The existing dwelling is located between other existing two storey dwellings, there is no effects related to overshadowing, loss of privacy or loss of views for neighbouring lots.

The proposed house raising will vary the maximum height as set out in the DCP by approximately 12% and therefore as it is a variation greater than 10%, determination is required via a Council meeting.

The proposal is considered to meet the intent and objectives of the development standard and relevant objectives of the R1 General Residential zone.





CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken with internal referrals however full assessment of the Development Application cannot commence as this variation to *RVLEP 2012* requires Council approval before assessment can be undertaken. In accordance with NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Planning Circular PS 20-002, all Development Applications where there has been a variation less than 10% in numerical standards under Clause 4.6 of *RVLEP 2012*, can be determined by delegation (General Manager or nominated staff member). This variation exceeds 10% (12%) and has been referred to Council for consideration.

CONCLUSION

The Variation sought under Clause 4.6 of *RVLEP 2012* and it is recommended to be supported by Council prior to assessment of the Development Application.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

14.3 DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE AMENDMENTS TO THE RICHMOND VALLEY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2021 - PRE EXHIBITION REPORT

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Francis Eyndhoven**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has undertaken a review of its Development Control Plan to correct minor administrative and spelling errors, inconsistency between chapters, achieve consistency with NSW legislation, the latest codes and guidelines, and the insertion of outcomes outlined in the *Richmond Valley Regional Job Precinct* Implementation Strategy.

The proposed amendments to the *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* have been provided separately to Councillors for review with a proposal for it to be exhibited for a minimum of 28 days. This report seeks Council's endorsement to undertake the community consultation process.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the draft amendments to the *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* for public exhibition.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 1: Establish the Richmond Valley as a regional growth centre

1B1 Provide a greater chouce of housing for our community

1B1.1 Prepare housing strategies and update planning controls to support the RV Growth Management Strategy and Place Plan recommendations

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Budget implications are negligible with likely costs relating to advertising during the exhibition period. These costs will be funded from existing operational budgets.

REPORT

The *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* (DCP) forms an important part of Council's Planning and Development framework. The DCP provides finer detailed and localised planning controls for development permitted under the *Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012*.

The DCP was last reviewed in 2021 and input into this current review was sought from frequent users of the document and DCP enquiries received by the Development Concierge. Regular review ensures the DCP provisions remain relevant over time, to incorporate changes arising from new legislation and to improve how provisions are applied in practice to Development Applications.

The amendments proposed in this update are administrative and minor in context. They include rectifying unintended errors, ensuring consistency between chapters and updates to reflect the latest legislation, codes and guidelines. Proposed updates to Chapters B and C of the DCP have been provided by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, subsequent to their rezoning and implementation of the Richmond Valley Regional Job Preceint.

It is a proposed that a separate review of the DCP is to be undertaken at a later date to incorporate updates and changes arising from other studies and plans currently being progressed by Council.

Review Summary

A table summarising the amendments made to each part of the DCP has been circulated separately to Councillors. These amendments relate to:

- Correcting unintended administrative, grammatical, numbering and spelling errors throughout the whole document,
- Correcting inconsistencies between chapters, mainly relating to definitions, setbacks and carparking,
- Updating where mentioned NSW Legislation, Codes, and Guidelines to maintain consistency with in-force State Government Planning documents, and
- The planning outcomes outlined in the *Richmond Valley Regional Job Precinct Implementation Strategy* have been inserted into the relevant chapters (mainly Chapters B: Commercial Development and C: Industrial Development) of the DCP.

CONSULTATION

The draft amendment to the *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* is seeking Council endorsement to be placed on public exhibition to seek input from the community and stakeholders.

The DCP is proposed to be exhibited for a minimum of 28 days, in accordance with Council's Community Participation Plan (CPP).

CONCLUSION

A review of Council's Development Control Plan has been undertaken, resulting in production of the *Draft Administrative Amendments to the Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021*, which has been circulated separately to this report. It is proposed to place the Draft DCP on public exhibition for a minimum 28 days.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to exhibit the draft plan. Once community engagement has been completed, a report on the outcomes of the exhibition will be presented to Council.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

15 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES & PROJECTS

15.1 TRANSFER OF COUNCIL'S INTEREST IN CASINO COMMUNITY HOUSING PROPERTIES

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council holds a 14.08% ownership share in the property at 51 East Street, Casino (Lot 1 DP 802516), and a 10% ownership share in the property at 100 North Street, Casino (Lot 61 DP 856967). The majority owner in both cases is the NSW Land and Housing Corporation (now Homes NSW). The ownership arrangement is formally documented in an executed Deed.

Both properties are subject to leases issued to North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd (NCCH) and form part of the former Local Government and Community Housing Program. NCCH has continuously managed these dwellings as community housing. Council's minority ownership provides no financial benefit and imposes ongoing administrative responsibilities.

Homes NSW has asked Council to consider entering a new lease or to indicate if it wishes to exit the shared equity arrangement, noting that a buy-out of Council's share would be considered.

The option for a new lease includes Council being listed as a co-lessor but typically acts as a silent partner in the lease. Council would be exempt from day-to-day management but remain financially responsible for ownership share of any structural issues affecting the properties.

The buy-out option would include finding the market value of the property and then Homes NSW buying out Councils share of that market value.

The East Street property is currently classified as 'Community' land and Council would be required to reclassify the land as operational to dispose or transfer interests in the land. A reclassification of the North Street property was undertaken by Council in 1994.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Authorises the issue of formal written notice to Homes NSW (formerly NSW Land and Housing Corporation) and North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd in accordance with the Deed, offering the first option to purchase Council's share in 100 North Street, Casino (Lot 61 DP856967) at market value as determined by the Valuer General or another valuer agreed between the parties;
2. Authorises the General Manager to:
   (a) Negotiate and enter a contract for the sale of 100 North Street Casino, should an offer by either Homes NSW or North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd be accepted,
   (b) Execute all documents and take necessary steps to give effect to the above actions.
3. Endorses the process outlined in this report for sale of Council's share in 51 East Street, Casino (Lot 1 DP 802516) at market value as determined by the Valuer General or another valuer agreed between the parties.
4. Commences the reclassification of Lot 1 DP 802516 as operational land in accordance with Section 30 of the *Local Government Act 1993* via an LEP (Planning Proposal) under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*
5. Authorises Council to lodge the planning proposal for the gateway with the Department of Planning.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 9: Manage resources responsibly and provide great service

9A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulations

9A1.2 Maintain Council's investment portfolio in accordance with requirements and aim for the best long-term benefit for the community

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

An estimated $5,000 would be required to engage a consultant to conduct the public hearing associated with the land reclassification process.

No additional financial impacts for Council are anticipated because of the reclassification itself.

Should the land be sold or an interest transferred, valuation and conveyancing legal costs would be incurred. These costs would be offset against any market value received from the sale.

Homes NSW have not been able to provide Council with structural reports or information on pending structural works. As a result, Council is unable to assess financial implications should it choose to retain an interest in the properties.

REPORT

In the 1990's, the then NSW Land and Housing Corporation, Casino Council, and North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd entered a Deed under the Local Government and Community Housing Program for the construction of five dwellings at 100 North Street Casino (1997) and five dwellings at 51 East Street Casino (era 1991). Casino Council provided the land, and the costs of construction of the residential dwellings were funded by NSW Land and Housing Corporation. Following construction, the percentage of ownership was calculated based on percentage of contribution.

A lease was executed in 1997 with North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd becoming the lessee for a period of 10 years with a 10-year option to renew for the dwellings constructed at 100 North Street Casino. Both options have expired, and the lease is operating on a holding over term (month by month).

A lease was executed in 1991 with North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd becoming the lessee for a period of 5 years with a 5-year option to renew for the dwellings constructed at 51 East Street Casino. Both options have expired, and the lease is operating on a holding over term (month by month).

North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd is responsible for the day-to-day management of these properties and Council operates as a silent owner.

Homes NSW (Property Access, Performance Programs and Partnerships team) has contacted Council to confirm management arrangements for these properties. Homes NSW is seeking advice on Councils preferred option of a lease renewal or if Council would like to proceed with option to exit the shared equity arrangement with a discussion on a buy-out option of either party share.

The option for a new lease would include Council being listed as a co-lessor but typically acts as a silent partner in the lease. Council would continue to be exempt from day-to-day management but remaining financially responsible for ownership share of any structural issues affecting the properties. Council has not been provided any inspection or structural reports which details Councils future financial risk.

Given the absence of structural information, the age of the dwellings, and the potential for unknown future liabilities, Council may wish to consider disposing of its ownership interest in the properties.

The buy-out option would include finding the market value of the property and then Homes NSW buying out Councils share of that market value.

100 North Street, Casino was reclassified to operational land by Council resolution on 28 June 1994 (G94-380). Council staff have been unable to locate any records where 51 East Street Casino was reclassified and by default remains classified as community land. As community land cannot be sold, exchanged, or otherwise disposed of, Council would need to formally reclassify the site to operational land before any disposal could occur for this property.

Image1 - 51 East Street, Casino

Image 2 - 100 North Street, Casino

To transfer Councils interest, a reclassification of land from community to operational land would be required in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* via an LEP (Planning Proposal) under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*

Council must prepare a Planning Proposal and consult with relevant government agencies. The proposal will then be placed on public exhibition so the community can review it and provide feedback. An independent facilitator will also run a public hearing to ensure community views are heard. All submissions and the outcomes of the public hearing will be reported back to Council before a final decision is made.

Council cannot sell or transfer its share of the land until this entire reclassification process is completed.

Council owns only a small share of the property. Under an existing legal agreement, if Council decides to sell its interest in the future, it must first offer it to Homes NSW at market value, as determined by the Valuer General or another agreed valuer.

CONSULTATION

Public consultation is not required for the disposal of operational land.

Council is required to undertake public consultation to reclassify land for the disposal of 51 East Street, Casino under the *Local Government Act 1993* to ensure transparency including holding a public hearing. A public hearing will provide opportunity for the community to make submissions to an independent party about the proposed reclassification. The outcomes of the proposed reclassification of operational land will be the subject of a further report to Council.

CONCLUSION

Community land is land that Council holds on behalf of the community for public use, enjoyment, and long-term benefit. This type of land is protected under NSW legislation, which means it cannot be sold or used for purposes outside its community function unless its classification is formally changed. The purpose of classifying land as community land is to ensure it remains available for public access, recreation, open space, or other community-focused activities.

Considering the transfer of Council's interest in 51 East Street and 100 North Street, Casino to Homes NSW supports the strategic alignment of each organisation's responsibilities. Homes NSW

is the NSW Government agency responsible for delivering social housing, supporting people experiencing housing stress, and improving access to safe and affordable homes.

Council retaining ownership of these properties does not provide a broader benefit to the community. Transferring Council's interest is consistent with the requirements of the existing legal deed and aligns with Council's strategic objective to ensure all property assets are used for their highest and best purpose.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Deed of ownership - Confidential (under separate cover)

15.2 CROWN LAND DRAINAGE EASEMENT FOR OVERLAND FLOW (CASINO)

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Casino's ageing stormwater network, built in the 1950s–60s, is no longer adequate for current rainfall patterns or the increased imperviousness of the urban area. Recent hydraulic modelling by Ardill Payne & Partners confirmed that several parts of Casino continue to experience localised flooding, and Council is now seeking grant funding to progress detailed design for the preferred piped upgrades to the main trunk system.

Investigations into extending an overland flow path from Warren Park to Barling Creek showed that while the concept could activate the trunk main's surcharge system, significant excavation and downstream constraints, particularly at Spring Grove Road and the Sewer Treatment Plant limit its feasibility.

Further flood assessment undertaken for the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct identified major flow obstructions at Spring Grove Road and the Sewer Treatment Plant, which redirect floodwaters through the industrial area during large events. Two mitigation options were assessed, with the preferred option being a new broad channel through adjacent Crown land near Naughtons Gap Road. However, this land is subject to an undetermined Aboriginal Land Claim, preventing any acquisition or construction.

Council cannot progress land acquisition until the claim is formally determined. To advance feasibility of the preferred overland flow option, Council must lodge a request with the NSW Aboriginal Land Claims Assessment Team for assessment of the outstanding claim.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Proceeds with investigations into the creation of a Drainage Easement over NSW Crown land.
2. Requests a priority desktop assessment of Aboriginal Land Claim 29512 over the Crown land parcels (Lot 7013 DP 92635 and Lots 310–317 DP 755727) to enable the creation of an overland flow pathway for stormwater and flood mitigation connecting Warren Park to Barling Creek.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 6: Provide infrastructure that meets community needs

6D Manage water supply, sewerage and drainage effectively

6D6 Improve local stormwater and drainage networks

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

REPORT

Casino's main trunk and supporting stormwater infrastructure was constructed during the 1950s and 1960s to alleviate local flooding caused by overwhelmed drainage systems during heavy rainfall. Since that time, increased rainfall frequency and intensity, combined with greater urbanisation and higher impervious surface coverage, have resulted in several areas of Casino continuing to experience localised flooding even during relatively minor storm events.

Ardill Payne & Partners was engaged to finalise a stormwater hydraulic model to assess the performance and impacts of the existing stormwater network within the Casino urban area. The assessment and associated mitigation options were presented to Council in 2023. Council is now seeking grant funding to progress detailed design for the preferred piped mitigation options aimed at improving the performance of the main trunk system.

In response to ongoing localised flooding issues, an extension of the overland flow path connecting Warren Park to Barling Creek was also investigated. Hydraulic modelling indicates that establishing this flow path would activate the surcharge system of the main stormwater trunk. However, the existing surface elevation of the trunk main means that relatively deep excavation would be required to construct channels capable of enabling effective surcharge initiation at Warren Park.

Council currently holds a 40-metre-wide easement extending from Warren Park through the former Primex site. This easement continues only as far as Spring Grove Road and the Council Sewer Treatment Plant, where existing infrastructure presents a significant constraint and prevents effective further stormwater discharge.

As part of the Ardill Payne mitigation assessment, extending the overland flow path along Spring Grove Road was also considered. Due to existing surface elevations along this corridor, the option did not provide sufficient hydraulic benefit and was therefore not identified as a preferred solution.

BMT was subsequently engaged to undertake a flood and risk impact assessment for the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct (RJP. The RJP comprises three industrial areas, including land affected by overland flow.

The study confirmed that during large flood events, breakout flow from the Richmond River passes through Casino before reconnecting with Barling's Creek via the gully system. This gully is significantly obstructed by Spring Grove Road, the Sewage Treatment Plant, and associated treatment ponds, which restrict the passage of flow toward Barling's Creek. As a result, floodwaters are redirected through the existing industrial area before spreading across the relatively flat land within the eastern portion of the precinct.

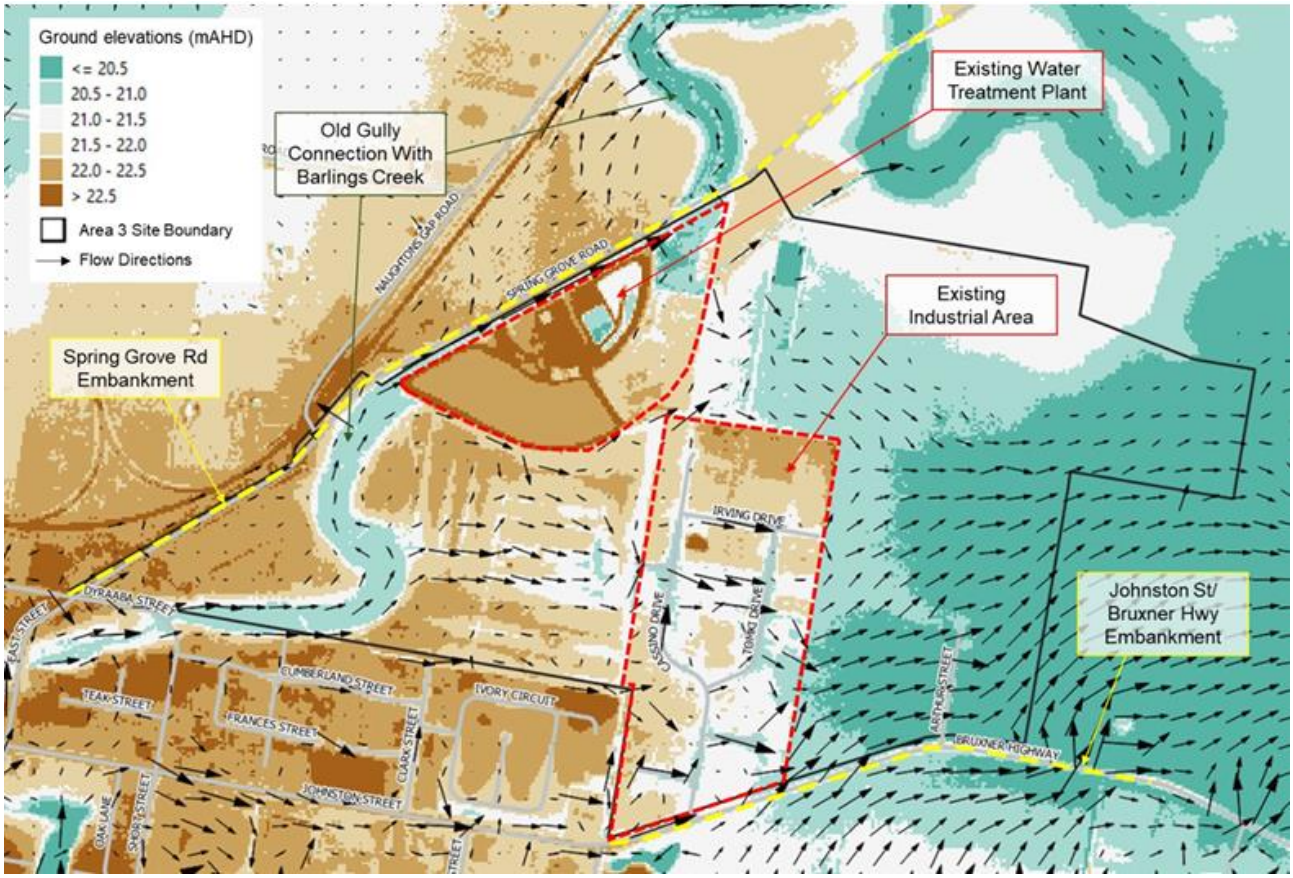


Image 1: BMT Flood Assessment Current Flood Condition (RJP Area)

Hydraulic options considered both the removal of the existing sediment ponds at the Casino Sewer Treatment Plant or alternatively the creation of a new broad channel within the Crown land adjacent to Naughtons Gap Road. Both mitigation options provide similar outcomes on flood impacts. Due to current operational use of the Casino STP the removal of the sediments ponds is not a preferred solution.

The option to create a new broad channel within crown land adjacent to Naughtons Gap Road to provide a link between two natural gullies involves creating a channel approximately 60m wide is currently constrained by an undermined Aboriginal Land Claim (29514) lodged August 2010. The Crown reserve R53560 for Camping and Travelling Stock is currently managed by Local Land Services and is currently tenured by a long-term grazing permit until 2030.

Under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*, Council has the authority to acquire land required for a public purpose. However, Council cannot proceed with any acquisition while an Aboriginal land claim remains undetermined; the claim must first be assessed and refused. If the land claim is approved, Council has no pathway to establish an overland flow corridor without the consent and agreement of the Local Aboriginal Land Council.

To advance the feasibility of this option, Council would need to lodge a formal request with the NSW Aboriginal Land Claims Assessment Team for a determination.

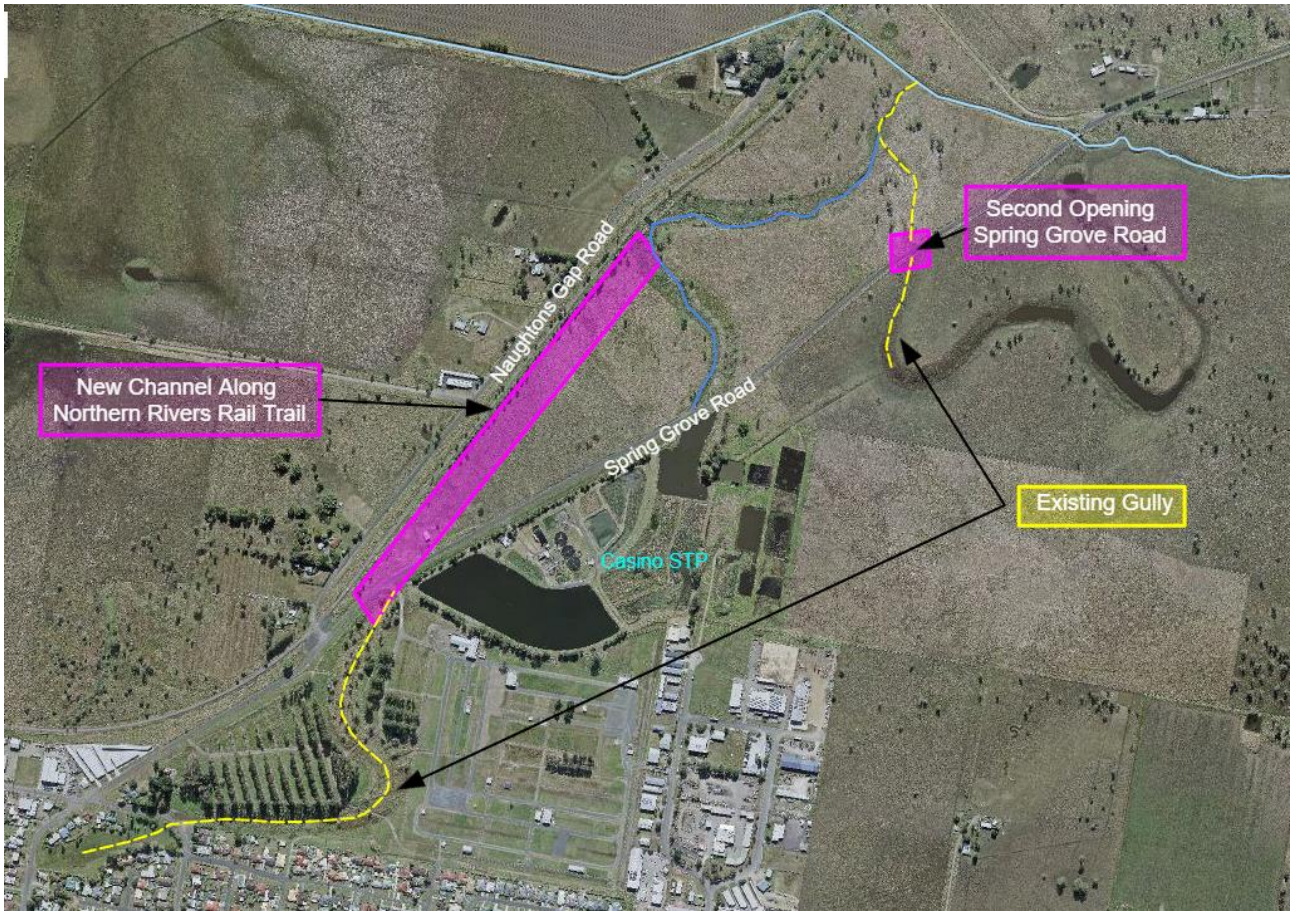


Image 2: Flood and overland flow stormwater mitigation option.

CONSULTATION

Council will consult with the Local Aboriginal Land Council and Local Land Services on the request to seek priority assessment on the undetermined Aboriginal Land Claim.

CONCLUSION

The flooding and stormwater assessments confirm that Casino's ageing stormwater network is no longer adequate to manage current rainfall and development conditions, resulting in ongoing

localised flooding. While alternative overland flow paths were investigated, existing surface levels and downstream infrastructure constraints limit their effectiveness. Regional flood studies further highlight the importance of this corridor for conveying breakout flows during major events. Targeted upgrades to the main trunk system remain the most effective mitigation measure, and progressing detailed design through grant funding is essential to improving Casino's long-term stormwater and flood resilience.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

15.3 CIVIC HALL MASTER PLAN

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council, with support from STEA Architecture consultants, prepared a draft Master Plan for the Casino Civic Hall. This work commenced in 2019 and included consultation with stakeholders and interested community members.

The draft Master Plan provides a comprehensive assessment of the building's condition and identifies opportunities to restore its original art deco character while improving its functionality as a contemporary performing arts and community venue. It also addresses structural, compliance, and operational considerations, including theatre technologies and service upgrades.

The formal adoption of the draft Master Plan was delayed due to the impacts of COVID-19. Council recently placed the draft Master Plan on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, with submissions closing on 24 March 2026. No submissions were received.

A final draft Master Plan is now presented to Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the draft Casino Civic Hall Master Plan.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 4: Celebrate our local identity and lifestyle

4B1 Support and deliver local events, festivals and cultural activities

4B1.3 Seek funding for upgrades to Casino Civic Hall to attract more touring performances

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council officers will continue to explore and pursue grant funding opportunities which can contribute to the works described in the draft Master Plan.

REPORT

Council, with support from STEA Architecture consultants, prepared a draft Masterplan for the Casino Civic Hall. Public consultation commenced in June 2019 with a workshop held at the Civic Hall, where feedback and information were gathered from stakeholders and interested community members. The draft document was subsequently developed over several months, supported by specialist trades and consultants engaged to provide expert input across relevant disciplines.

The draft Masterplan provided a detailed assessment of the condition of the Civic Hall and outlined potential development and restoration opportunities. It placed strong emphasis on reinstating the building's original art deco character while ensuring contemporary utility and functionality. The document addressed all aspects of the hall's structure and its compliance with applicable building codes and regulations that influence its operation and use. Significant consideration had been given to the hall's role as a performing arts venue, reflected in the detailed analysis of associated theatre technologies and operational requirements.

Renewed cost estimates for the proposed renewal works have been prepared to support Council's pursuit of future funding opportunities and to demonstrate a clear strategic approach to the long-term management of the Civic Hall. Since the commencement of the Masterplan process, Council has secured grant funding that enabled renewal of the main hall floor, lighting upgrades,

installation of fans, improvements to the speaker system, transition to a functional chair system, and interior painting.

The high-level estimate for major refurbishment works, building extensions, and comprehensive theatre and services upgrades (including air conditioning) is $5,587,612. Council will identify appropriate grant funding opportunities, with delivery of the works likely undertaken in stages.

The Casino Civic Hall features in the current Community Strategic Plan, with a specific action in the 2025-2026 Operational Plan, 4B1.3 ‘Seek funding for upgrades to Casino Civic Hall to attract more touring performances.’ Adoption of the masterplan is the first step toward achieving this action.

Click on the following link to view the plan https://richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Casino-civic-hall-master-plan-Rev-19-08-2020-1.pdf

CONSULTATION

Workshops were held at the Civic Hall in 2019 to gather initial information for the Master Plan, during which feedback and ideas were collected from stakeholders and interested community members. The formal adoption of the draft Master Plan was delayed due to the impacts of COVID-19. Council subsequently placed the draft Master Plan on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, with submissions closing on 24 March 2026, and no submissions were received.

CONCLUSION

The draft Master Plan outlines the key conceptual design elements and the long-term vision for the Civic Hall. While these concepts provide a strong foundation, they may evolve as detailed technical drawings are developed, allowing flexibility within the adopted plan while preserving the overall intent and future use of the building.

The proposed improvements aim to strengthen and expand community events, enhancing the Civic Hall’s role as a vibrant gathering place. By doing so, the project is expected to deliver meaningful social and economic benefits to the Richmond Valley, supporting local growth and enriching community life.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Detailed Cost Estimate - Revised 2026 (under separate cover)

16 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

16.1 WATER PRICING REVIEW UPDATE

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council received a detailed report on water pricing at its 18 November 2025 meeting and resolved the following:

"That Council:

1. *Receives and notes the results of the 2023 water pricing review and Council's commitment to further investigations in the Water for Life Strategy, Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program.*
2. *Continues to liaise with the Casino Food Company Ltd and other affected stakeholders on appropriate pricing structures that support Council's continued investment in water security and infrastructure and improve water pricing equity, while considering any potential impacts on the economic contribution of these businesses to the Richmond Valley.*
3. *Receives a further report on this matter in advance of the 2026/27 budget preparation process."*

Following this resolution staff have completed a detailed analysis of Council's cost of water production, this includes analysis on what it currently costs to both produce and reticulate water to all towns and villages in the Richmond Valley LGA. Council engaged Hydrology and Risk Consulting Pty Ltd (HARC), an independent industry specialist via a request for quote process to deliver an independent review of Council's water pricing analysis to:

- Evaluate the robustness and accuracy of Council's calculated cost of water production.
- Assess the methodology against industry best practice, relevant state guidelines, and applicable regulatory frameworks.
- Identify risks, gaps, and areas for improvement.
- Provide clear recommendations to ensure pricing is fair, evidence based, transparent, and able to withstand public and regulatory scrutiny.

The review provides valuable information to support preparation of the 2026/2027 budget process and is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

While the analysis and report focus on the financial sustainability of Council's Water Fund, it is recognised that the Casino Food Company Ltd (CFC) provides significant commercial and economic benefit to the Casino township and the broader Richmond Valley. CFC is a major regional employer and contributor to the local economy, and Council has historically supported the ongoing operation of the facility through access to town water supply under long-standing pricing arrangements under a water supply agreement between the CFC and Council from 2012.

At the same time, Council has an obligation to ensure that water pricing arrangements are transparent, equitable, financially sustainable and in line with the *Local Government Act 1993*. The analysis highlights that while Council can currently supply water to the CFC at a relatively lower unit cost, this outcome is dependent on substantial historic and ongoing investment by Council in water supply infrastructure, as set out in the *Water For Life 2050* strategy. This investment allows Council to manage operational and drought-related risks on behalf of all water users.

Council has had its agreement with CFC legally reviewed and the clear advice is that it is invalid and non-binding on Council, as a charge under the *Local Government Act 1993* cannot be agreed

in perpetuity, as doing so is an unlawful fetter on the decision making of future Councils. Therefore, a new water supply charge will need to be determined by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the water supply cost analysis findings and the independent review of Council's water pricing methodology;
2. Notes that the current water consumption charge applied to the Casino Food Company Ltd does not fully recover the cost of supply to it facilities and results in an ongoing financial loss to Council's Water Fund;
3. Notes that access to Council's town water supply provides the Casino Food Company Ltd with significant avoided costs, reduced commercial risk, and higher supply security, particularly during periods of drought, which are not reflected in current pricing;
4. Endorses discussions with the Casino Food Company Ltd to increase water consumption charges to achieve a more equitable and financially sustainable arrangement in line with the options outlined in this report;
5. Supports a transition toward an economic pricing framework aligned with Long Run Marginal Cost, infrastructure planning, and regulatory best practice.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 9: Manage resources responsibly and provide great service

9A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulations

9A1.5 Commence Stage 2 of water/sewer pricing and development contributions review

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

It is expected that increases in operating costs will continue to impact the operational budget of Council's Water Fund. This, along with a projected capital works program of approximately $42 million in the forward 10-year LTFP makes it imperative that Council has an equitable and sustainable pricing structure into the future to ensure Council's Water Fund has sufficient funds to deliver the services required by our community.

REPORT

Council conducted a preliminary review of water pricing in April 2023, in response to Councillors' concerns over pricing equity and future water security. The review looked at projected reserve balances and planned capital works in the Water and Sewer Capital Works Program for the following 10 years. The review also considered the historical pricing of the Casino Food Company Ltd (at the time NCMC), residential and other non-residential water customers. This review found that under the current water pricing arrangements, the gap is increasing year on year between the Casino Food Company Ltd.'s pricing and what other users are paying.

Council's Water and Sewer Engineering staff have recently completed a detailed analysis on the water production and reticulation costs for both the production of water in Casino, and the supply and reticulation of water for all the towns and villages in Richmond Valley LGA. This analysis shows there is significant cross-subsidisation across our LGA, not just in relation to the Casino Food Company Ltd, but between Casino and the Mid Richmond townships as well.

The Analysis

The analysis is based on the 2024/25 financial year water fund results and has calculated the costs of producing water in Casino along with supply to both the Casino Food Company Ltd and all other Casino users. The analysis has also calculated the cost of purchasing water for the Mid Richmond and the cost of supply to the Mid Richmond communities.

The following table summarises the results of the analysis:

	Value ($)	Applicable Volume (kL)	Description Item
Casino Water Production Cost	1.47/kL	2,293,710	Cost to produce water at Casino WTP and supply it to the North Reservoir.
Cost to Produce and Supply Casino	4.15/kL	954,615	Cost to produce and supply water to non-CFC consumers (In 2024/25 the charge was $3.25/kL for the first 200kL and $4.95/kL for greater than 200kL).
Cost to Produce and Supply Casino Food Company Ltd	1.48/kL	1,215,696	Cost to produce and supply water to CFC (In 2024/25 the CFC was charged $1.19/kL for all water consumed).
Mid Richmond Water Purchase Cost	3.03/kL	503,717	Cost to purchase water from Rous Water.
Mid Richmond Water Supply Cost	6.27/kL	503,717	Cost to purchase and supply water to the Mid-Richmond Communities. (In 2024/25 the charge was $3.25/kL for the first 200kL and $4.95/kL for greater than 200kL).

These results highlight:

- In 2024/25 CFC was supplied 2.293ML of water with the rest of the Casino water supply area supplied 0.954ML.
- There is cross-subsidisation across the entire LGA, this is mainly due to Council's uniform charging structure and that two separate water supply arrangements are in place across the Richmond Valley.
- The most heavily subsidised area is the Mid Richmond at a total cost of $6.27/kL, this is made up of $3.03/kL purchase price paid to Rous Water and the $3.24/kL supply cost.
- Casino Food Company Ltd is also significantly subsidised with a production cost of $1.48/kL with the charge in that year being $1.19/kL.

The calculated unit cost of supplying water to the Casino Food Company Ltd represents the marginal operational cost of production and distribution under existing infrastructure arrangements. This cost is only achievable because Council has already invested in, and continues to fund, significant shared infrastructure, including raw water extraction, treatment capacity, storage, reticulation networks, and compliance and operational capability. In the absence of access to Council's town water supply, the Casino Food Company Ltd would be required to fund, construct, licence, operate, and maintain its own independent water supply system. This would involve considerable capital investment and long-term operational, regulatory, and drought-related risk. These avoided costs are not reflected in the current pricing structure.

The analysis also assessed the Casino Food Company Ltd's current pricing and costs with the results following:

Item	Value ($)	Description
Cost to Supply CFC	1.48/kL	Cost to produce and supply water to CFC.
2024/25 CFC Consumption Charge	1.19/kL	FY25 water usage charge for CFC.
Profit Margin on 2025 Charge	-0.29/kL	Profit margin on water sales to CFC with consumption charge of $1.19/kL.
Total Profit on CFC	-354,917.88	Total FY25 loss on water sales to CFC.
Additional Revenue at $1.48/kL (Cost of Supply)	354,917.88	Additional revenue that would have been generated in 24/25 FY if CFC were charged cost price.
2025/26 CFC Consumption	1.27/kL	Current usage charge for CFC.

Item	Value ($)	Description
Charge		
Approx. Price Increase Required From 2026 Rate to Break Even	0.21/kL	Approximate price increase required to break even on the rest of FY26 CFC sales. This figure would require adjustment with CPI.
Approx. Price Increase Required From 2026 Rate For 14% Profit Margin	0.42/kL	Approximate price increase required to make 14% profit on the rest of FY26 sales to CFC.

As can be seen above, the water supply charge levied to the Casino Food Company Ltd is not sufficient to cover the cost of producing the amount of water it consumes. This information, now independently verified from HARC, is particularly useful to Council to begin discussions with the CFC in relation to increasing its water supply charges to a price where it is covering the cost of production plus a percentage that provides funding toward infrastructure investment. The 2012 deed mentions a 14% profit percentage, which is why a pricing option based on that percentage has provided.

Commercial Benefits of Access to Town Water Supply

Access to Council's town water supply provides the Casino Food Company Ltd with commercial benefits that extend beyond the direct cost of water production. These benefits include the avoidance of significant upfront capital investment, the transfer of asset management and compliance obligations to Council, and access to a reliable and professionally managed water supply system.

Importantly, connection to a town water supply provides a high level of supply security during periods of drought and water scarcity. Industrial water licences used for self-supply are subject to allocation limits, embargoes, or suspension during extreme conditions, whereas town water systems are managed to maximise continuity of supply to support public health, community needs, and regional economic activity.

This level of supply reliability has material commercial value for high-water-use, continuity-dependent industries such as abattoirs and is a key reason such facilities typically seek to connect to town water supplies where possible.

Independent Review

Hydrology and Risk Consulting Pty Ltd (HARC) was engaged to undertake an independent assessment of RVC's water pricing methodology (copy of report at Attachment 1), in particular the consultants were asked to look at the following:

- Evaluate the robustness and accuracy of Council's calculated cost of water production.
- Assess the methodology against industry best practice, relevant state guidelines, and applicable regulatory frameworks.
- Identify risks, gaps, and areas for improvement.
- Provide clear recommendations to ensure pricing is fair, evidence based, transparent, and able to withstand public and regulatory scrutiny.

In forming its opinion during the review HARC used guidance issued by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), including:

- Regulatory and Assurance Framework (RAF)
- Sound pricing and prudent financial management guidance
- Long Run Marginal Cost (LRMC) guidelines

HARC highlighted several strengths in the data that was supplied to it, this gives Council confidence in its calculations to inform discussions with the Casino Food Company Ltd in relation to its ongoing water consumption pricing, as it is shown that the current rate is below the actual cost of water production. The main strengths highlighted were:

- RVC has a robust and well-documented accounting methodology for calculating water production costs.
- Costs are transparently allocated across production, reticulation, and Casino Food Company Ltd (CFC) infrastructure.
- Calculations reconcile clearly to financial statements, asset registers, and water demand data.
- The methodology accurately represents actual historic costs of supplying water in 2024/25.

HARC found that the current methodology does not meet regulatory expectations for economic pricing, creating compliance and financial sustainability risks. It provided medium to long-term recommendations which would bring RVC's water pricing in line with best practice and achieve better financial sustainability for the Water Fund in the longer term.

Specifically:

- No estimate of Long Run Marginal Cost (LRMC) is used to inform usage charges.
- No economic cost recovery model (annuity or Regulatory Asset Base approach) is applied.
- Pricing relies on single-year accounting costs, rather than long-term forecasts.
- Pricing is not fully integrated with infrastructure planning or long-term financial planning.

The independent review by Hydrology and Risk Consulting Pty Ltd confirms that Council's current pricing methodology is robust on an accounting basis but does not reflect full economic pricing principles. In particular, the review notes that current charges do not incorporate Long Run Marginal Cost, future capital augmentation requirements, or the economic value of supply security and risk transfer.

As a result, while current pricing arrangements may appear competitive on a short-term unit cost basis, they expose Council's Water Fund to ongoing financial shortfalls and do not fully reflect the broader economic benefits received by large industrial users connected to the town water system. Moving to the full economic pricing approach is likely to lead to further increases in charges for all customers to reduce Council's reliance on external grant funding for water supply infrastructure projects.

As a result, the risks Council faces are as follows:

- Ongoing revenue shortfalls
- Exposure to future operational cost increases
- Weakened defensibility under regulatory scrutiny

In the report HARC has also given its opinion on the Casino Food Company (CFC) water consumption pricing and the impacts this could have on the water fund if not addressed.

- Water charges to CFC are governed by a 2012 Deed.
- Rising production costs and bulk water charges are not being recovered.
- In 2024/25, Council incurred an estimated loss of $356,000 on water supplied to CFC.
- Cost of production: $1.48/kL
- Current CFC usage charge (2025/26): $1.27/kL

This gap in water production cost and CFC user charge is unsustainable in the long term and contributes materially to the water business deficit.

HARC has included some short-term and medium to long-term recommendations.

In the short-term Council should:

- Increase CFC water usage charges above the current cost of production.
- Continue annual CPI increases to stabilise the pricing path.
- Reduce immediate financial losses while transitioning to best practice.

In the medium to long-term HARC recommends RVC progressively transitions to a compliant economic pricing framework by:

- Developing and applying an LRMC model to inform usage charges.
- Implementing a building block cost recovery model incorporating:
  - Operating and maintenance costs
  - Capital renewal and growth costs
  - Return on capital (annuity or Regulatory Asset Base approach)
- Aligning water pricing with:
  - Long-term financial planning
  - Asset management and capital works programs
  - Demand forecasts and growth scenarios

Pricing Scenarios

Pricing scenarios for the 2026/27 financial year have been developed to give Council options for water supply pricing for the Casino Food Company and the impact on revenues.

Base Scenario

The base scenario is as per Council's current long term financial plan, 5% increase across all categories.

	Scenario - Base Current LTFP 5% Increase		
	% Increase	**Charge 2026/2027**	**Yield 2026/2027**
Water Consumption Charges			
Residential Consumption Charges - first 200 kl	5%	3.65	2,860,322.50
Residential Consumption Charges - > 200 kl	5%	5.57	954,645.64
Non Residential Consumption Charges	5%	3.65	1,911,804.30
Casino Food Company	5%	1.33	1,636,797.75
TOTAL YIELD			**7,363,570.19**

Scenario One

Scenario One is Casino Food Company paying the $1.48/kL, ensuring cost recovery for the water supplied to them. This would be a 17% increase on the current year's price and would provide an additional $184,601.25 in income. All other users have a 5% increase as per the LTFP.

	Scenario - 1 Cost to supply CFC (per RVC Calc)		
	% Increase	**Charge 2026/2027**	**Yield 2026/2027**
Water Consumption Charges			
Residential Consumption Charges - first 200 kl	5%	3.65	2,860,322.50
Residential Consumption Charges - > 200 kl	5%	5.57	954,645.64
Non Residential Consumption Charges	5%	3.65	1,911,804.30
Casino Food Company	17%	1.48	1,821,399.00
TOTAL YIELD			**7,548,171.44**
ADDITIONAL YIELD			**184,601.25**

Scenario Two

Scenario Two is the Casino Food Company paying $1.69/kL which represents the cost of production plus a 14% profit margin, this would be a 33% increase on the current year's price and would provide an extra $443,043.00 in income. All other users have a 5% increase as per the LTFP.

	Scenario - 2 Cost to supply plus 14% profit margin		
	% Increase	**Charge 2026/2027**	**Yield 2026/2027**
Water Consumption Charges			
Residential Consumption Charges - first 200 kl	5%	3.65	2,860,322.50
Residential Consumption Charges - > 200 kl	5%	5.57	954,645.64
Non Residential Consumption Charges	5%	3.65	1,911,804.30
Casino Food Company	33%	1.69	2,079,840.75
TOTAL YIELD			**7,806,613.19**
ADDITIONAL YIELD			**443,043.00**

Scenario Three

Scenario Three has the Casino Food Company paying $1.83/kL which is 50% of the proposed Non Residential Water Supply Charge, this would be a 44% increase on the current year's price and would provide an extra $609,184.13 in income. All other users have a 5% increase as per the LTFP.

	Scenario - 3 CFC paying 50% of Non-Residential Rate		
	% Increase	**Charge 2026/2027**	**Yield 2026/2027**
Water Consumption Charges			
Residential Consumption Charges - first 200 kl	5%	3.65	2,860,322.50
Residential Consumption Charges - > 200 kl	5%	5.57	954,645.64
Non Residential Consumption Charges	5%	3.65	1,911,804.30
Northern Co-operative Meat Company	44%	1.83	2,245,981.88
TOTAL YIELD			**7,972,754.32**
ADDITIONAL YIELD			**609,184.13**

Scenario Four

Scenario Four has the Casino Food Company paying $3.65/kL which is the proposed Non Residential Water Supply Charge, this would be a 187% increase on the current year's price and would provide an extra $2,855,166.00 in income. All other users have a 5% increase as per our LTFP.

	Scenario - 4 CFC paying Non-Residential Rate		
	% Increase	Charge 2026/2027	Yield 2026/2027
Water Consumption Charges			
Residential Consumption Charges - first 200 kl	5%	3.65	2,860,322.50
Residential Consumption Charges - > 200 kl	5%	5.57	954,645.64
Non Residential Consumption Charges	5%	3.65	1,911,804.30
Northern Co-operative Meat Company	187%	3.65	4,491,963.75
TOTAL YIELD			**10,218,736.19**
ADDITIONAL YIELD			**2,855,166.00**

CONSULTATION

Water pricing is included in Council's Draft Revenue Policy which is presented to Council at the May Ordinary Meeting each year. The Policy is then placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days for community feedback. These submissions along with any amendments are presented back to Council at the June Ordinary Meeting for final adoption for the following financial year.

The General Manager is in regular communication with the Chief Executive Officer of the Casino Food Company Ltd in relation to water consumption pricing arrangements. Should Council adopt the recommendation, meetings will be scheduled to discuss options to achieve a more equitable and financially sustainable arrangement in line with the options outlined in this report.

CONCLUSION

Council recognises the significant economic and employment contribution of the Casino Food Company Ltd to the Casino township and has historically supported the business through favourable and stable water supply arrangements. However, the current pricing structure does not recover the full cost of supply and transfers financial and drought-related risk from the industrial user to the broader community.

A balanced approach is required that continues to support regional economic activity while ensuring that Council's water pricing framework is equitable, transparent, and financially sustainable. Transitioning towards an economic pricing framework aligned with Long Run Marginal Cost and long-term infrastructure planning will allow Council to more appropriately reflect the true cost and value of water supply while avoiding price shocks and maintaining constructive engagement with key stakeholders.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. HARC - Review of RVC Water Pricing Methodology (under separate cover)

16.2 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - MARCH 2026

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Rylee Vidler**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the status and performance of its cash and investment portfolio in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* s.625, Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl.212, Australian Accounting Standard (AASB 9) and Council's Investment Policy.

The value of Council's cash and investments as at 31 March 2026 is shown below:

Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
$16,046,456	$42,000,000	$6,250,000	$3,000,000	$18,462,485	$85,758,941

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 31 March 2026 was negative (3.17%) which was below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for March of 3.81% (annualised), which is Council's benchmark.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Financial Analysis Report detailing the performance of its cash and investments for the month of March 2026.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 9: Manage resources responsibly and provide great service

9A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulations

9A1.2 Maintain Council's investment portfolio in accordance with requirements and aim for the best long-term benefit for the community

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As at 31 March 2026, Council has earned $2,138,106 in interest and $550,310 in fair value gains from funds held in TCorp, for a total investment income of $2,688,416. This equates to 86.01% of the annual budget for interest and investment income of $3,125,750, noting the annual budget was adjusted upwards by $682,000 following the December Quarterly Budget Review.

Future fair value gains or losses will continue to be monitored and reported to Council.

REPORT

Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Cash Rate Update

The RBA increased the cash rate to 4.10% at the March meeting.

Rate of Return

The weighted average rate of return on cash and investments in March was negative (3.17%), a decrease in 845 basis points from the previous month. The rate of return is 698 basis points below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index of 3.81% (annualised) which is Council's benchmark.

Council's NSW Treasury Corporation IM Funds returned net losses of $494,582 during the month of March. The Medium-Term Growth Fund (MTGF) returned a loss of $316,288 and the Long-Term Growth Fund (LTGF) returned a loss of $178,294.

During March, financial markets experienced volatility following the outbreak of conflict in the Middle East. According to NSW Treasury Corp's monthly economic report, the supply shock from the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz is expected to materially increase global inflation and weaken economic growth, however the extent of the impact will depend on how long the supply of oil and other key inputs such as urea are disrupted.

The MTGF has a recommended investment timeframe of seven or more years (original investment was October 2018) and the LTGF has a recommended investment timeframe of 10 or more years (original investment was June 2021) during which time it is expected that there will be ups and downs in fair value gains. However, it should be noted that, despite the variation in returns, there has been no impact on the principal sum originally invested by Council.

Term deposits and floating rate notes continue to offer increasing rates of return, which is positive, however, some banking institutions are still limiting the number of deposits they will accept, and others are not accepting any deposits at present.

Council's Investment Portfolio

Council held cash and investments of $85,758,941 at 31 March 2026. This was made up of Council's Business Online Saver Account ($8,245,000), Macquarie Cash Management Account ($5,016,880), Term Deposits ($42,000,000), Floating Rate Notes ($6,250,000), Bonds ($3,000,000), NSW Treasury Corporation Investments ($18,462,485) and other bank accounts ($2,784,576).

Council's investment portfolio had maturity dates ranging from same day up to 1,813 days. Term deposits, floating rate notes and bonds of $51,250,000 represented 59.76% of the total portfolio as at 31 March 2026.

Council made the following new investments during March 2026:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Investment Term	Interest Rate
Beyond Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$4,000,000	6 months	4.80%
Bank of Sydney	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	3 months	4.60%
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	5.05%
Southern Cross Credit Union	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	5.15%
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	5.05%
QBank	Floating Rate Note	Y	$1,000,000	3 Years	3mBBSW +1.4%
Southern Cross Credit Union	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	5.50%
Total			**$15,000,000**		

Council had the following investment maturities during the month of March 2026:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Interest Earned
Beyond Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$4,000,000	$82,773
Bank of Sydney	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$42,616
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$43,118
Southern Cross Credit Union	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$42,882
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$42,882
Auswide Bank	Floating Rate Note	Y	$1,000,000	$168,121
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$42,384
Total			**$15,000,000**	**$464,776**

* Total interest earned across the life of the investment. Interest was paid quarterly whilst held.

Council had $18,462,941 in longer term investments being the MTGF and LTGF held with NSW Treasury Corporation as at 31 March 2026. The investment values and fair value returns are shown below:

Investment Holding	Fair Value 31 March 26	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) at 31 March 26	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) YTD	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) Life of Investment
Medium Term Growth Fund	$14,474,522	($316,288)	$389,203	$3,469,492
Long Term Growth Fund	$3,987,963	($178,294)	$143,388	$987,963
Total	**$18,462,485**	**($494,582)**	**$532,590**	**$4,457,455**

Environmentally Sustainable Investments (ESI's)

Council's cash and investments portfolio of $85,758,941 at 31 March 2026 includes $61,712,485 or 72.0% with no direct investment in the fossil fuel industry.

These percentages include Council's investments with NSW Treasury Corporation.

NSW Treasury Corporation has a stewardship approach to ESIs which focuses on managing environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks and opportunities, particularly climate change which is expected to impact portfolios over the long term. The stewardship policy states NSW Treasury Corporation believes incorporating these principles into investment decisions results in better risk-adjusted financial outcomes. Even though NSW Treasury Corporation takes this stewardship approach, its monthly reporting only highlights the different asset classes, not individual investments, and the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry.

CONCLUSION

During the month of March 2026, Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

As at 31 March 2026, Council's cash and investments totalled $85,758,941 with $16,046,456 of this being funds held in bank accounts. The weighted average rate of return was negative (3.17%) and total investment revenue equals 86.01% of budgeted revenue for the year to 31 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. RVC Investment Pack - March 2026 (under separate cover)

17 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

RECOMMENDATION

Recommended that the following reports submitted for information be received and noted.

17.1 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 MARCH 2026 TO 31 MARCH 2026

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Andy Edwards**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Development Applications report for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026.

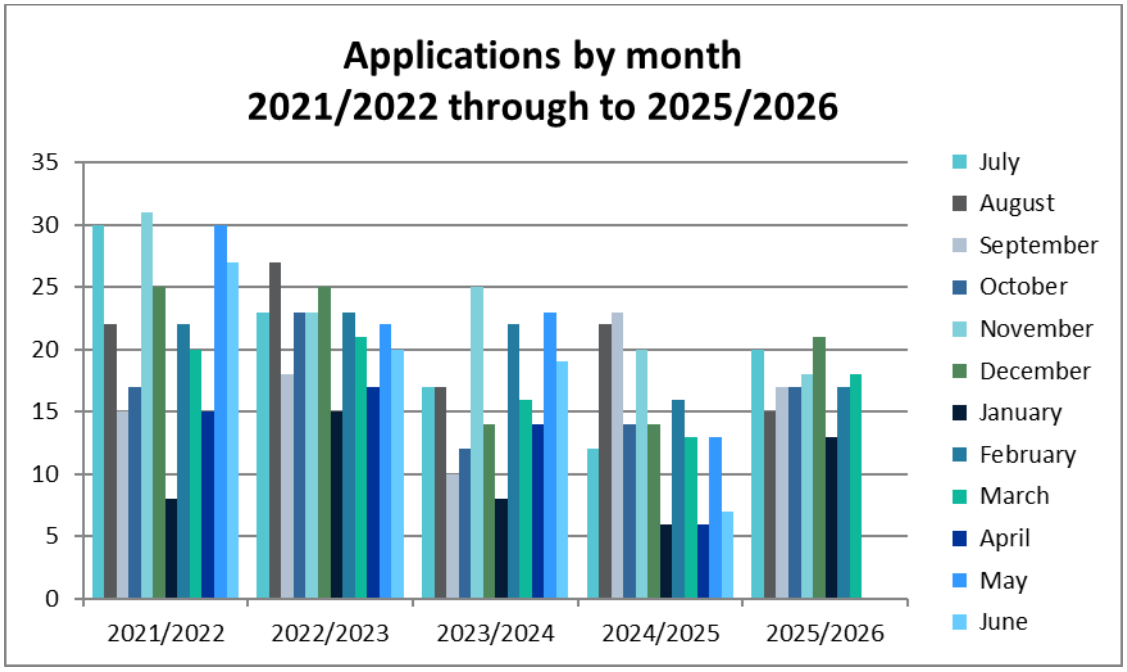
REPORT

This report provides a summary of development activity on a monthly basis. All Development Applications determined in the month are outlined in this report, including Section 4.55 approvals, applications which were refused and withdrawn, and Applications with no development value, such as subdivisions.

Councillors receive a fortnightly summary of the status of applications (including all received) and notifications of all determinations of Development Applications are included in the Community Newsletter.

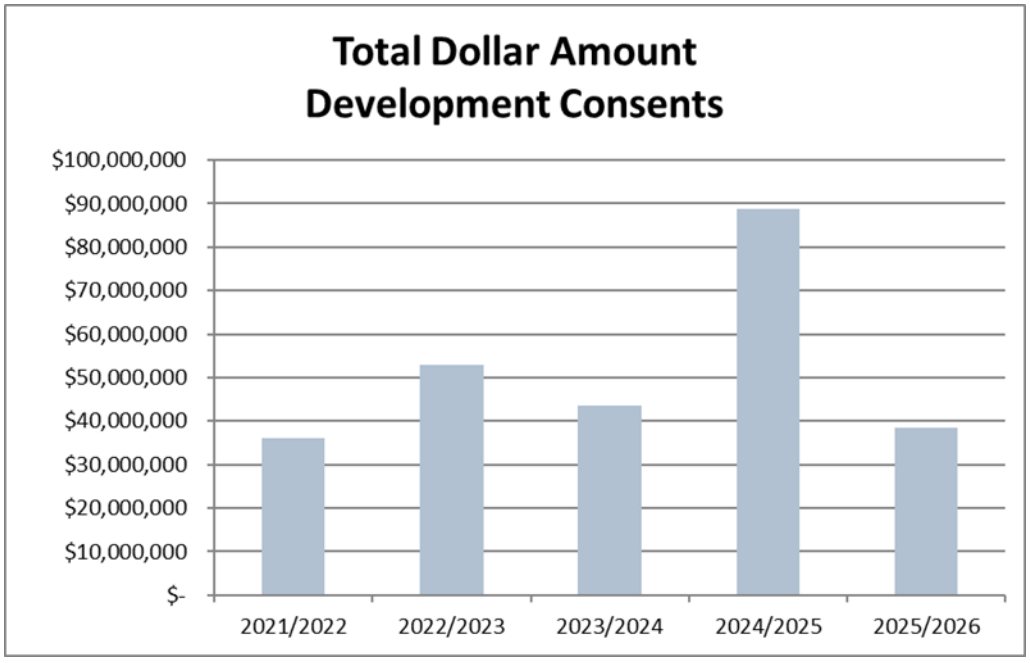
The total number of Development Applications and Complying Development Applications determined within the LGA for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026 was eighteen with a total value of $3,925,713.80.

The graph below shows the number of Development Applications processed by Council over five financial years.

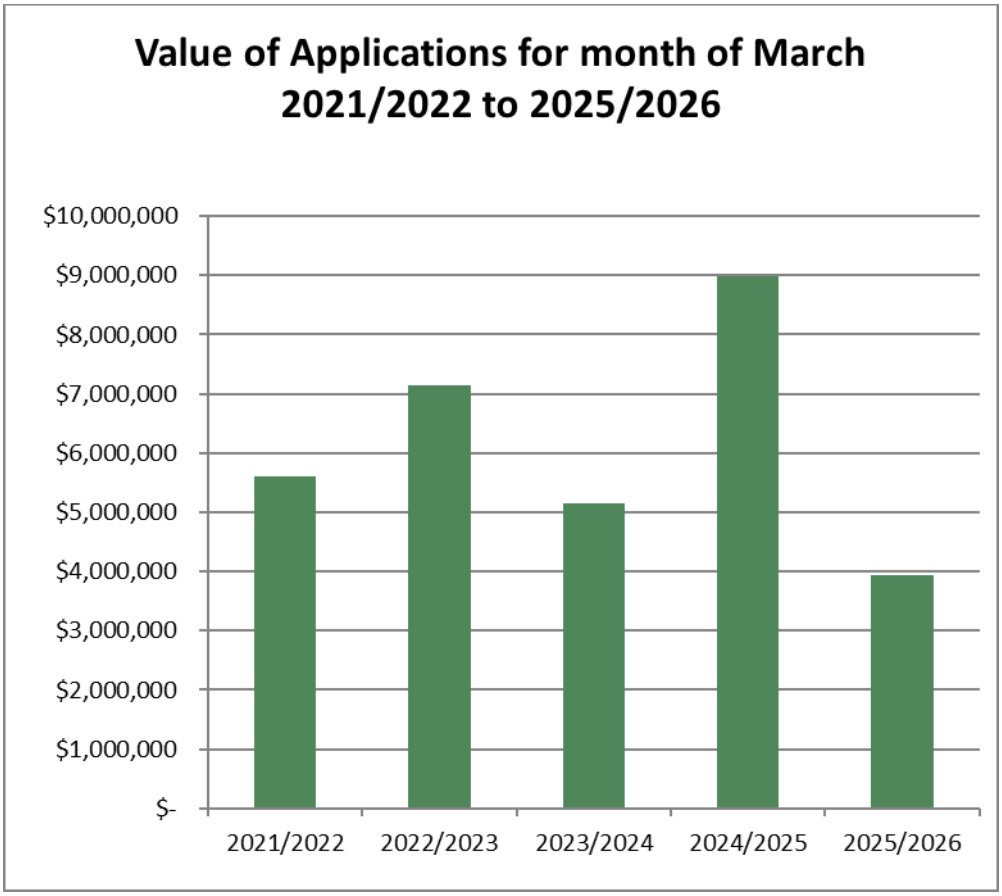


Graph 1: Monthly number of development applications and CDC's processed by Council over five financial years.

Graph 2 provides the annual value of Development Consents including CDCs issued by Council and private ceritifers over five financial years. Graph 3 provides a detailed review of the value for the reporting month of March 2026.



Graph 2 Annual value of development



Graph 3 Value of development for the month of March from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

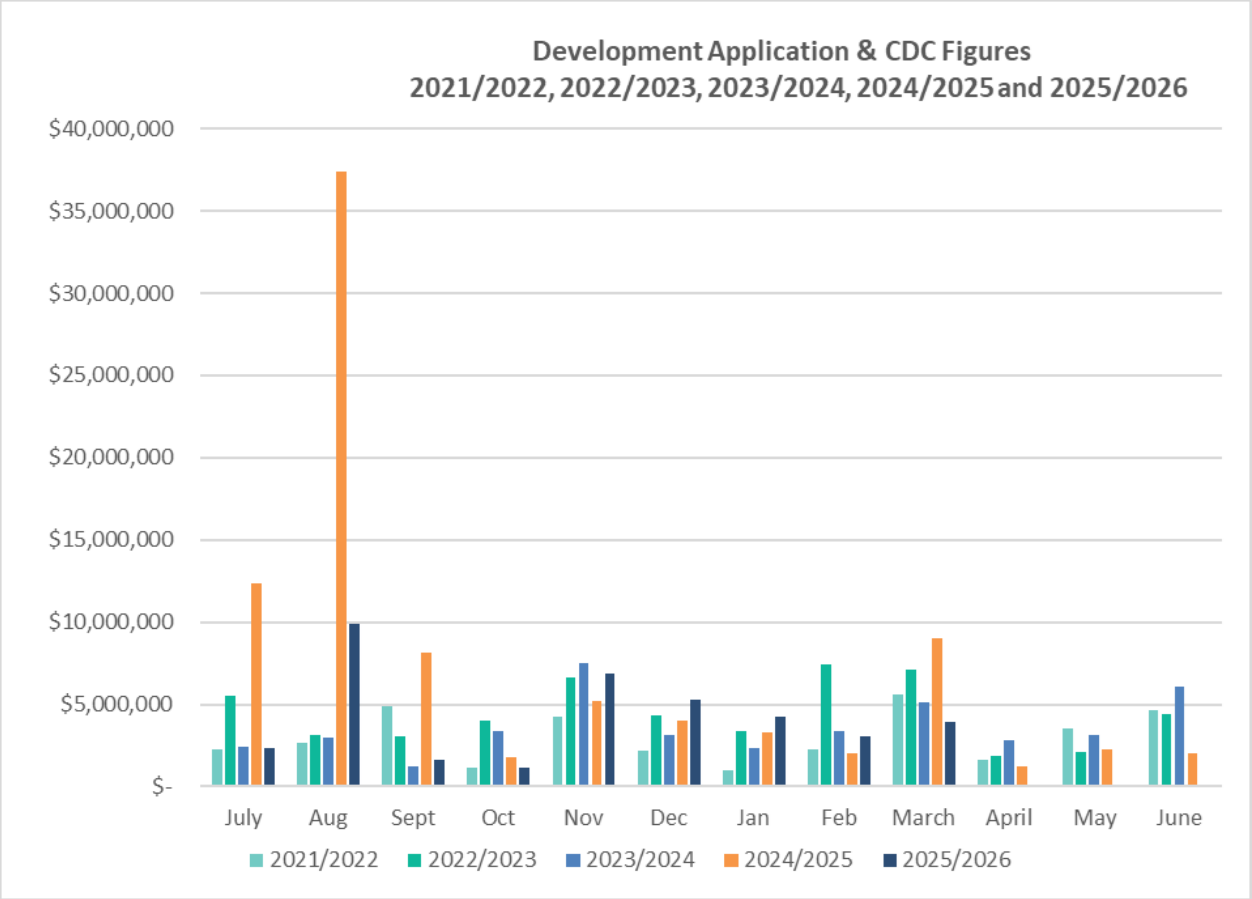
2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
20	21	16	13	18

Table 1: Number of Applications for the month of March from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

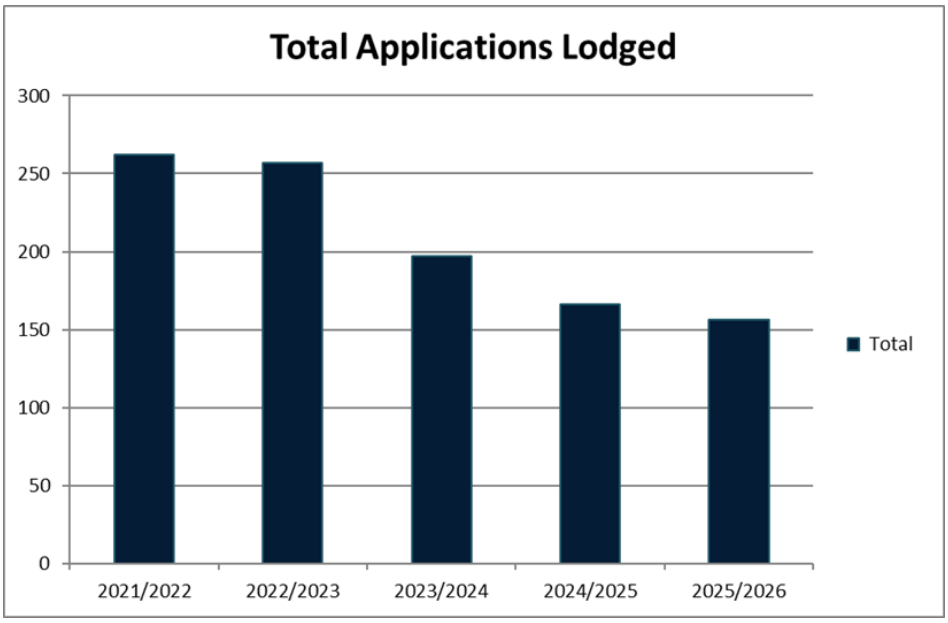
Number of Development Applications

The number of applications received by Council does not necessarily reflect the value of developments, as single large developments can be equivalent in value to a large number of more standard type developments such as sheds, dwellings and small commercial developments.

Graphs 4 and 5 detail the value and number of applications determined by Council over the past five years.



Graph 4: Value of development applications per month over five financial years.



Graph 5: Number of Development Applications & CDCs per annum over five financial years

Activity for the month of March 2026

General Approvals (excluding Subdivisions, Section 4.55)	14
Section 4.55 amendments to original consent	1
Operational Consent	-
Deferred Consent	-
Subdivision	-
Refused	1
Complying Development (Council Approved)	-
Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	2
Amended Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	-
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED	**18**
Rejected	-
Withdrawn	-
Average assessment days for applications determined in March 2026 (Planning & Building Combined)	**28**
No. of Integrated development applications determined in March 2026	**-**
No. of Designated development applications determined in March 2026	**-**

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0132	DIY Granny Flat	M A & K A Schneider	7 Wallum Drive, Doonbah	Proposed detached secondary dwelling, shed and associated works	19/01/2026	2/02/2026	3/03/2026	215,600.00
DA2026/0136	S D Henderson	S L Scarborough & S W Robson	11 Rodeo Drive, North Casino	Colourbond shed with request to vary DCP	20/01/2026	2/02/2026	11/03/2026	71,500.00
DA2026/0138	Fernleigh Drafting & Council Services	T L Cole & E J Taylor	45 Verulam View, Spring Grove	Detached steel framed shed with awning and retaining wall	23/01/2026	30/01/2026	5/03/2026	157,000.00
DA2026/0139	Barker Studio Pty Ltd	C J N Eberhardt	16 Wirraway Avenue, Evans Head	Demolition of existing dwellings and construction of a new two storey dwelling with associated works	28/01/2026	10/02/2026	17/03/2026	1,807,300.00
DA2026/0142	Professional Planning Group - PPlan	M B Stephen & W M Candy	340 Naughtons Gap Road, North Casino	Installation of resited structure to create dual occupancy and ancillary works	30/01/2026	23/02/2026	17/03/2026	147,000.00
MA2026/0020	Russell Dent Builder	R M & S M Mazzocato	1/8 Elm Street, Evans Head	S4.55(2) - Reduced setback to strata property boundary	31/01/2026	27/02/2026	31/03/2026	0.00
DA2026/0143	C Childs	T M McGowen	243 Woodburn Evans Head Road, Woodburn	New single-storey dwelling	1/02/2026	10/02/2026	10/03/2026	155,300.00
DA2026/0144	S G Masters	S G & G M Masters	945 Spring Grove Road, Spring Grove	Construct an enclosed terrace extension to dwelling including retaining walls and associated works	2/02/2026	10/02/2026	13/03/2026	176,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026 (Cont'd)								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0145	D J Bowles	D Bowles	40 Martin Street, Coraki	Re-sited dwelling and associated works	4/02/2026	12/02/2026	13/03/2026	254,559.80
DA2026/0147	Artisan Pools Pty Ltd	A D & E S Johnson	4 Frances Street, Casino	Installation of an inground fibreglass swimming pool	9/02/2026	13/02/2026	16/03/2026	87,480.00
DA2026/0148	Third & Public Pty Ltd	A & C R & G M Hodges	6 Sparkes Place, North Casino	Inground concrete swimming pool with tiled surrounds	10/02/2026	20/02/2026	18/03/2026	106,180.00
DA2026/0151	M M Sawatzki	M M & R W Sawatzki	205 Baraang Drive, Broadwater	Installation inground fibreglass swimming pool	18/02/2026	24/02/2026	20/03/2026	51,050.00
DA2026/0152	Play Design Studio	J R James	9 Surry Street, Coraki	New steel framed shed on concrete slab	19/02/2026	2/03/2026	26/03/2026	38,500.00
DA2026/0159	Fernleigh Drafting & Council Services	M J & S A Innes	44 Laurel Avenue, Casino	Attached steel framed carport	23/02/2026	3/03/2026	27/03/2026	11,740.00
DA2026/0163	Approved Services Pty Ltd	A F McDonald	3 View Street, Fairy Hill	New single storey dwelling	27/02/2026	5/03/2026	31/03/2026	370,759.00

Summary of Council Certified Complying Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Flood Affected Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Privately Certified Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Submitted to Council for Registration**	**Date Accepted**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
CDC2026/0023	Home Building Certifiers Pty Ltd	Aboriginal Housing Office	25 Frederick Street, Casino	Demolition of dwelling and ancillary structures	12/03/2026	19/03/2026	12/03/2026	70,000.00
CDC2026/0024	Buildcert Certification Pty Ltd	G M & G F Bebb	5 Cedar Street, Evans Head	Demolition of existing shed & erection of detached steel framed shed	30/03/2026	7/04/2026	30/03/2026	65,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act with a Clause 4.6 Variation for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Refused under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Refusal Date**	**Estimated Cost**
DA2026/0100	J P Quinn	Ms S D Gampe	100 Mahogany Road, New Italy	Re-sited house including alterations and additions to the structure	12/11/2025	18/11/2025	5/03/2026	140,745.00

Summary of Development Applications Rejected under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Rejected Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Withdrawn under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Date Withdrawn**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

17.2 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - MARCH 2026

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Rylee Vidler**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the month of March 2026.

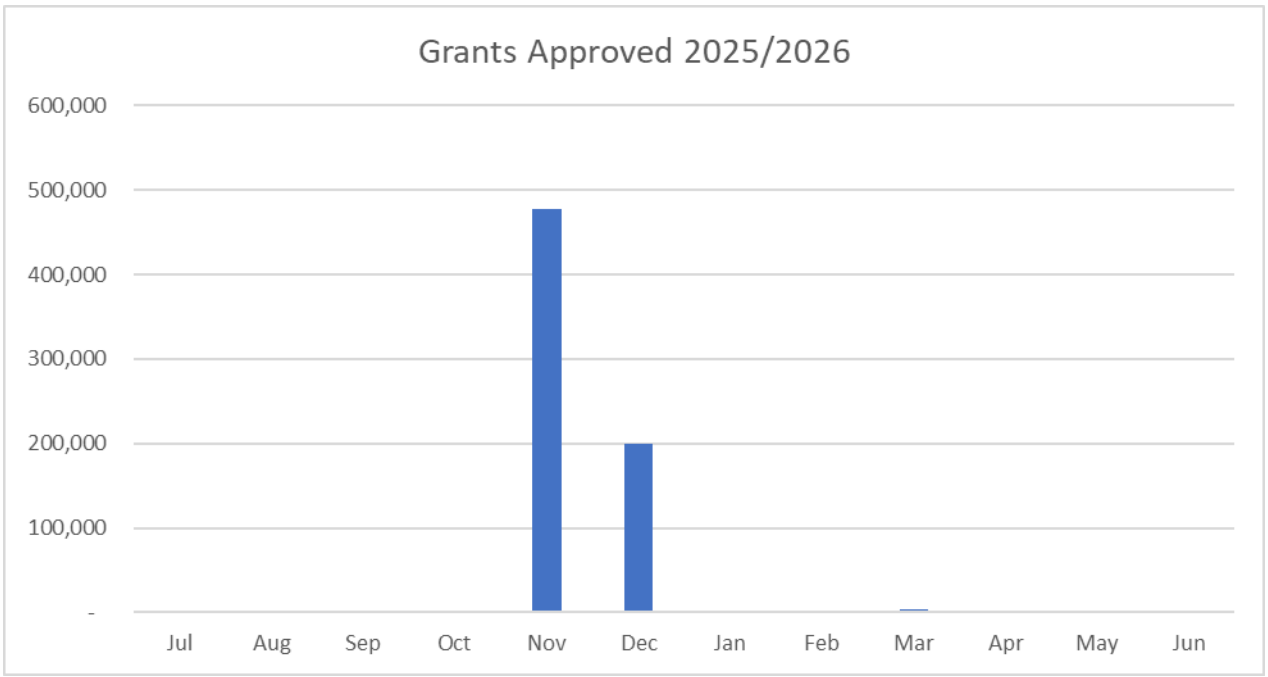
REPORT

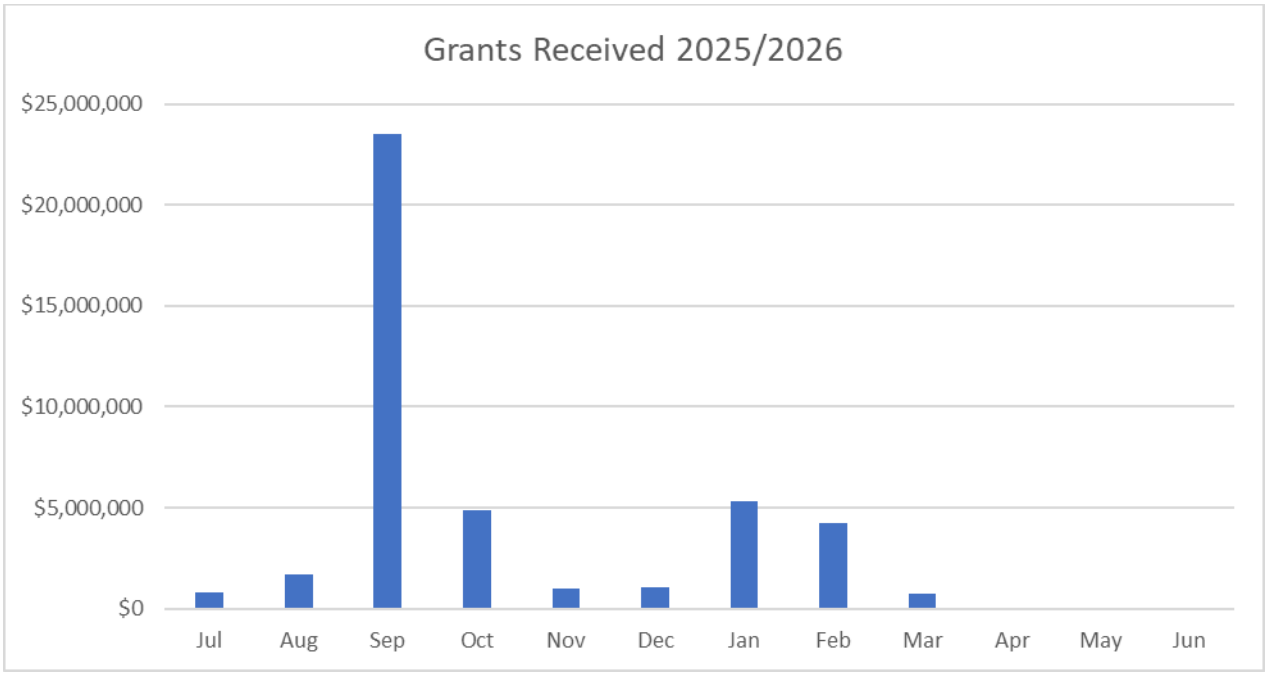
This report provides information on grant applications that have been approved, grants that have been received, grant applications that were unsuccessful and grant applications that were submitted for the month of March 2026.

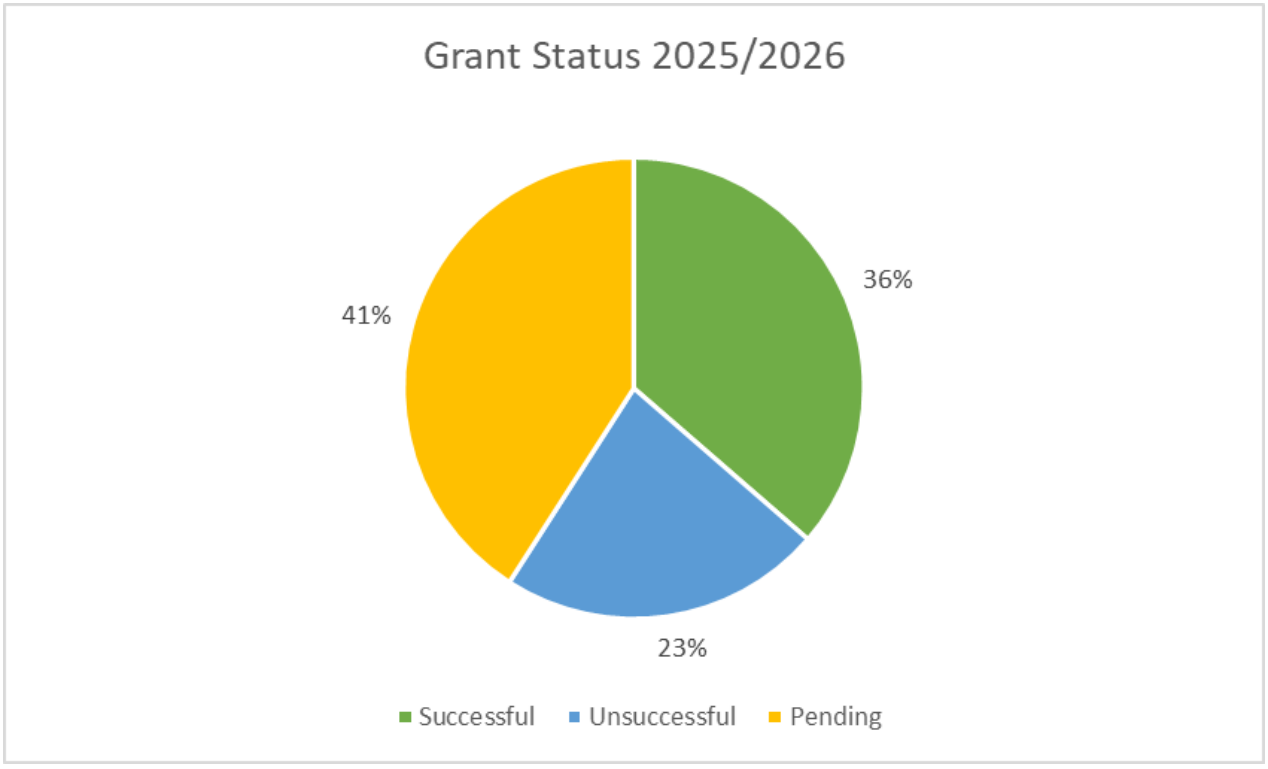
During the reporting period, Council submitted one new grant application and was notified that it was successful. Council was not notified of any unsuccessful applications.

Council received $745,182 during March from two previously approved grants.

A summary of grants approved and received, as well as the status of applications for the current financial year to 31 March is shown below:




Grants Received 2025/2026
$25,000,000
$20,000,000
$15,000,000
$10,000,000
$5,000,000
$0
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun


Grant Status 2025/2026
36%
41%
23%
Successful
Unsuccessful
Pending

Grant Applications Submitted

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted
Youth Week 2026 Events	NSW Office of Youth (State)	Youth Week 2026	$ 10,158	$ 3,829	$ 6,329	4 March 2026
Comment: If successful, this funding will be used to deliver two youth events in partnership with Casino Youth Hub and Mid Richmond Neighbourhood Centre.						
Her Way: Connecting Casino CBD with Queen Elizabeth Park	Transport for NSW (State)	Safer Cities: Her Way 2	$ 1,000,000	$1,000,000	$ -	6 March 2026
Comment: If successful, this funding will be used to design and deliver an infrastructure program to improve the safety of women and gender diverse people in Casino CBD and navigation to Queen Elizabeth Park.						

Grants that have been received

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
YES Program	Office of Local Government (State)	Local Government Apprentice, Trainee and Cadet Program Round 1	$ 519,276	$ 519,276	$ -	8 November 2024	$ 25,035 12 March 2026	$ 85,269
Comment: Payment received for third milestone claim.								
Roads to Recovery 2024/25 to 2028/29	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Federal)	Roads to Recovery Program	$ 8,819,517	$ 8,819,517	$ -	N/A - Annual allocation	$ 720,147 25 March 2026	$ 2,124,590
Comment: Quarter 3 instalment for the 2025/2026 allocation.								

Grants that have been approved

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Approved
Youth Week 2026 Events	NSW Office of Youth (State)	Youth Week 2026	$ 10,158	$ 3,829	$ 6,329	4 March 2026	23 March 2026
Comment: This funding will be used to deliver two youth events in partnership with Casino Youth Hub and Mid Richmond Neighbourhood Centre.							

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.3 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT JANUARY - MARCH 2026

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Ngarie Macqueen**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Customer Service Report for the period 1 January – 31 March 2026.

REPORT

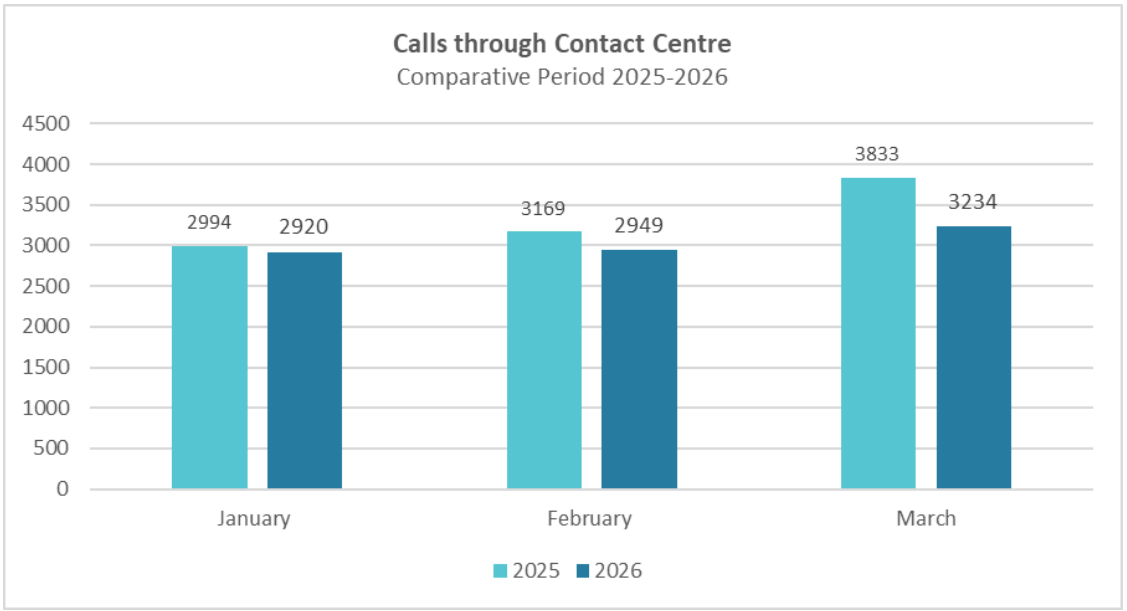
Customer Service Delivery

Council's team is committed to consistently delivering professional and caring customer service to the Richmond Valley community through all areas of works performed. The information contained within this quarterly report demonstrates the significant variety and volume of tasks completed by Council's customer-facing staff working within several different teams throughout the organisation. Relevant benchmarks, as outlined in the Customer Service Charter and Standards, are discussed below where appropriate.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAM

Call Statistics

A total of 9,103 calls were handled by the contact centre team during the reporting period. This includes 5,600 calls received through the queue, 251 calls directly to Customer Experience (CE) agents and 3,252 outbound calls made by CE staff. The contact centre has exceeded all service targets for the reporting period, including 85.46% of calls answered within industry standard of 30 seconds. The average time each caller spends in the queue is 18 seconds, 0.61% average of abandoned calls, and an average call time of 2:50 minutes.



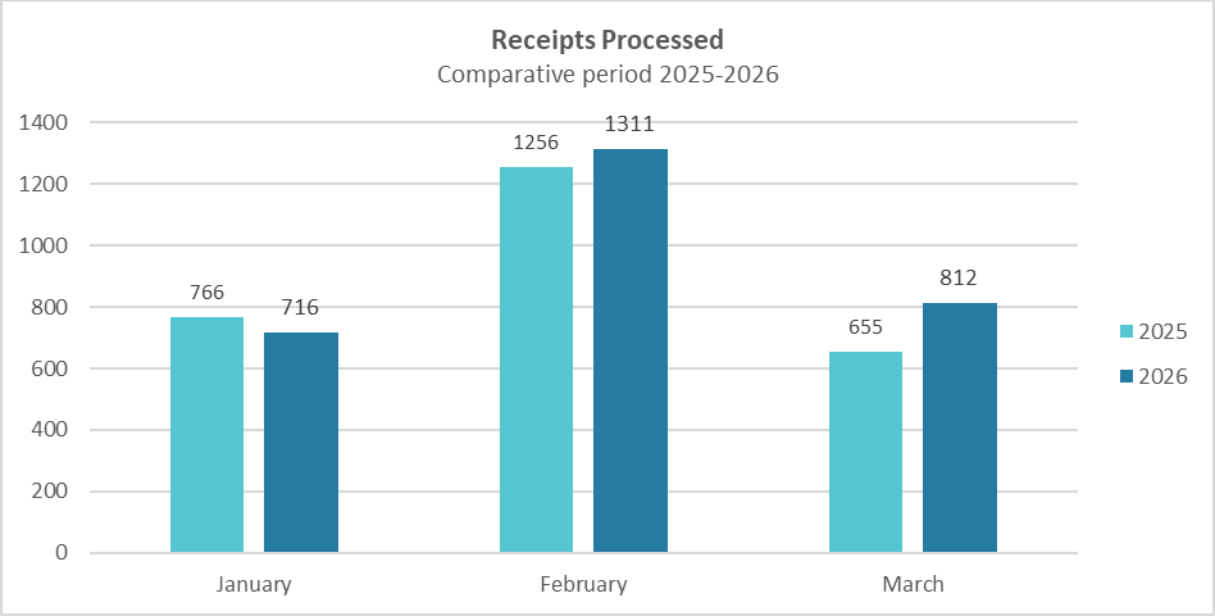
Graph 1: Calls received into the call centre

Receipt and Administration Statistics

A total of 2,839 receipts were processed for the reporting period. February saw an increase in the number of receipts processed, which can be attributed to the rates instalment period.

Customers preferred payment methods are as follows:

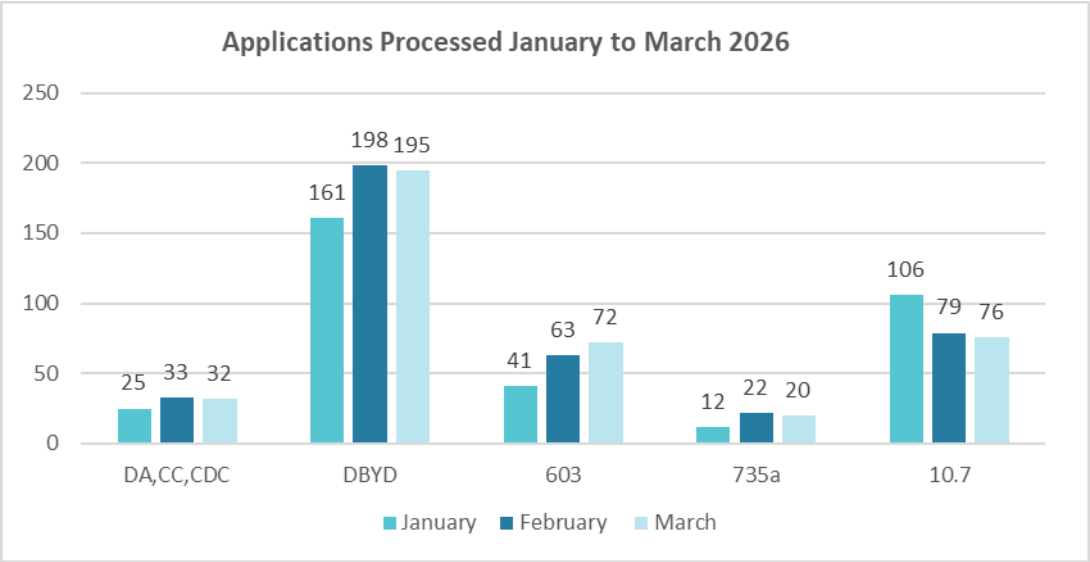
- 60% EFTPOS.
- 24% as cash payments.
- 11% were paid via direct bank transfer.
- 5% by cheque.



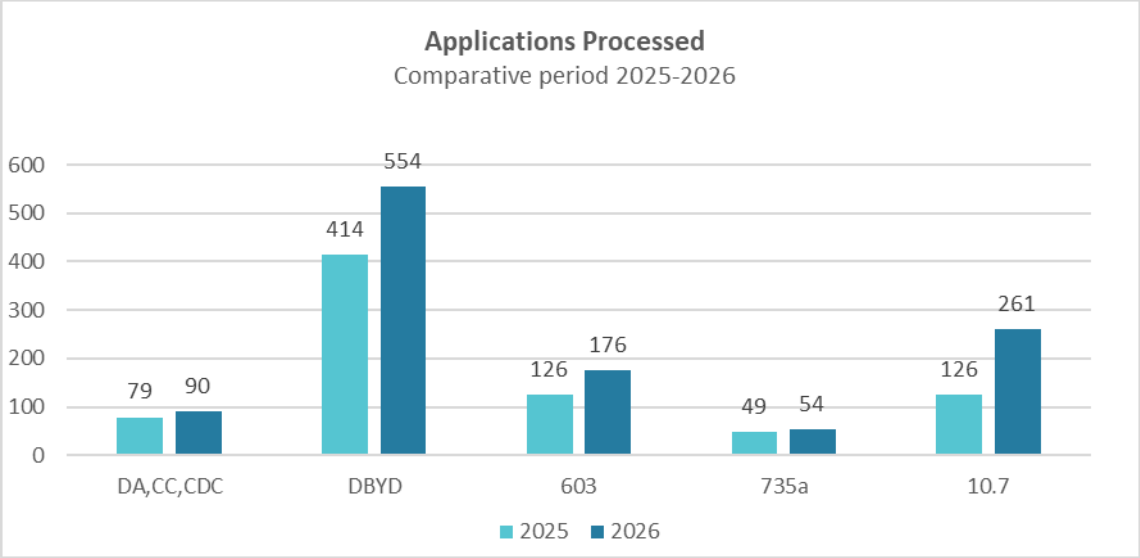
Graph 2: Total number of receipts

Certificates and Customer Requests

A total of 491 Section 735A, 10.7, and 603 Certificates were received in the reporting period with 98.4% completed within set timeframes in accordance with Council's service standards.



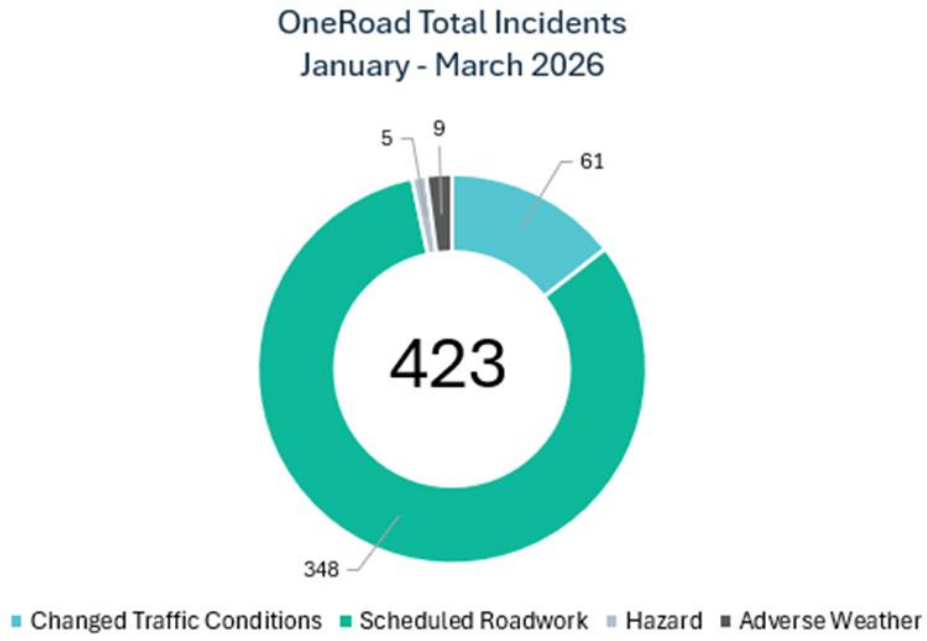
Graph 3. Applications received



Graph 4. Applications comparison

OneRoad – Key Statistics

Members of the CE team collaborate with Roads and Drainage, Events and Assets teams, as well as Emergency Services to ensure all scheduled and unplanned road incidents are entered through the OneRoad portal in a timely manner. Road users can be confident conditions and closures on the Live Traffic app are current and are regularly updated to include details of expected delays and alternative routes to minimise disruptions.



Graph 5: Total planned and unplanned road incidents recorded

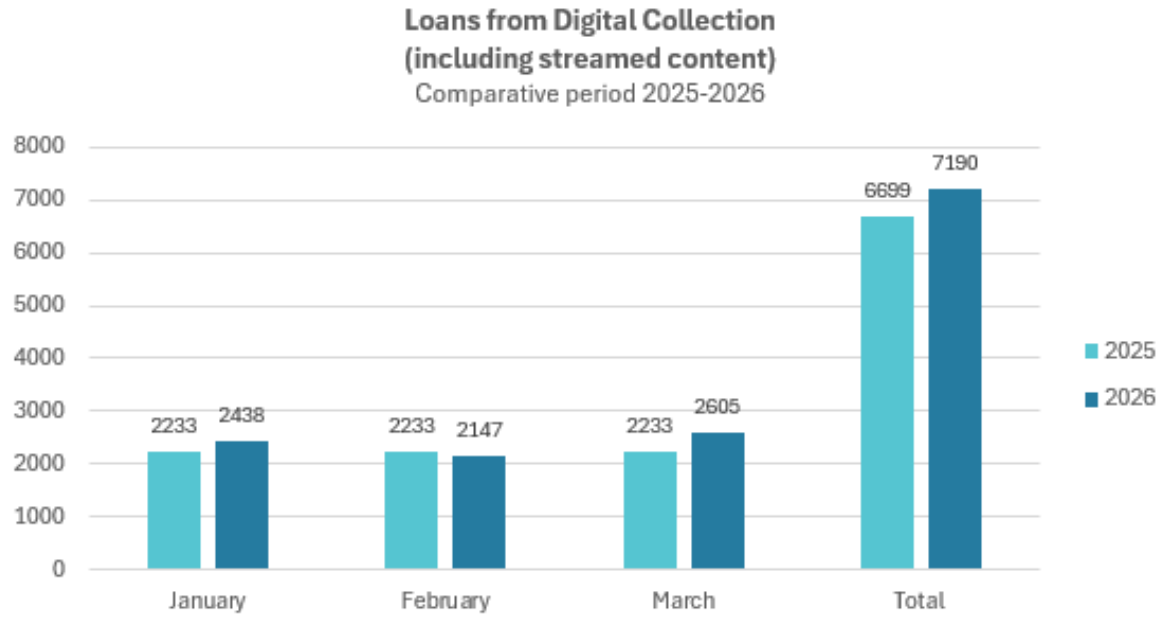
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TEAM

Development Concierge

The Development Concierge fielded 733 enquiries during the reporting period. Majority of the enquiries for the reporting period were in relation to residential alterations and additions, including swimming pools and sheds.

The Development Concierge remains committed to customer response service levels, by end of the next business day. Complex enquiries may require greater research which is generally done with the assistance of technical staff. Customer enquiries are answered with verbal and email responses.

The first responders continue to offer a planning portal assistance service to applicants, providing full case management throughout the assessment process to ensure customers receive quality support and imposed timeframes are achieved.

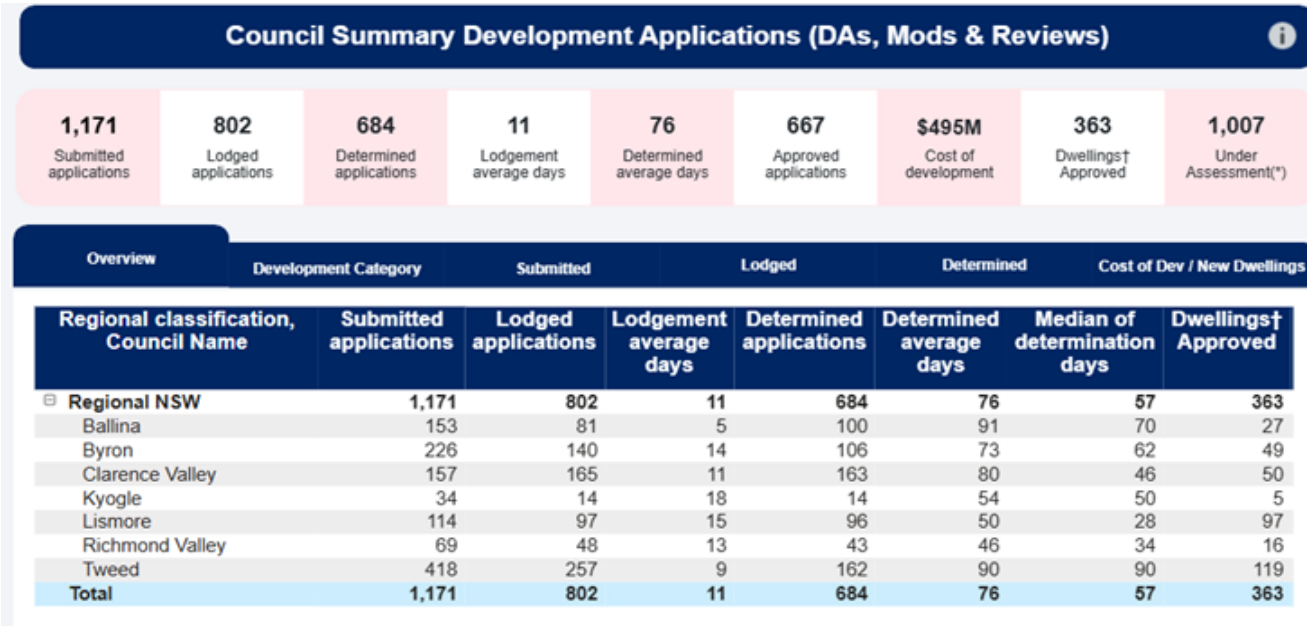


Graph 6 Concierge enquiries by type

E-Planning Portal – Key Statistics

To combat the national housing crisis, the NSW Government has set a target for an additional 377,000 homes in NSW by 2029. To achieve this, all councils have been given notice to reduce assessment times in line with the Minister's expectations, with the aim of fast tracking the approval process and achieving the new home target within the tight timeframe. Councils' pre-assessment and assessment times will be monitored monthly by the Department of Planning to ensure they are maintaining their assigned assessment times.

Council regularly delivers the most efficient assessment times across all development types, in comparison to all councils in the Northern Rivers area.



Council Summary Development Applications (DAs, Mods & Reviews)

1,171	802	684	11	76	667	$495M	363	1,007
Submitted applications	Lodged applications	Determined applications	Lodgement average days	Determined average days	Approved applications	Cost of development	Dwellings† Approved	Under Assessment(*)

Overview | Development Category | Submitted | Lodged | Determined | Cost of Dev / New Dwellings

Regional classification, Council Name	Submitted applications	Lodged applications	Lodgement average days	Determined applications	Determined average days	Median of determination days	Dwellings† Approved
Regional NSW	**1,171**	**802**	**11**	**684**	**76**	**57**	**363**
Ballina	153	81	5	100	91	70	27
Byron	226	140	14	106	73	62	49
Clarence Valley	157	165	11	163	80	46	50
Kyogle	34	14	18	14	54	50	5
Lismore	114	97	15	96	50	28	97
Richmond Valley	69	48	13	43	46	34	16
Tweed	418	257	9	162	90	90	119
Total	**1,171**	**802**	**11**	**684**	**76**	**57**	**363**

Figure 7 NSW Planning Portal Council summary comparison

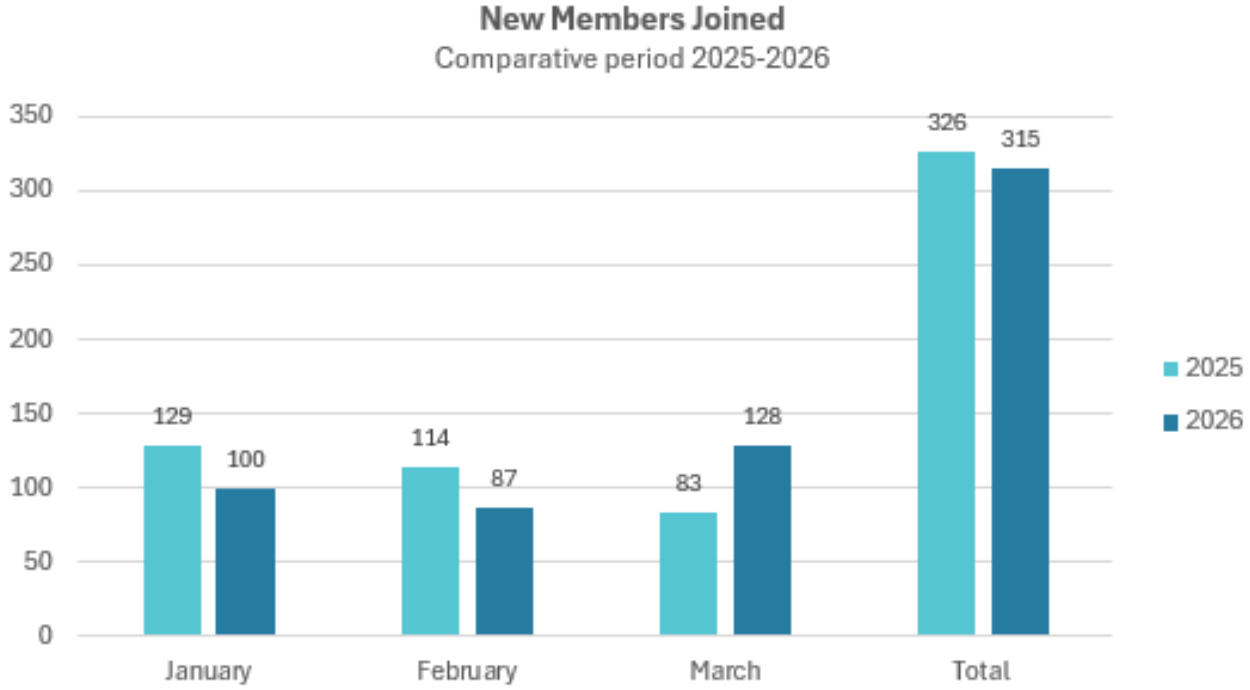
Application Type	Totals	Jan	Feb	March
Total DA Received	**69**	19	25	25
Total CC Received	**18**	5	7	6
Complying Development	**3**	2	0	1
Subdivision Certificate	**3**	2	0	1
S138 - Road Reserve Activities	**20**	6	6	8
S68 - Plumbing Permits & Events	**114**	24	47	43
PC Appointments	**18**	3	7	8
Occupation Certificate	**24**	4	11	9
Building Certificate	**6**	1	2	3
Private Certificate	**22**	8	6	8

Figure 8 Applications received via the NSW Planning Portal

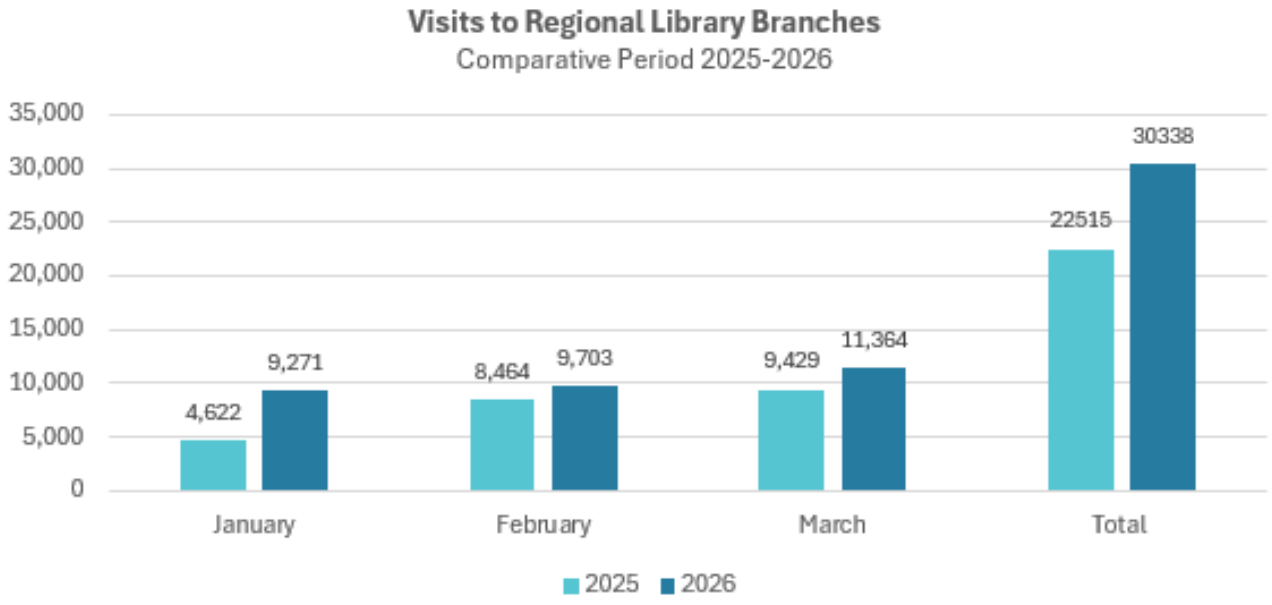
REGIONAL LIBRARY TEAM

New Members and Visitation – Key Statistics

The figures below display a comparison of newly joined members to the Regional Library service, and visits to all Regional Library branches throughout the January - March period. There was a 3.37% decrease in the number of new members joining the Regional Library as compared to the same period in 2025, with overall visitation up by 34.75%.



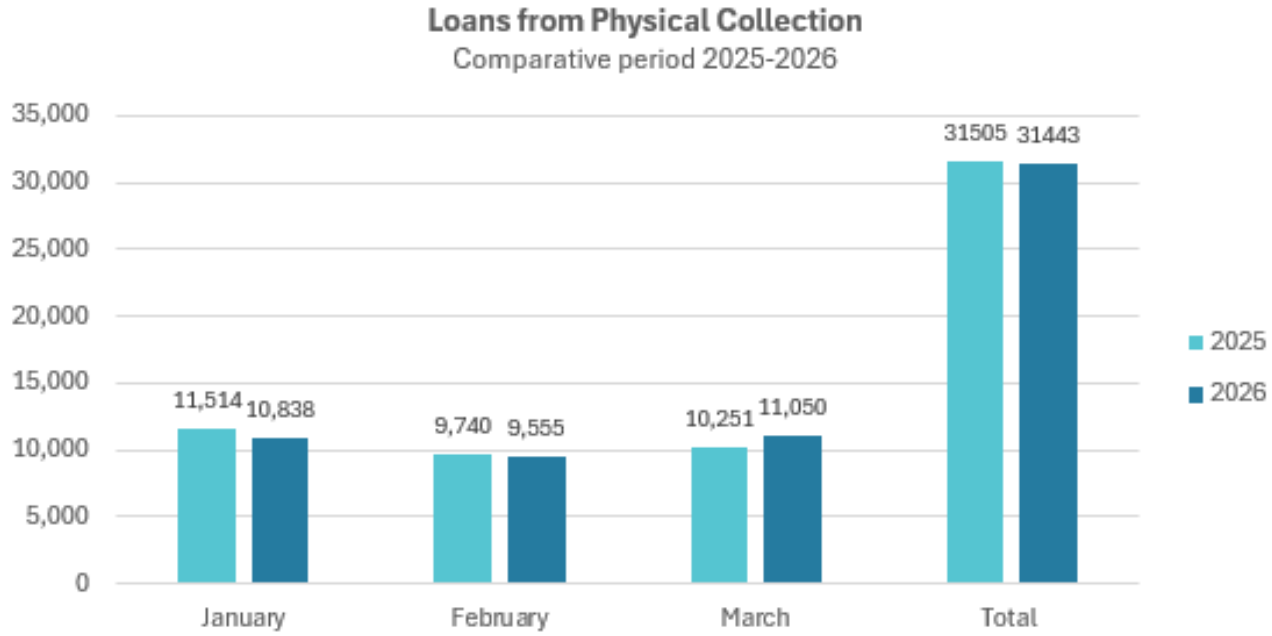
Graph 9 The number of new members to join the Regional Library



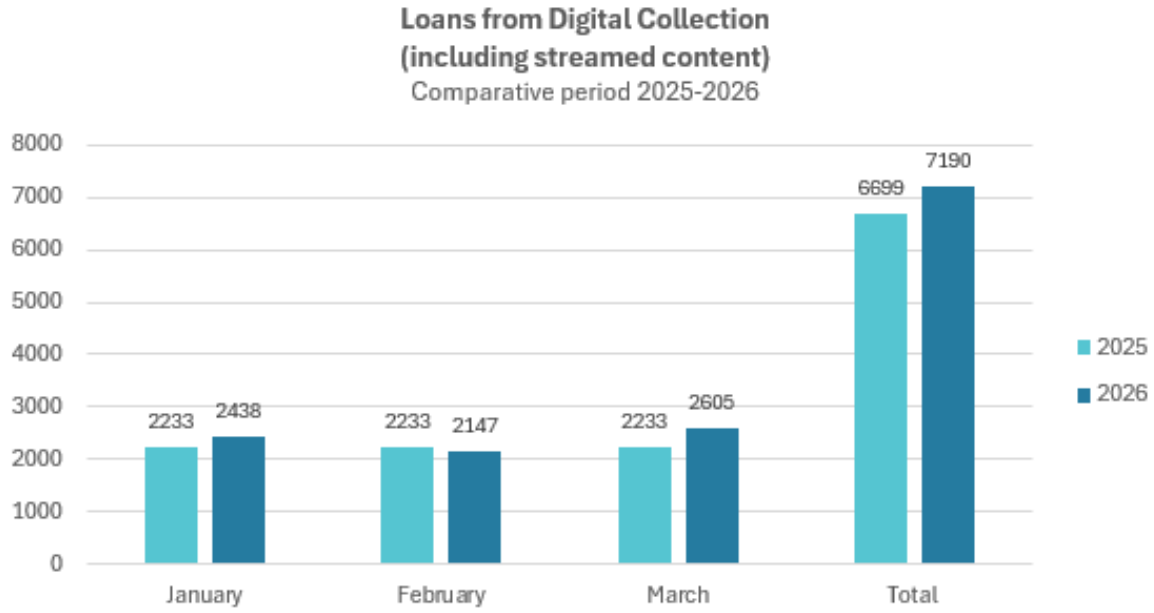
Graph 10 Visits to Regional Library branches

Loans for the Regional Library – Key Statistics

The figures below display the number of loans for the Regional Library's physical and digital collections for the January - March period. As compared to the same period for the previous year there has been a 7.33% increase in digital loans, and a 0.20% decrease in physical loans. The most popular items in the Regional Library's digital collection for this quarter were the eAudiobooks, who made up 49% of digital loans for this period.



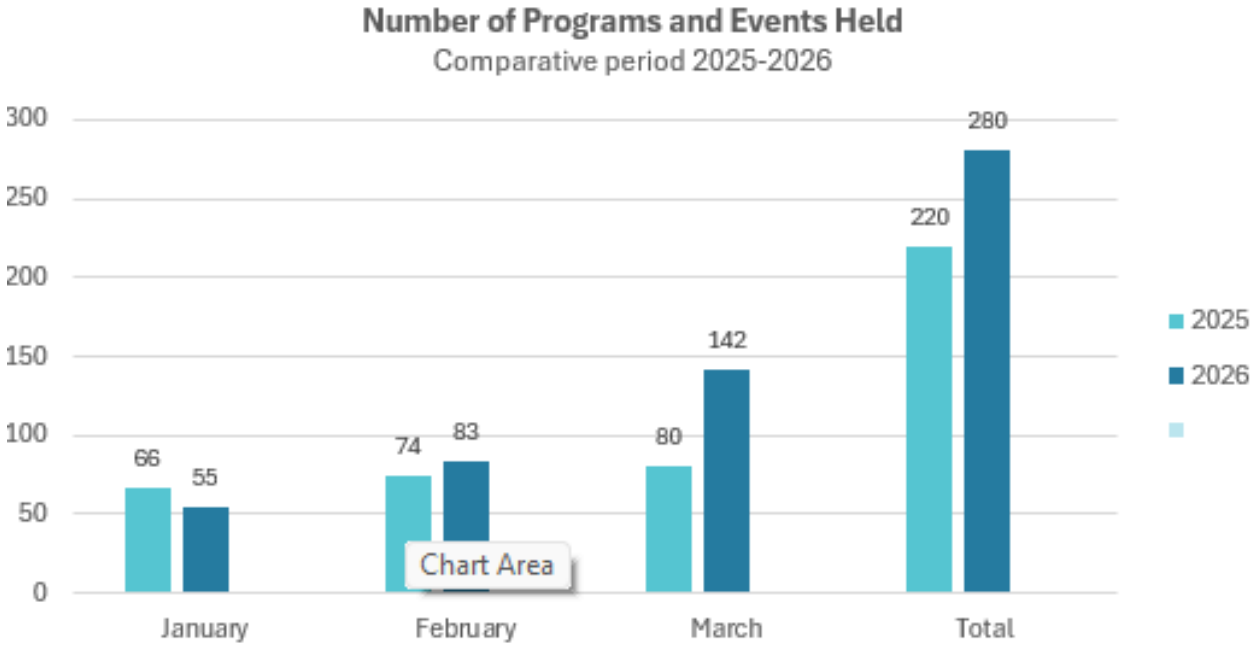
Graph 11 Loans from the Regional Library's physical collection



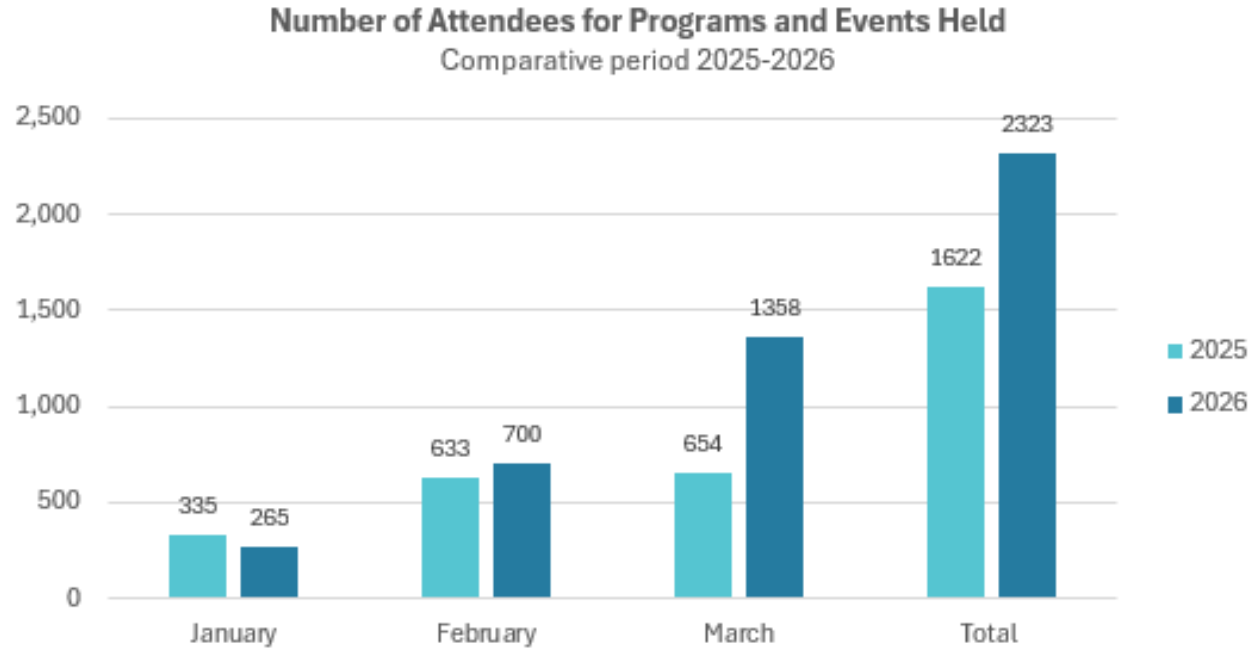
Graph 12 Loans from the Regional Library's digital collection

Regional Library Programs and Events – Key Statistics

The Regional Library team continues to develop and run a range of programs and events for community members of all ages both onsite at library branches and in an outreach capacity within the community. During the January - March period there was a 27.27% increase in the number of programs and events held and a 43.22% increase in the number of attendees as compared to the same period in 2025.



Graph 13 Number of programs and events held by the Regional Library

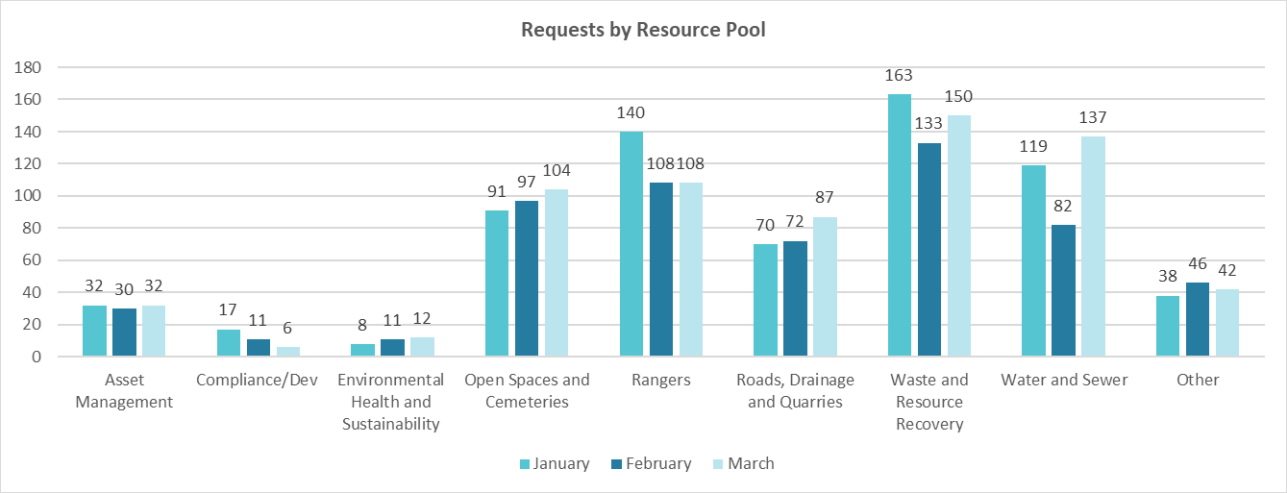


Graph 14 Number of attendees for programs and events held by the Regional Library

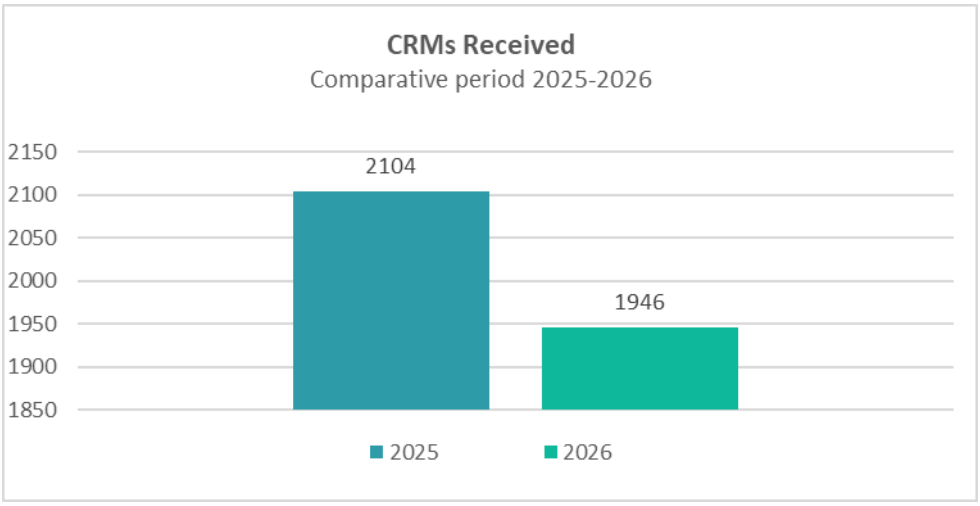
RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL TEAM

Customer Request Management System (CRMS) - Key Statistics

Council's CRMS provides a structured process for Council to receive, track, and respond to community requests received across a broad range of services, including roads, animal management, waste, water, and sewer services. During the reporting period, a total of 1,946 new service requests were logged.



Graph 15 Number of customer requests received



Graph 16 Customer requests comparison

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.4 PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE OFF REARDONS LANE

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the information contained within the report on the proposed road closure adjoining Reardons Lane, Swan Bay; and
2. Notes that a future report will be presented to Council for determination of the proposed road closure following the consultation required under the *Roads Act 1993.*

REPORT

Council has received an application from an adjoining landowner requesting the closure and purchase of a section of public road adjoining Reardons Lane.

The road is currently unnamed and was transferred to Council as the Roads Authority in 1995. It is classified as an unsealed gravel road and is not maintained by Council. The road functions as a no-through road. The applicant has advised that they undertake all maintenance of the road and utilise it as their driveway access.

In accordance with Section 38B of the *Roads Act 1993*, Council is required to undertake the relevant consultation prior to closing a public road for disposal. This process will include notifying relevant authorities, adjoining landholders and inviting feedback.

A further report will be presented to Council following the completion of the public consultation period for determination.

Map: Showing proposed road closure for disposal.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.5 ROAD RECLASSIFICATION OF BOUNDARY CREEK ROAD, BROADWATER

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Considers the information contained within the report for the road reclassification of Boundary Creek Road, Broadwater; and
2. Notes that following consultation a future report will be presented to Council for determination.

REPORT

Boundary Creek Road is a 1.5 km rural no-through road located north of Broadwater and forms the boundary between the Richmond Valley and Ballina Shire local government areas. The road intersects only with Legges Lane and provides access to agricultural landholdings and eight rural residences, three of which are within the Richmond Valley Council area and five within Ballina Shire. The road terminates in an unsealed turnaround area, provides access for authorised commercial fishing and restricted 4WD access to the beach for emergency services.

The first 900 metres of Boundary Creek Road, extending from Blackwall Drive (Old Pacific Highway), remains a sealed pavement in poor condition; showing signs of deterioration, including edge cracking, extensive past pothole repairs and vegetation growth encroaching within the sealed surface. These defects indicate that while the pavement is still serviceable in parts its condition is likely to continue to decline over time without more substantial intervention.

Image 1: Showing condition of road seal on Boundary Creek Road (taken 2 March 2026).

The final 600 metres of the road had deteriorated significantly prior to the 2022 flood event, with pavement failures beyond the scope of routine maintenance. Following the flood damage, emergency works were undertaken that involved applying gravel to restore basic access. As a result, this section now functions as an unsealed rural access road rather than a sealed pavement.

The land use and access characteristics of the road is limited, serving only cane farming paddocks, eight rural residences and the commercial fishers/emergency services beach access. Traffic counts undertaken since the closure of public beach access in March 2021 show a marked reduction in daily vehicle movements, with overall traffic volumes remaining low (44 annual average traffic vehicles per day including 33.2% heavy vehicles). These usage patterns are consistent with a low order rural access road.

Image 2: Showing condition of unsealed section on Boundary Creek Road (taken 2 March 2026).

Reinstating and renewal of a sealed pavement would require full pavement rehabilitation and a substantial capital investment. Given the low traffic volumes and the absence of broader network significance, maintaining this road as an unsealed road may represent the most cost effective and operationally appropriate approach. Ongoing maintenance would focus on periodic grading, drainage management and surface renewal as required to ensure safe access for residents and agricultural operations.

Option 1: Reconstruct and reseal

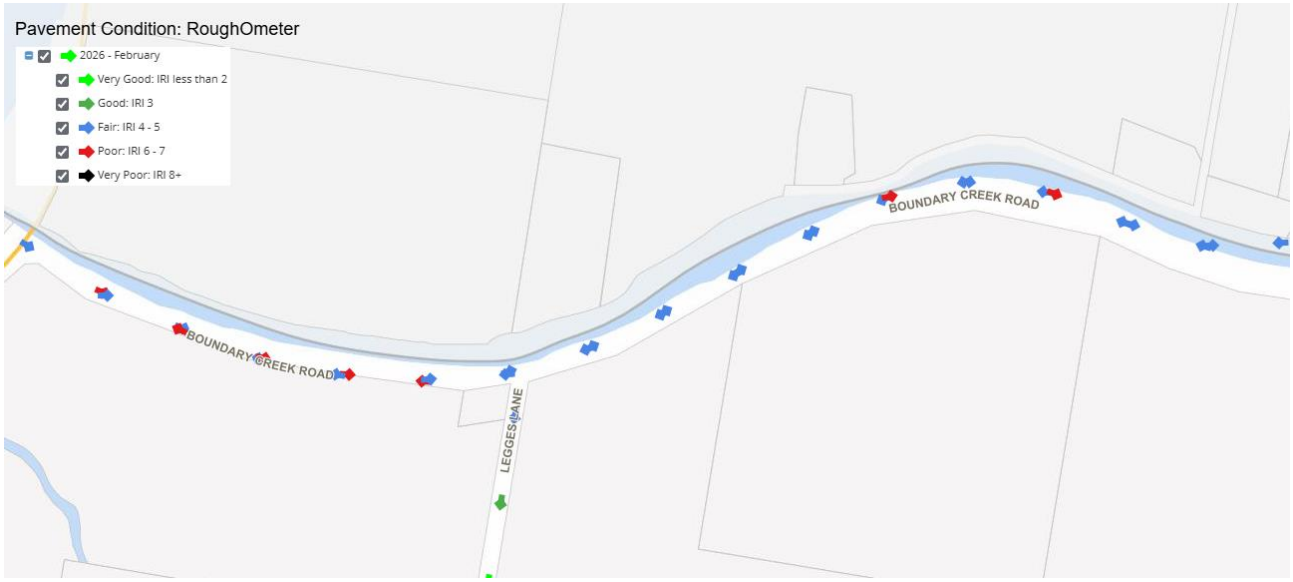
This option involves fully reconstructing and resealing 1.5km of Boundary Creek Road through complete pavement rehabilitation, including subgrade improvement, drainage upgrades and the application of a new bitumen seal. The estimated cost of this work is approximately $1.8M and it is not in Council's Long Term Financial Plan or capital program. While this option would restore a sealed, all-weather access road and improve amenity for residents, the investment represents a high capital cost when considered against the very low traffic volumes and the limited strategic value of this section compared with other, more heavily used roads within the local government area.

Option 2: Formally reclassify Boundary Creek Road as unsealed road.

This option proposes formally reclassifying Boundary Creek Road as an unsealed road. As sealed sections deteriorate to a point where they no longer provide adequate service, works would be undertaken to reinstate the entire length of the road as an unsealed surface. This option would involve updating asset registers and service levels, so the section is managed as an unsealed rural access road. The reclassification would align the road's hierarchy framework with actual usage and condition, reduce long-term renewal liabilities and allow Council to maintain the road more efficiently. Under this approach, the section would be designated a Class C Road under Council's Unsealed Rural Roads Hierarchy and would receive programmed maintenance every two years.

Returning the road to an unsealed pavement would also enable Council to maintain it to a more consistent and trafficable standard, as the existing degraded bitumen seal provides little structural protection and makes repairs more difficult and costly than maintaining a gravel surface. Some residents may oppose the loss of a sealed surface, but there is no adverse asset impacts associated with formalising the road as unsealed. By formally reclassifying the section as unsealed, Council can manage it more effectively and consistently without causing any negative long-term impacts on the road structure.

Map 1: Showing location of Boundary Creek Road adjoining Ballina Shire Council LGA.



Map 2: Showing condition of Boundary Creek Road as Fair/Poor (RoughOmeter February 2026)

It is proposed that Council undertake consultation with the community by notifying all affected residents of the two options under consideration and providing clear information on the associated costs, implications and expected service levels. Residents will be invited to offer feedback and raise any concerns, including matters relating to dust, amenity or access reliability.

Council will also consult with Ballina Shire Council as the proposal directly affects five residents who live within its local government area. This engagement will ensure both councils have a shared understanding of the implications, allow Ballina Shire Council to provide input on the proposed reclassification, and support a coordinated approach to communication and service delivery for the affected households.

Following the consultation period, a further report incorporating community feedback will be presented to Council.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

18 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil

19 MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL

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*:

19.1 Tender VP490321 - Heavy Rigid Truck Mobile Library

This matter relates to (d)(i) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - (a) 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 personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

20 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL