

Benalla Rural City Council

Additional Finance and Planning Committee

Agenda

Date: Wednesday 15 October 2025

Time: 6pm

Venue: Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room)
13 Mair Street, Benalla

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Agenda

Chair	Councillor Peter Davis	
Councillors	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)	
	Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)	
	Councillor David Blore	
	Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne	
	Councillor Jillian Merkel	
	Councillor Nathan Tolliday	
In attendance	Peter Keane	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Jane Archbold	Manager Community
	Joel Ingham	Acting Manager Assets and Infrastructure
	Nilesh Singh	Manager Development
	Greg Robertson	Manager Facilities and Information Technology
	Jess Pendergast	Governance Coordinator

Opening and Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair will open the meeting and recite the following Acknowledgement of Country.

We, the Benalla Rural City Council, acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Apologies

Recommendation:

That apology/ies be accepted.

Governance Matters

This Committee Meeting is conducted in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Benalla Rural City Council *Governance Rules 2020*.

Public Submissions

Any person wishing to participate in Public Submissions in accordance with 7.3 of the *Governance Rules 2020* should contact the Council by emailing council@benalla.vic.gov.au or telephoning the Governance Coordinator Jess Pendergast on (03) 5760 2600.

Recording of Council Meetings

In accordance with Rule 6.4 of the *Governance Rules 2020* the Committee Meeting will be livestreamed via the Council's website. An audio recording will be made of the proceedings and made available for public access, with the exception of matters identified as confidential items in the agenda.

Members of the public can watch the live broadcast of the meeting at www.benalla.vic.gov.au

Behaviour at Meetings

Members of the public present at a meeting must remain silent during the proceedings other than when specifically invited to address the Committee.

The Chair may remove a person from a meeting for interjecting or gesticulating offensively after being asked to desist, and the chair may cause the removal of any object or material that is deemed by the Chair to be objectionable or disrespectful.

The Chair may call a break in a meeting for either a short time, or to resume another day if the behaviour at the Council table or in the gallery is significantly disrupting the Meeting.

Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor must declare any Conflict of Interest pursuant to Section 130 of the Act in any items on this Agenda.

At the time indicated in the agenda, a Councillor with a conflict of interest in an item on that agenda must indicate they have a conflict of interest by clearly stating:

- the item for which they have a conflict of interest;
- whether their conflict of interest is general or material; and
- the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest.

Immediately prior to the consideration of the item in which they have a conflict of interest, a Councillor must indicate to the Meeting the existence of the conflict of interest and leave the Meeting.

1. Draft *Benalla Airport Masterplan* – Hearing Of Submissions

Ref: 1573044422-1235

Greg Robertson – Manager Facilities and Information Technology

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents submissions received on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

BACKGROUND

The first Benalla Airport Masterplan was adopted in 2015. The Masterplan paved the way for progressive improvements to airport management, operations, and infrastructure improvements.

The introduction of the plan coincided with the council moving to direct management of the facility to ensure all Civil Aviation Authority Safety *Aerodrome Certificate* requirements were appropriately managed and achieved.

DISCUSSION

The draft *Benalla Airport Masterplan* (the Masterplan) builds on a successful foundation of the 2015 plan and accommodates initial feedback from stakeholders.

The Masterplan provides a comprehensive roadmap for the development of Benalla Airport over the next 20 years, reinforcing its role as a critical economic and social asset in north-eastern Victoria.

The Masterplan, developed through extensive stakeholder consultation, including with aviation and non-aviation groups, outlines a strategic vision to enhance operational efficiency, safety, and community value while respecting the airport's heritage and environmental context.

Key initiatives include:

- Upgrading runway 08/26 to accommodate larger Code 3C aircraft (such as a Dash 8 Q400).
- Expanding taxiways and aprons.
- Developing new hangar precincts.
- Improving drainage and access infrastructure.

The Masterplan also addresses non-aviation demands, such as tourism and industrial growth, with proposed visitor accommodations and mixed-use precincts.

Aligned with the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF), the Masterplan prioritises airspace protection, noise management, and heritage preservation, including a recommended heritage overlay for significant structures like the BARC huts.

The implementation plan categorises projects into immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term priorities, with indicative costings provided for key developments.

Under the new Masterplan, regular reviews, every five years, will ensure adaptability to market demands and stakeholder needs, fostering sustainable growth and innovation while maintaining safety and compliance.

The Council on 6 August 2025, resolved:

That the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan be endorsed and placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Airport Masterplan* (the plan) was given on the Council's website and the *Benalla Ensign* on 3 September 2025.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and social media.

The submission period closed 5pm Wednesday 17 September 2025.

DISCUSSION

At the close of the submission period 20 submission had been received from:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ Paul Gibbs – Gold Rush Ballooning | ▪ Mark Carr |
| ▪ Martin Jacobson | ▪ Suzie |
| ▪ Tricia Vale | ▪ Nick Woods |
| ▪ Martin Tregale | ▪ Emily Watt |
| ▪ Michael Hedderman | ▪ Matt Jacobs |
| ▪ Jannice Smith | ▪ Balloon Association of Victoria |
| ▪ Molly Craig | ▪ Shaun Driscoll |
| ▪ Francois Steyn – Balloon Association of Victoria (BAV) | ▪ Andy Davidson – Gliding Club of Victoria |
| ▪ Eric Nash | ▪ Sabine Smythe |
| ▪ Anonymous | ▪ Mark Tyliniski |

Submissions are attached as **Appendix 1**.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters have been invited to address the Finance and Planning Committee in support of their submissions.

***COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025* IMPLICATIONS**

Community

- *A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

Liveability

- *Vibrant public spaces and places.*

Environment

- *Healthy and protected natural environment.*

Leadership

- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, community engagement was undertaken at the 'Consult' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Consult	We will provide information and consider feedback prior to making a decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Draft Plan presented in a public report to the Council.▪ Draft Plan to be published on Council's website.▪ Feedback and submissions invited via the Council's website and social media.▪ Public Notice of community consultation in the Benalla Ensign, Social Media and on the Council website.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The draft Masterplan has been funded through a Council budget allocation. Identified future initiatives will have cost implications, those cost implications will be considered as part of the annual budget development process.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council operates the Benalla Airport under a Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Aerodrome Certificate, Number: CASA.ADCERT.0251 issued on 17 September 2024. The certificate is subject to the Benalla Airport continually meeting the requirements of the *Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998 (CASR)*.

The facility operates under an *Aerodrome Manual* as required under *CASR Part 139*. The manual is approved by CASA and subject to CASA audit.

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

Submissions will be considered at the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 5 November 2025.

The draft *Benalla Airport Master Plan* will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on Wednesday 19 November 2025

Recommendation:

That submission on the draft *Benalla Airport Master Plan* be received.

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Draft Benalla Airport Masterplan - Submission Results

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Benalla draft Airport Masterplan.

We first visited Benalla Airport in 1987 to watch the opening ceremony of the World Gliding Championships and have over many years visited Benalla for National Balloon Championships or to glide.

We are an AOC operator and look forward to being Benalla Airport's first commercial lessee soon. Our business Goldrush Ballooning uses the airport as a base of operation nowadays for around 200 commercial flights annually that carry more than 1500 passengers. While the flights usually don't launch or land from YBLA, the strong sport aviation community, convenience and attributes of the township make Benalla Airport good place to store, maintain, refuel our 9 balloons, and initiate our flights from. We are long standing BAV members, former GCV members, and Aviation Museum members. We recently invested with BAV in establishing a balloon refuelling facility which is now operational.

Our mission is to increase ballooning and its profile in northeast Victoria. As well as building our business here I am the chairman and founder of the Art of Flight Festival which we hope will become an annual event. In 2026 the event will be run under an Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) Cat II sanction seeing international competitors join our National Championships. If well supported our 5-year goal is to hold the World Hot Air Balloon Championships here in 2030 attracting 103 teams and officials from 40 countries.

Benalla Airport offers great opportunities to the wider community both airside and landside. From our perspective these are the points in the Masterplan that need consideration and revision.

Precinct 6 - Both airport stakeholders and BRCC need to improve the public and user amenity in the precinct. Through no one organisation's fault, Hangar Lane and BARC Avenue present very poorly, attracting crime and undesirables. We would like to see; street art applied to the hangars that back on to Hangar Lane; better night time lighting; a sealed surface; hanging electrical cables removed; working toilets; attractive planting; a café or food van. Hangar Lane and Barc Avenue are public thoroughfares and need to be safe, secure and activated.

Precinct 4 and 5 - We are concerned there are no realistic plans for public viewing areas at either precinct for gliding, ballooning, or general flying. Precinct 4, the gliding area to the northern side needs a public road access to enable a public viewing area and maintain airport security.

Precinct 3 - Hangar Home opportunities are sought after by well to do aviators and will provide Council increasing rates. Morey Road would be ideal if a suitable developer was found. Can this opportunity be included?

Precinct 1 - Aerodrome Weather Information Service (AWIS) would provide all pilots including Air Ambulance, Fire Fighting, Police, transiting pilots unable to continue southwards into bad weather, and all local aviators most necessary aerodrome weather conditions.

Arrival signage - There are at least 3 bookable tourism products that reside on Benalla Airport (glider flights, Aviation Museum visits, balloon flights) however you would not know they are there. The Airport Signage makes the airport look like a government institution rather than a historic airport. There should be large welcoming and attractive signs beside the SES facing Sydney Road roundabout and the oncoming traffic along Samaria Road, and duplicated on Kilfeera Road. I have uploaded a sample of the Temora Aviation Museum signage.

Correction - page 54, 11.2.5 Bunk style accommodation on the Samaria Road side of the Gliding Clubhouse does not exist. GCV have plans, but there currently is no accommodation there.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Paul Gibbs, 2 October, 2025.

Q2

Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

https://haveyoursay.benalla.vic.gov.au/download_file/593

Q3

Your name

Short Text

Paul Gibbs & Maaïke Bierma



Guardhouse
— CAFÉ —

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

Submission on behalf of the Benalla Airport Users Group regarding the Draft Benalla Airport Master Plan 2025
30 September 2025

Benalla Airport Users Group congratulates Benalla Rural City Council (BRCC) and consultants To70 Aviation (Australia) on drafting the second iteration of the Benalla Airport Masterplan.

With a steadily increasing number of diversified stakeholders taking interest and investing in Benalla Airport our recently formed Group seeks to see the Airport succeed. The challenge is what that success looks like and what Benalla Airport can become.

Research suggests that successful regional airports have: diversified income; good governance; an adopted masterplan; available apron and quick refuelling for air ambulance, firefighting and medevac; aviation clusters (aviation-related operators that benefit from being co-located); improving airside & landside infrastructure; tourism, events & place-making (to get community buy-in, visitor spend, and airport awareness); funding pipelines & partnerships; amongst other key attributes.

The draft Masterplan touches on a number of these in its "Strategic Vision and Objectives" Section 10, page 49 which is positive. With BRCC as owner and the rate payers as stakeholders we feel a holistic approach to the triple bottom line needs to be developed further.

We note there are good opportunities in Precincts 5 and 6 for both aviators and the community / non aviators, however better lighting and toilets are badly needed, and careful upgrades are required e.g. Hangar Lane. In Precinct 1 the majority of our members support the Draft Masterplan's overall recommendation to upgrade the 08/26 runway to 3C capability, however our GCV members do not. In breaking this out, comments centred around the impact it may have on the existing sport and light aviation operators, something for which Benalla Airport is renowned. If the 3C capability allows Air Ambulance Victoria to provide quick medical care it on a hot day or adds safety to existing operations then it was good; however most questioned the safety and sustainability of a Dash 8 Q400 74-90 seat, 29 tonne airliner operating from Benalla. One of our members said, "As a former Qantas regional pilot I'm doubtful that the airport has a future as an economically sustainable regional airline airport, therefore council expenditure in that area I don't think would be a good investment for airport users and ratepayers."

Our committee is aware that land at the eastern end of the 08/26 runways may be available to Council to lengthen the main runway eastwards. More discussion would produce a better resolved runway and taxiway layout.

We strongly support the establishment of an AWIS for all pilots as Benalla Airport's conditions can be markedly different from those at nearby Wangaratta, which has an AWIS. Also, the new access gate (6C) to the hangars (precinct 2) is long overdue.

Precincts 2 and 3 could provide great opportunities for Benalla Airport in the future and need careful long-term planning. Hangar / home blocks are not mentioned in this plan which is an oversight. Precinct 4 also has good potential for future gliding needs. It could also provide an excellent public viewing area however we are concerned that public landside road access through a gate filtering in from Sydney Road may be lost. This northside access was in the 2015 Masterplan and needs to be included in the current Masterplan.

With the airport approaching its 100th birthday there is no doubt that Benalla Airport is a historic airport, and its story needs to be told. In its second half-century it has developed strengths in sport aviation (gliding & ballooning) and light aviation, and these can be built upon. Key performance indicators, a stepwise plan and sound governance will make the airport successful.

We thank Council for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the draft Masterplan.

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Martin Jacobson

Q4

Short Text

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

I think the proposal is very good, extension of the runway and drainage are welcomed. I believe that the interests of airplane usage (not gliders) are paramount. From my experience, I believe that the gliders DO NOT add to Benalla's economy or tourism. In fact, I believe there is a cost for the facility, which is used by predominantly nonresidents. There has been an expectation that Benalla Council pay. I believe Council should demand copies of the last 10 years accounting reports from the Gliding Club as initial reference and investigation. In summary, the club does not represent Benalla interest. Council should also look at the actual cost to Benalla City.

The Tourism aspect is not really "used" and is in effect in the incorrect position. This has been my view for many years. I do support the Migrant camp and its impact on Tourism and our culture and history; however it is my opinion, it is in the wrong place. The Migrant camp needs to be moved to a prominent area being closer to the town centre and in an historical/cultural precinct.

Likewise, the Air Museum, could also be moved, however, it is more relevant being at the airport.

The Caravan Park SHOULD NOT be in this position and is only there to appease the Gliding Club.

A Caravan Park which is operated by a business operator could easily be built and developed in Benalla! This would actually increase business enterprise and the economy, rather than council supporting a caravan park predominantly for nonresidents. Furthermore, the land could be better used.

Other smaller players such as the ballooning, can "fit in" alongside or be reviewed later. They are not main game players.

The main players are the planes! The helicopters and the potential growth.

I welcome all the energy in reviewing this major asset of Benalla and the visionary aspects of building our airport which is amazingly, right in the City. This airport would and could be used for business, domestic, training services and manufacturing travel. I have no doubt of this.

People actually want to book a flight to other places in Victoria and NSW yet have to travel. There is absolutely a NEED for flights. This could be a new vibrant industry in Benalla.

I would always be happy to attend and provide my opinion/s if required.

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

TRICIA VALE

Response No:
4

Contribution ID: 3743

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Oct 03, 2025, 10:27 AM

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

Page 28 - the gas refueling facility is now complete and in service.
Page 37 - not just significant ballooning activities, Benalla Airport is also home to the largest hot air ballooning club in Australia - the Balloon Association of Victoria. You can validate this with Ben Phillips, President of the Australian Ballooning Federation at president@abf.net.au or 0425 762 352
Page 39 - "Ballooning association" should be correct title of "Balloon Association of Victoria"
Page 55 - the gas refueling facility is now complete and in service.
Page 64 - new fuel facility in place. Could have a picture of the fuel facility. I could provide on on request.
Page 85 - correct spelling of "Jonie" is "Joni". Correct spelling of "Francoise" is "Francois"

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Martin Tregale

Response No:
5

Contribution ID: 3742

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Oct 03, 2025, 06:22 AM

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Recognition of the historical importance of the BARC is of vital importance to both honour those who came and contributed to Benalla and many who continue to do so.

Hut 65 should be GIFTED to the Migrant Camp group to enable a great tourist attraction to be expanded.

The Aero Park is an eyesore and would be better utilised as a greenspace, allowing use by visitors and residents of Cooinda. This has been talked about for too long, action needed

Q2

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documents.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Michael Hedderman

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

As a member of Benalla Theatre Company, with our home in Hangar Lane, I am concerned with the lack of addressing the state of facilities located there for all the user groups involved.
My balance is not great at times, especially at night and on unlit and degrading surfaces. So for me to have to walk to the toilets at the back of BPACC is dangerous and scary. Also not knowing who may be lurking in the shadows. If in a hurry I have to get in a car and drive there, not ideal as the old toilet block is right next to our huts. These disgusting facilities are still waiting for their promised upgrade.
We need interim facilities provided for Hangar Lane users not located so close to BPACC.
All these concerns need to be addressed in the Benalla Airport plan.

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Jannice Smith

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

Benalla Theatre Company currently occupies Huts 63 and 64 on Hangar Lane. We would like to raise several urgent safety and infrastructure concerns that affect not only our members but all users of this area.

Firstly, there is currently no street lighting along Hangar Lane. While there was lighting in the past, it has since been removed. Our company primarily operates during the evenings and several nights each week. The absence of lighting creates a significant safety risk, particularly in a space that is used by families and children. This issue affects not just our organisation but all users of the huts and facilities along Hangar Lane. With the road unlit, it is difficult to see individuals moving through the area—especially if their intentions are not good—which raises serious security concerns.

Secondly, the condition of the road surface on Hangar Lane is poor and deteriorating. There are numerous potholes and unpaved sections that make the road unsafe for vehicles and pedestrians alike. This presents a clear hazard, especially in low-visibility conditions at night.

In addition, the toilet block on Hangar Lane, which dates back to the 1930s, is in an unusable and unsafe state due to a lack of maintenance and repairs. We were informed in February that the toilets were not to be used and were told that refurbishment would occur through a grant that had been secured. However, no work has commenced, and the facilities remain closed. As a result, we are being directed to use the toilets near BPACC, which requires walking a significant distance in the dark along a damaged and unlit road. This is unacceptable and unsafe, particularly for our younger members.

In summary, we respectfully request urgent attention to the following key issues:

1. Installation of adequate lighting along Hangar Lane for improved safety and visibility.
2. Repair and resurfacing of the road to address potholes and unpaved areas.
3. Immediate refurbishment or replacement of the toilet block, or provision of safe, accessible alternative facilities nearby.

Addressing these issues is critical to ensuring the safety, security, and accessibility of Hangar Lane for all who use it. We appreciate your time and attention to these matters and look forward to seeing meaningful action taken.

Q2

Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3

Your name

Short Text

Molly Craig

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

On behalf of the Balloon Association of Victoria, I would like to thank Council for the initiative taken in preparing the draft Airport Master Plan and for the opportunity to provide comment.

As the largest ballooning club in Australia, based at Benalla Airport, we are deeply invested in the airfield and committed to its long-term success. Our members, facilities, and events contribute significantly to the activity and reputation of the airport.

We believe the Master Plan would benefit from greater recognition of ballooning's role at Benalla. Ballooning is not only a regular and growing activity but also one that brings visitors, training opportunities, and national events to the region. We see Benalla Airport as the natural hub for ballooning in Victoria and are committed to continuing our investment in its future.

Please find attached our response for Council's consideration.

Francois Steyn - President

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

https://haveyoursay.benalla.vic.gov.au/download_file/592

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Francois Steyn

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

Response to Ballooning Section – Benalla Airport Master Plan

26 August 2025

The draft Master Plan significantly under-represents the current and future scale of hot air ballooning activity associated with Benalla Airport. While balloons do not require an airfield for take-off or landing, Benalla Airport is the operational heart of ballooning in Victoria — home to the **Balloon Association of Victoria (BAV)**, the largest balloon club in the country, key infrastructure, and a growing base of both recreational and commercial operations.

1. Current Level of Activity

In the past year, activity linked to the airport included approximately:

- 60 private flights
- 250 commercial flights
- 30 flights during our annual training camp

This equates to 340 flights per year directly associated with the airport — already well above the 288 annual movements forecast in the Master Plan for 2044.

2. Future Growth – Events and Expansion

In 2026, BAV in partnership with Goldrush Ballooning, will host the **Art of Flight Festival** and the **Australian National Championships** at Benalla. We expect:

- 20–25 competition balloons flying twice daily for 5 days (~200–250 flights)
- Additional commercial and fiesta balloons, bringing the total to 250–300 flights in one week.
- If successful, the organisers intend to make this an annual event anchoring a major balloon festival for Victoria in Benalla.

Ongoing training camps and events are also driving a steady increase in qualified pilots and safe flight activity across the region.

3. Club Strength and Membership Growth

- BAV membership has grown from 53 in 2023 → 61 in 2024 → ~70 in 2025. While modest in absolute numbers, this is significant growth of over 30% in just two years.
- Moreover, the demographic profile is changing, with more younger and female members joining in the past 4–5 years — ensuring the sport’s sustainability for another generation.

- While not all international competitors are BAV members, Australia currently fields a strong group of world-class pilots, demonstrating the strength and visibility of ballooning in this country.

4. Infrastructure and Capability at Benalla

- The airport supports both recreational and commercial ballooning. Co-location with a commercial operator brings maintenance, certification, and operational expertise directly to the airfield.
- Existing facilities include a club hut, LPG refuelling facility, and rental balloon for training and visiting pilots.
- This package has already made Benalla an attractive hub, with facilities that draw balloonists from across Australia.

5. Planning for the Future

To sustain and grow this success, BAV is mindful that investment may be required in club facilities, including on-site accommodation and ensuite bathrooms, to host more training camps, competitions, and social flying gatherings.

We request that the Master Plan consider **allocating land at the airport for potential future expansion of ballooning club facilities**, recognising the club's role in pilot training, aviation safety, and the airport's broader activity mix.

6. Recommendation

We recommend that the Master Plan:

- Recognise Benalla Airport as Australia's leading ballooning hub and BAV as Australia's largest and most active balloon club.
- Revise activity forecasts to reflect current volumes already exceeding projections.
- Acknowledge ballooning's strong growth, evolving demographics, and role in pilot training.
- Allocate provision for future ballooning facilities within the airport precinct.

Benalla Airport is not simply a launch/landing site for balloons — it is the organisational and operational base for the sport in Victoria and an increasingly important contributor to the airport's activity and profile.

Balloon Association of Victoria (BAV)

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

The Benalla Airport Master Plan makes a number of statements and sets objectives which indicate the importance of preserving and enhancing the heritage aspect of the site, specifically the Benalla Migrant Camp, some provided below:

- +Historical background - page 12
- +Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, "protect and manage our important natural and cultural places" - page 22
- +Heritage Act - page 22
- +Previous Master Plans, "Suggest ideal improvements to airport facilities to both aviation and NON-AVIATION activities at the airport, while meeting the council's vision and objectives" - page 24
- +Site Description, "A number of historic huts (BARC huts) which are used by the community for a variety of community and recreational activities" - page 25
- +Overview of consultation, "both aviation and non-aviation interests are fully considered in shaping the airport's future", and "promote tourism and promote the airport's cultural significance, particularly its historical links to the migrant community in Benalla" - page 39
- +Summary of Consultation Outcomes, "Overall, the consultation highlighted a clear need for an integrated approach that balances operational enhancements with community and cultural considerations. The feedback gathered will inform the development of the masterplan, ensuring that it reflects both the airport's operational needs and its importance as a regional and cultural asset" - page 40

Despite this, the plan does not seem to encompass plans for possible extension and enhancement of the Benalla Migrant Camp, and other cultural and heritage users, which would actually strengthen the destination holistically and be complementary to the site's activation.

The Masterplan does not clearly define for these groups the potential opportunity/investment (of which there seems to be limited, if any), or indeed impact on their activities and use of structures and surrounding open spaces. In particular the impact of new safety entrance through the former camp main gates should be explored further, as this may dilute opportunity for the Migrant Camp to enhance its tourism offering and provide a clear sense of arrival to the site.

In fact, it seems the Plan positions these users as somewhat insignificant or inconvenient:

- +diminishing the Migrant Camp in comparison to the achievements of the Bonegilla Migrant Camp (page 34), despite Benalla has not invested in the site to unlock this potential (it should really be seen as a benchmark and evidence of potential)
- +placing the Heritage buildings as a 'Weakness/Constraint' (page 35), rather than a Strength or Opportunity. In contrast, further collaboration and development of the Aviation Museum is positioned as an 'Opportunity/Prospect' - these should be treated equally.
- +absence of any reference to past and prospective major events presented by the Benalla Migrant Camp (page 50)

This is perhaps an outcome of weighted consultation including 33 aviation stakeholder, and only 6 non-aviation stakeholders.

In this period of review, I suggest there should be a thorough review of existing Council strategic documents and projects which indicate Council's desire to enhance the Benalla Migrant Camp, and ensure these are supported and integrated into the Airport Masterplan. Particular attention should be paid to:

- +Destination Management Plan, in which the 'Benalla Migrant Camp Heritage Precinct' is explicitly detailed as a Major Attraction Development priority project
- +Arts, Culture and Heritage Innovation Working Group, through which funding is actively being sought to conduct feasibility and concept planning to unlock the potential of the Benalla Migrant Camp and enhance the visitor experience. In doing so, it would deliver cultural and economic outcomes more in line with those of Bonegilla previously referenced.

The Benalla Airport Masterplan should align with these existing Council priorities and projects - there is great opportunity in this Plan to unlock the full potential of the site to the benefit of both the aviation users, and non-aviation 'arts, culture and heritage' users, specifically the Benalla Migrant Camp. However to do this, they must be given something closer to equal weighting, and the Plan must deliver a very clear definition of opportunities and impacts of any development on any users. To this end, the positioning and style of low budget accommodation is the most evident potential limitation on any future Benalla Migrant Camp enhancement - both through its location, and the suggestion its style should mimic the BARC Huts (which is generally not a practice supported by Heritage Victoria, which new structures intended to be instantly distinguishable from those with heritage value). Has there been any modelling developed to also ensure the provision of low budget accommodation is suitable to the users, but also financially beneficial to both the Council and broader community?

To adopt the Masterplan, it seems there should be more rigorous flight data to confirm assumptions on use and demand - is there no data captured on flights? Should a 12 month period of data capture be undertaken to refine and confirm projections, rather than leaning on 2015 Master Plan assumptions as a baseline? This is reinforced in the Recommendation on page 44.

Correction required to 'Surrounding Land', as the regional gallery would not be considered by many to be within walking distance, while the BPACC facility is not activated - page 25

Correction required, column 2, line 3, page 41 - "Birds"

Correction required to broken link in 'Charter' section of page 43

Clarification required, 'Respect site history' should be expanded to "Use the site's history as a foundation for enhancing visitor experiences and opportunities, and work to the existing Heritage Management Plan' with the referred document appended to the Masterplan for clear reference, page 51

Correction required to 'Improved linkages' as the BPACC facility is not activated - page 51

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Eric Nash

Response No:
12

Contribution ID: 3732

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 18, 2025, 08:43 AM

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text Feedback supplied in our submission

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload https://haveyoursay.benalla.vic.gov.au/download_file/584

Q3 Your name

Short Text Anonymous

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

BENALLA AIRPORT DRAFT MASTER PLAN SUBMISSION

INTRODUCTION

I welcome the publication of the Draft for Consultation for the Benalla Airport Master Plan 2025. I submit the following in response, summarised at the end of this submission: As a stakeholder, I hold the following positions: • Secretary/Treasurer, Benalla Aviation Museum and Men's Shed Inc.

COMMENTS RELATING TO SPECIFIC SECTIONS Regarding grammar, and therefore the presentation of the Draft: there is occasional use of 'comprised of'. The correct use is 'comprises', 'comprised' or 'comprising', e.g. 'the fuel facility comprises AVGAS and JET A-1 tanks'. There are also a few misspellings which are detailed below. P. 30 Fig. 11 The caption is incorrectly labelled as 'Image of the Benalla Aero Club Hangar'. The hangar is, in fact, partly occupied by the Benalla Aviation Museum as per the arrangement above, and shows the Museum's historic Tiger Moth wartime training aircraft. The Aero Club has its own hangar, 21, in the general hangar area.

3.5.5 The Benalla Common Terminal Area Frequency (CTAF) should read 125.6 MHz. 2.1 Regarding the airport's history, the field was used as a landing ground and motor racing circuit from the late 1920s through the 30s until developed by the RAAF for No. 11 Empire Flying Training School.

3.9.2 Should read WW II Empire Air Training Scheme 9.3.2 Benalla held a major air show on January 17, 1987. The 2023 show was not the first. P. 64 Fig. 21 Use of 'hanger' instead of 'hangar'

12.4.3 The desirability of an Automated Weather Information Service (AWIS) is understated in this paragraph. Non-RPT airports in the area including Shepparton, Wangaratta and Mangalore have had an AWIS for years. AWIS enhances safety and is not just for RPT aircraft as implied in the paragraph. At the very least, it is extremely useful for emergency services aircraft as well as all other aircraft.

12.5 Kilfeera Rd is misspelled.

14.3.1/2/3 Regarding priorities. I consider installation of an AWIS as a high priority. Also, a parallel taxiway enhances safety and usability, and I would recommend a high priority for that as well.

Appendix A Stakeholder Consultation Table. In addition to the nominated Aviation Museum stakeholder, I would like to be included in the table.

GENERAL ASPIRATIONS AND CONCERNS

Benalla Aviation Museum and historical significance of the airport Regarding the Requirements/Expectations column, a major concern expressed to your representatives, and not I consider, adequately addressed in this Draft, is the non-availability of the full area of the historic wartime Bellman hangar for the Benalla Aviation Museum. One quarter of this historic building is occupied by a private tenant, and is under-utilised.

It is frustrating to see the development of a potential world-class aviation museum being crimped by lack of space in a historic building. Museum volunteers being able to clean, restore and utilise the remaining quarter of the historic hangar and its substantial side-annexes would enable the Benalla Aviation Museum to become a proper tourist drawcard, two hours from Melbourne and ten minutes from a major freeway, attracting aviation enthusiasts and members of the public alike, to the airport.

The Museum is desperate for more space in order to achieve this. It should be noted that very few airports combine history with proximity to a town, and I consider the historical aspect of Benalla Airport and the importance of the Aviation Museum has been under addressed in this draft. It should also be noted that unlike many others, this Museum is a 'living' museum, where historic aircraft are regularly flown. In addition, there is a significant 'Swords into Ploughshares' aspect of Benalla Airport's history; migrant families from the very countries with which Australia had been at war (Germany and Italy) came here as 'New Australians' after war's end, were welcomed, and lived in the facilities originally constructed for a war effort against them, until they were settled. The acquisition of a nearby ex-RAAF building, preferably opposite the Museum hangar, to be restored as a combined Migrant Camp/wartime RAAF barracks exhibition, would be a unique and significant enhancement to the Historical Precinct as a 'one stop shop' for visitors, further increasing attendance appeal.

I submit that this should be a recommendation in the Plan.

Signage for Benalla Airport's historical significance is poor. Like Benalla, the western Victorian town of Nhill hosted a World War II RAAF training base. An excellent aviation museum is at Nhill airport, housed in a large, dedicated building, and it is enthusiastically supported by the local Council. Historic RAAF Base signage in Nhill's main street, is an indication of the town's appreciation and promotion of their historic asset.

Hangar Lane

Hangar Lane provides access to the main historical precinct of the airport including the Aviation Museum, ex-RAAF huts and the Migrant Exhibition. It also provides access to the Men's Shed building that is associated with the Aviation Museum. The road surface is poor, the area is unlit and there are numerous holes that house pests such as rabbits, and probably snakes. Restoring and lighting this road should be a priority if not for aesthetics but for safety and security.

FLIGHT OPERATIONS AT BENALLA

Runway 08-26

The Plan recommends upgrading Runway 08-26 to accommodate Dash 8 Q400 aircraft. I consider this a 'red herring'. It is unlikely that Benalla would host Regular Public Transport (RPT) aircraft during the validity of this completed Master Plan. An RPT service to Melbourne would be unrealistic, and Wangaratta Airport, a far more capable field to handle these aircraft, is barely 25 minutes away from Benalla.

I cannot see Qantaslink (operator of Dash 8 aircraft) flying these machines from Melbourne or Albury to Benalla or even using Benalla as a base of operations for other regional routes. It would be cost prohibitive.

The works required to achieve this would drain valuable resources away from other projects recommended in the Plan. In addition, Runway 26 extends toward a significant built-up area. However, Runway 08 - 26 would greatly benefit from a sealed, parallel taxiway. Compared with many other airports, Benalla has an unusual taxiway layout. Whichever landing direction is in use, aircraft have to back-track on the runway, sometimes for full length, either after landing or before take-off. This is inefficient, causes delays and could be considered a safety hazard in view of the increased General Aviation and Emergency Services traffic operating from Benalla. Most aviation accidents do not occur through one single occurrence; multiple links in a chain of events join up to cause an accident or incident, and back-tracking on runways can be one of them.

The current east-west segment of the existing taxiway before it curves north to the threshold of 08 could be extended to full length. Additionally, a 'turn off' stub halfway along the runway to enable an expeditious runway exit onto the taxiway would further reduce runway occupancy time.

Runway 17-35 There is an issue for operators of tailwheel-type aircraft, when there is a pre- or post- frontal northerly or southerly wind respectively, Runway 17-35 is the only option for take-off and landing due to crosswind limitations. Tailwheel aircraft are more sensitive to crosswinds, and many tailwheel machines operate from or fly into Benalla. This runway is regularly closed in wet conditions, which severely limits GA activity at Benalla, sometimes for weeks and occasionally months on end.

In short, money and resources to upgrade Benalla to take Dash 8 aircraft would be better spent on a parallel taxiway for 08-26, and the sealing of 17-35. Benalla Airport should be regarded as a thriving General and Sport Aviation field with history and proximity to a town, rather than the unrealistic aspiration to be an RPT hub.

Terminal Area

Benalla Airport would greatly benefit from a small but well-designed terminal building that provides secure toilet access. The current 'elephant shelter' structure airside from the existing disgraceful toilet block is useless. It was installed as a supposed shelter for Air Ambulance patient transfers from vehicle to aircraft, but it does not protect patient and personnel from the elements in any way. A properly designed terminal building would be advantageous to Air Ambulance patient transfers in inclement weather. The Recreational Vehicle sewage dump point is inappropriate for the location. Not far from the Aviation Museum, the area is occasionally congested with vehicles, along with noise and foul smells. It should be moved elsewhere. As a long-time volunteer at the Aviation Museum, I note that few 'dumpers' take the opportunity to visit or observe aircraft operations; they just 'dump and go'. The current toilets in the (appropriately) brown building in the public area are old, unhygienic, frequently vandalised, not regularly serviced, and occasionally you find drug paraphernalia strewn in them. It is embarrassing to have to direct Museum and other airport visitors to this 'facility'. The airport needs a dedicated, secure toilet facility for stakeholders, located away from public areas.

Hangar Housing

Both Tocumwal and Yarrawonga Airports provide 'hangar-housing', i.e. where people can live on the airport with immediate access to their aircraft. This provides the best of both worlds: local government acquires ratepayers, and the airfield becomes vibrant with aviation activity. It is surprising that hangar housing is not already in place on an airport with lots of land, close to town and just two hours from Melbourne.

SUMMARY of COMMENTS

- Omit the RPT Dash 8 capability requirement for Benalla Airport
- Focus on aero-sports, history and community amenity
- Seal Runway 17 - 35 • Parallel taxiway for Runway 08 – 26
- Instal an AWIS • 'Airside' toilets
- Small terminal/coffee shop
- Benalla Aviation Museum allocated the full area of the Bellman Hangar
- Nearby hut acquired (purchased) for joint historic RAAF Barracks/Migrant Camp display in conjunction with the Aviation Museum
- Lighting, proper sealing and repair of Hangar Lane

Thank you for your attention,

Anonymous

Response No:
13

Contribution ID: 3730

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 16, 2025, 11:05 AM

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

I hereby submit my submission on the Draft Benalla Airport Master Plan. Please refer to the attached document. If there are any questions regarding my submission, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Thank you,

Mark Carr

Q2

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documents.

https://haveyoursay.benalla.vic.gov.au/download_file/583

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Mark Carr

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

BENALLA AIRPORT DRAFT MASTER PLAN SUBMISSION

by **MARK CARR**

INTRODUCTION

I welcome the publication of the Draft for Consultation for the Benalla Airport Master Plan 2025. I submit the following in response, summarised at the end of this submission:

As a stakeholder, I hold the following positions:

- Vice president, Benalla Aviation Museum and Men's Shed Inc.
- Owner, Hangar 26, Benalla Airport (one of the largest on the airport)
- 'Warbird' operator and owner of three operational aircraft, two of them historic, based in the Benalla Aviation Museum
- Member, Benalla Airport Users' Group Inc.
- Social Member, Gliding Club of Victoria

As the owner of Hangar 26, I am the *de facto* 'landlord' of the Benalla Aviation Museum, because use of the Council-owned Bellman hangar for the Museum is swapped with Council for their use of Hangar 26. I derive no income or tax relief from this arrangement.

COMMENTS RELATING TO SPECIFIC SECTIONS

Regarding grammar, and therefore the presentation of the Draft: there is occasional use of 'comprised of'. The correct use is 'comprises', 'comprised' or 'comprising', e.g. 'the fuel facility comprises AVGAS and JET A-1 tanks'. There are also a few misspellings which are detailed below.

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12.5 Kilfeera Rd is misspelled.



14.3.1/2/3 Regarding priorities. I consider installation of an AWIS as a high priority. Also, a parallel taxiway enhances safety and usability, and I would recommend a high priority for that as well.

Appendix A Stakeholder Consultation Table I interacted directly with representatives of To70 Aviation on their visit to the Benalla Aviation Museum. In addition to the nominated Aviation Museum stakeholder, our Secretary, John Currie, I would like to be included in the table (I refer you to my credentials stated in the Introduction to this document).

GENERAL ASPIRATIONS AND CONCERNS

Benalla Aviation Museum and historical significance of the airport

Regarding the Requirements/Expectations column, a major concern expressed to your representatives, and not I consider, adequately addressed in this Draft, is the non-availability of the full area of the historic wartime Bellman hangar for the Benalla Aviation Museum. One quarter of this historic building is occupied by a private tenant, and is under-utilised. It is frustrating to see the development of a potential world-class aviation museum being crimped by lack of space in a historic building.

Museum volunteers being able to clean, restore and utilise the remaining quarter of the historic hangar and its substantial side-annexes would enable the Benalla Aviation Museum to become a proper tourist drawcard, two hours from Melbourne and ten minutes from a major freeway, attracting aviation enthusiasts and members of the public alike, to the airport. The Museum is desperate for more space in order to achieve this.

It should be noted that very few airports combine history with proximity to a town, and I consider the historical aspect of Benalla Airport and the importance of the Aviation Museum has been under-addressed in this draft. It should also be noted that unlike many others, this Museum is a 'living' museum, where historic aircraft are regularly flown.

In addition, there is a significant 'Swords into Ploughshares' aspect of Benalla Airport's history; migrant families from the very countries with which Australia had been at war (Germany and Italy) came here as 'New Australians' after war's end, were welcomed, and lived in the facilities originally constructed for a war effort against them, until they were settled.

The acquisition of a nearby ex-RAAF building, preferably opposite the Museum hangar, to be restored as a combined Migrant Camp/wartime RAAF barracks exhibition, would be a unique and significant enhancement to the Historical Precinct as a 'one stop shop' for visitors, further increasing attendance appeal. I submit that this should be a recommendation in the Plan.

Signage for Benalla Airport's historical significance is poor.

Like Benalla, the western Victorian town of Nhill hosted a World War II RAAF training base. An excellent aviation museum is at Nhill airport, housed in a large, dedicated building, and it is enthusiastically supported by the local Council.

The graphic at right shows the 'Historic RAAF Base' signage in Nhill's main street, and indication of the town's appreciation and promotion of their historic asset.



Hangar Lane

Hangar Land provides access to the main historical precinct of the airport including the Aviation Museum, ex-RAAF huts and the Migrant Exhibition. It also provides access to the Men's Shed building that is associated with the Aviation Museum.

The road surface is poor, the area is unlit and there are numerous holes that house pests such as rabbits, and possibly snakes. Restoring and lighting this road should be a priority if not for aesthetics but for safety and security.

FLIGHT OPERATIONS AT BENALLA

I operate several aircraft from the Aviation Museum, namely an ex-RAAF CAC Winjeel, a 1939 de Havilland Moth 'Minor' (very rare) and a Van's RV-8. However, I write the following not just with regard to my own operations at Benalla, but those of other users.

Runway 08-26

The Plan recommends upgrading Runway 08-26 to accommodate Dash 8 Q400 aircraft. I consider this a 'red herring'. It is unlikely that Benalla would host Regular Public Transport (RPT) aircraft during the validity of this completed Master Plan. An RPT service to Melbourne would be unrealistic, and Wangaratta Airport, a far more capable field to handle these aircraft, is barely 25 minutes away from Benalla. The works required to achieve this would drain valuable resources away from other projects recommended in the Plan. In addition, Runway 26 extends toward a significant built-up area.

However, Runway 08 - 26 would greatly benefit from a sealed, parallel taxiway. Compared with many other airports, Benalla has an unusual taxiway layout. Whichever landing direction is in use, aircraft have to back-track on the runway, sometimes for full length, either after landing or before take-off. This is inefficient, causes delays and could be considered a safety hazard in view of the increased General Aviation and Emergency Services traffic operating from Benalla.

Most aviation accidents do not occur through one single occurrence; multiple links in a chain of events join up to cause an accident or incident, and back-tracking on runways can be one of them.

I have personally experienced a hazardous situation at Benalla while back tracking on 08 to be faced with an aircraft on final approach that was on an incorrect frequency and unaware of my presence until the last minute. A parallel taxiway would have prevented this occurrence.

The current east-west segment of the existing taxiway before it curves north to the threshold of 08 could be extended to full length. Additionally, a 'turn off' stub halfway along the runway to enable an expeditious runway exit onto the taxiway would further reduce runway occupancy time.

Runway 17-35

As an operator of three tailwheel-type aircraft, two of them historic, when there is a pre- or post- frontal northerly or southerly wind respectively, Runway 17-35 is my only option for take-off and landing due to crosswind limitations. Tailwheel aircraft are more sensitive to crosswinds, and many other tailwheel machines operate from or fly into Benalla besides mine.

This runway is regularly closed in wet conditions, which severely limits GA activity at Benalla, sometimes for weeks and occasionally months on end.

In short, money and resources to upgrade Benalla to take Dash 8 aircraft would be better spent on a parallel taxiway for 08-26, and the sealing of 17-35. Benalla Airport should be regarded as a thriving General and Sport Aviation field with history and proximity to a town, rather than the unrealistic aspiration to be an RPT hub.

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The Recreational Vehicle sewage dump point is inappropriate for the location. Not far from the Aviation Museum, the area is occasionally congested with vehicles, along with noise and foul smells. It should be moved elsewhere. As a long-time volunteer at the Aviation Museum, I note that few 'dumpers' take the opportunity to visit or observe aircraft operations; they just 'dump and go'.

The current toilets in the (appropriately) brown building in the public area are old, unhygienic, frequently vandalised, and I occasionally find drug paraphernalia strewn in them. It is embarrassing to have to direct Museum and other airport visitors to this 'facility'. The airport needs a dedicated, secure toilet facility for stakeholders, located away from public areas.

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SUMMARY of COMMENTS

- **Omit the RPT Dash 8 capability requirement for Benalla Airport**
- **Focus on aero-sports, history and community amenity**
- **Seal Runway 17 - 35**
- **Parallel taxiway for Runway 08 - 26**
- **Instal an AWIS**
- **'Airside' toilets**
- **Small terminal/coffee shop**
- **Benalla Aviation Museum allocated the full area of the Bellman Hangar**
- **Nearby hut acquired (purchased) for joint historic RAAF Barracks/Migrant Camp display in conjunction with the Aviation Museum**
- **Lighting, proper sealing and repair of Hangar Lane**

Thank you for your attention,

Mark Carr



AUTHOR, 'WRITTEN in the SKY'

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

SWOT analysis can also put in here tourism opportunities: balloon flights departing from Benalla, Migrant Camp development.
Opportunity for aviation tourism ie: Fly/Dine packages fly your plane come for lunch and depart again. This was very popular when I lived in the outback.

Page 46, 8.3 talks about accommodation and in particular low cost/camping options. However, the report doesn't acknowledge where it has taken its data from. This is different to the DMP where we are looking at trying to attract a 4.5 star hotel. This is why an accommodation feasibility study is important. Both sound like they contradict each other. In page 55 it states that the precinct is designed to provide affordable temporary accommodation airport visitors and users, however its currently used by the gliding association. Access to low cost accommodation is an important offering that must be maintained at the airport. Long term, cabins could be built, that blend in the with current BARC hut structures.

Look at the Destination Management Plan.

Need to say Migrant Camp throughout the document not Migrant Centre.

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

suzie

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

Response No:
15

Contribution ID: 3725

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 10, 2025, 11:30 PM

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

I wish to support the submission from Gliding Club of Victoria regarding the 2025 Airport Masterplan. In particular, I can see no justification for investment in facilities to accommodate Dash 8 type aircraft. There would be too little demand for a commercial service using similar aircraft to be economical. I make this comment with a background of working in the air transport industry for many years.

Q2

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documents.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Nick Woods

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

I wish to formally submit to Council regarding the urgent need for improved security lighting within Hanger Lane BARC HUT area.

The lack of adequate lighting presents a significant safety risk to Community Arts Hut Users, residents, and visitors, particularly during evening and early morning hours. Insufficient illumination reduces visibility, creates an environment conducive to anti-social behaviour, and compromises the community's confidence in using public spaces after dark.

The installation of appropriate security lighting would:

- Enhance public safety and visibility.
- Deter unlawful or unsafe behaviour.
- Encourage greater use of community facilities.
- Support Council's commitment to fostering safe, inclusive, and accessible public spaces.

On behalf of concerned community members, I respectfully request that Council prioritise the assessment and installation of improved lighting in this location. This investment would provide measurable benefits in terms of safety, wellbeing, and community confidence.

Q2 Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Emily Watt

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan.

Long Text

Subject: Proposal for Tarring Runway 17/35

To Whom It May Concern,

As a local resident and pilot, I would like to propose a submission regarding the possibility of tarring the North/South runway 17/35. Currently, this runway is composed of grass, which is satisfactory under normal conditions; however, it poses a safety risk when it becomes wet and boggy.

Additionally, extending the East/West runway to accommodate larger aircraft would provide an alternative landing option on runway 17/35 during strong wind conditions, as heavier aircraft are not recommended for use on grass surfaces, particularly when they are wet.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,
Matt Jacobs

Q2

Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3

Your name

Short Text

Matt Jacobs

Q4

Short Text

Q5

Multi Choice

BRCC Benalla Airport Master Plan 2025 submission

I thank the Benalla Rural City Council (BRCC) for the opportunity to make a submission on the draft 2025 Master Plan for Benalla aerodrome.

I am a regular user of Benalla aerodrome and have been for nearly four decades, being a BRCC rate payer for some of that period. I own a share in a hangar on the airfield (constructed at my own expense and held on a long term ground lease from BRCC) and a share in a large wingspan glider. I therefore have a vital interest in what happens at “my” airfield.

I am a member of and have held many positions since the mid-1980’s in various aspects of the Gliding Club of Victoria Inc (GCV), and am currently the Secretary of the State Gliding Centre Committee of Management Inc (SGC). SGC owns the main non-airside brick building (which is also leased on a long term ground lease from BRCC) and is sub-leased to GCV. In addition I am a founding member of Benalla Aeropark Club Inc (BAC) which holds the non-airside accommodation assets (also leased on a long term ground lease from BRCC). I was one of the two primary representatives of SGC, GCV and BAC in the recent ground lease negotiations with BRCC and am familiar with all relevant matters in those leases. I am also a full member of the recently formed Benalla Airport Users Group Inc (BAUG) which provides coordination and collaboration linkages with all other airside and non-airside users around Benalla airport.

I have read and fully support the submission that has been lodged with BRCC by GCV regarding the Benalla Airport 2025 Master Plan. Like many others, I look forward to the growth of sports aviation activities at Benalla airport as the size and location of the current airport makes it entirely unsuitable for any larger aircraft than currently can land there. It is clear that prudent risk assessment precludes a larger main bitumen runway than currently exists – the proposed 08/26 main runway extension would increase the adverse impacts on Benalla residents and I am sure BRCC can reasonably foresee significant litigation emanating from the increased risks the proposed runway extension would bring. More importantly however, there is no remotely reasonable commercial case for the proposed air services these larger aircraft would offer due to non-existent demand, whilst the runway and airport terminal and associated works would be hugely expensive (and disruptive). In short, it was a bad idea when this idea was introduced in the 2020 Benalla Airport Master Plan – which had pitifully limited consultation with affected users at the time – and it is still a bad idea. If, and it is a big if, larger commercial aircraft need to land in the Benalla area, there are two, and only two, options available: one, send them to Wangaratta Airport (20 minutes up the Hume Highway), or two, build a completely new, larger, replacement airport outside the growth areas of Benalla city. Only one of these options is viable.

Outside of the above-described major flaw, the 2025 Master Plan has a number of other issues that need to be addressed. In the interest of brevity, I will just list these below and look forward to the opportunity to provide further explanation and justification for them in subsequent consultations with BRCC. These issues include:

- Need to retain existing open space area both airside and non-airside for potential aviation emergencies (not end up like Essendon Airport, surrounded by buildings!);
- Need a full-length taxiway south of the main 08R26L runway with a number of ‘slipways’ along the runway length to exit the runway and return to the main apron, thus avoiding ‘back tracking’ by aircraft on the main runway – this should be only a modest cost to construct;
- Need to improve Samaria Road entrance and access to better deal with the additional school traffic;
- Need glider ‘acceleration strips’ the full length of 08L/26R for safe launching of gliders and especially further land area (approximately 100-200 metres) is required to be added to the airport along the entire length north of the eastern end of 26R gable markers for

aircraft parking, marshalling, crew operations and car parking (similar to what is available north of 08L) – this land acquisition should have been part of the runway extensions that were carried out by BRCC in 2017 for the World Gliding Championships;

- Need to extend the hard stand on 26L08R for glider marshalling when wet grass runways are closed by BRCC via Notam;
- Need to recognize that that BAC (i.e. Aeropark) is for members of Aeropark, not for visitors (as stated in the Master Plan) and the Master Plan also needs to show that SGC has already agreed with BRCC for additional land north-west of the existing building to facilitate additional accommodation blocks for GCV members;
- Need a water retarding basin along Kilfeera Road south of the existing hangars for hangar drainage control;
- Need to expand the existing glider trailer park for more trailers and the area to be sealed, secure and protected from wind, rain and UV and designed for ease of access (noting these trailers are often 12 metres long and have the turning circle of a semi-trailer truck);
- Need to ensure adequate and equitable allocation of new hangar locations in the proposed third row of hangars for both commercial and non-commercial aircraft, together with suitable long term lease tenure, noting that hangars must have a minimum taxiway width of 35 metres and that access is required to new taxiways both from the west and the east from these new third row hangars;
- Need to significantly reconfigure Precinct 7 which should not permit public access and not have a viewing area platform – instead a new public access road should be provided outside the airside boundary utilizing the existing perimeter road and relocating the airport boundary fence inside this public access road with a new perimeter road inside the new boundary fence – this is likely to be only a modest cost to implement and will prove to be a much safer and more convenient way for the visiting public to view aircraft movements at Benalla airport (further layout details can be provided).

I look forward to receiving a favourable hearing from BRCC and look forward to making further submissions directly to BRCC to further explain the above comments.

Yours sincerely,

Shaun Driscoll

3 October 2025

From: Andy Davison

Sent: Monday, 15 September 2025 4:38 PM

To: Greg Robertson

Subject: GCV Response to the Airport Masterplan

Please be cautious

This email was sent from outside of your organisation

Hi Greg,

Please find attached the GCV response to the 2025 YBLA Masterplan. I've agonised over this for the last few weeks, knowing that it is not particularly glowing to the work that has been done in the Masterplan to date.

The criticism is made in the best interests of developing an asset of value for Benalla in the most realistic way we can imagine. Our ideas will not be right necessarily, but it does at least highlight that there are more possibilities open to developing aviation activity in Benalla than just bringing in big aircraft. We were disappointed that the Masterplan has not offered up any alternative visions, and felt it was important to therefore provide an alternative for consideration.

I have sent this to you directly for an initial review - I've promised to send in a hard copy for council shortly, so that will follow, but I wanted to make sure you have a chance to see what I've written and to connect for a conversation if you feel it's overly contentious.

Kind regards,

Andy

Andy Davison
Club President
Gliding Club of Victoria



2025 YBLA Masterplan Review

26 August 2025

Primary Author: A. Davison

Responding on behalf of Gliding Club of Victoria

Executive summary

The Gliding Club of Victoria supports the Benalla Rural City Council in its ambitions to grow utilisation and community value of the Benalla Airport. We consider that the current masterplan falls short in of this ambition, by considering only one future for the airport – that being the potential future commercial aviation hub for large aircraft. The masterplan is therefore single minded in its desire to safeguard a future option to such large aircraft. Our investigations of this possibility have identified that this desire is not consistent with the proximity of the airport to the Benalla City Centre.

Other regions have realised this opportunity by undertaking to move their airports away from the urban centres in order to facilitate such traffic. Such a proposal is not a part of the current Masterplan considerations. This, along with a number of omissions and inaccuracies, calls into question whether the masterplan presented is a realistic vision of the future for aviation in Benalla. Informal consultation with professionals in airport management and design have drawn the same conclusions.

We conclude our critical analysis with one alternative vision for Benalla Airport that has not been considered by the presented Masterplan – a new “Hero Brand” for Benalla, establishing a vibrant hub for recreational aviation. Such a pursuit that would attract both transactional and sustained value for the broader Benalla community. It also promotes long-term growth for the region via a growing recreational sector with capacity for investment, as opposed to transactional growth for a single sector whose continued commercial focus is on reduced spending and cost reduction measures.



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Introduction

The Benalla Rural City Council has recently updated the 2015 Masterplan to develop a document that addresses the current and future needs of airfield users, as well as the broader requirements of the Council and the Benalla community.

It is important to note we recognise that this work does not constitute a comprehensive re-survey of the airfield and its surrounding precinct, and that it is principally concerned with the analysis of land assets associated with the airport, and the transitioning of these from their current configuration to their “optimal future state”.

The gliding community constitutes the principal user group of the aerodrome, and most importantly **the only airport operation that is present 7 days a week**, all year round. As such, we have a **unique perspective** on the current and future operations on site. We employ a permanent local staff member present throughout the year and have a significant membership base whose activity varies seasonally.

We exist within a broader community, united in our commitment to growing recreational aviation activities. Our club and the broader community provided numerous submissions during the masterplan process, and we appreciate that many of our concerns have been incorporated into the input analysis.

However, we have reservations regarding the future outlook presented, which appears to overlook significant feedback from our community in drawing its conclusions. While we acknowledge the Council's efforts to ensure the masterplan considers gliding activities, it seems that the contractors engaged remain insufficiently informed about the specific nature of airfield utilisation, particularly by the gliding sector. Given that gliding is a comparatively small segment within aviation, this may not be unexpected.

Nonetheless, although our contributions have been acknowledged, they have not been reflected in the conclusions, either through omission or by lack of understanding. There has been no direct engagement with our community to understand our concerns during the process of constructing this masterplan. This lack of consultation prior to delivering the masterplan is disappointing. We had expected more from an organisation specialising in international airport masterplans.

Our response seeks to identify the areas where we believe the masterplan does not fully reflect the needs of the Benalla community, current (and future) airfield users (including the Gliding Club of Victoria) and to highlight inconsistencies between the proposed vision for future airport operations and the realities of an airport situated in close proximity to a



densely populated urban area. We do this in the spirit of having the airfield and its operations be a harmonious and valuable asset to the community of Benalla.

In this light, we will conclude with an alternative vision, seeking to establish Benalla as a central hub for recreational aviation. We do so in the knowledge of the need for operations at YBLA to be mutually beneficial to the users of the airport and to the broader Benalla community.

Shortcomings of the Masterplan

Understanding of contra-circuit operations

On page 26, the masterplan discusses the contra operation stating, “The airport employs a contra circuit system on all runways, enabling powered aircraft to operate in one direction while gliders operate in the opposite direction”. This is incorrect; whilst it is almost certainly a mistake in the language used, it is important to note that clarity on this issue is a matter of critical safety concern.

Contra operations in fact refers to mixed traffic types operating on different sides of the operating airstrip. In the case of YBLA:

- When operating on 08/26, gliding traffic operates to the north of the runway, with powered aircraft operating to the south
- When operating on 17/35, gliding traffic operates on the east of the runway, with powered aircraft operating to the west.

In a contra-circuit operation, the powered aircraft circuit will have the opposite rotation to gliding traffic, resulting in the “Left” and “Right” designation for approaches to the airfield (this refers to the direction of turns in the circuit, rather than a side of the runway).

This separation is critical to safe operation of mixed traffic. At **NO TIME** do gliders and powered aircraft operate in opposite directions. Such an operation would be extremely hazardous. ERSA is clear on this matter, so the consultants understanding could have been improved through consultation with our community.

It is also critical to note that as a result of the contra-circuit operations, there is **NO** dead side of the airport (as is present in many other regional airports).

Airfield dimensions

The airfield dimensions originally posted in the recent masterplan drafts have been presented as being consistent with the dimensions that were captured in the 2015 masterplan. The dimensions have since been amended at our request to reflect the fact that gliding strip has been extended to the eastern boundary of the airport perimeter road (around 2018). This demonstrates that due diligence has not been established in construction of this masterplan (that is, ensuring an accurate, current baseline from which a valid masterplan for the future can be drawn) and has created a lack of confidence in the consultant's masterplan recommendations and conclusions.

Airfield facilities

The statement of airfield facilities ignores the presence of the new facility at the Eastern end of 08/26. Again, this demonstrates a lack of thoroughness in the analysis of the current state of the airfield.

Airfield navigation to launch areas

The masterplan discusses transit of people to the gliding launch areas via the perimeter road (page 28 of the 2025 Masterplan V3.0). Specifically, it indicates that members of the general public are required to navigate themselves to the glider launch facility. This is incorrect - in fact Council regulations require the general public must be under escort at all times to proceed to the launch point, which represents a considerable burden on the volunteer resources of the club. Hence our recommendation to have a public access road connect to the existing perimeter road, which we will discuss later.

Presence of emergency services

The masterplan has overlooked the use of YBLA as a base for one of the fire-bombing helicopters in the region. This is a minor oversight but goes to the lack of understanding of the local context.

Impact of aviation on neighbouring areas

The masterplan is diligent in pointing out the sensitivity to aviation traffic for bordering developments, however it makes no acknowledgement of similar considerations for gliding traffic. Bordering developments represent significant safety concerns for gliding operations, as options for low-level emergency situations are critical for continuing operations. Gliding relies on the presence of open fields to use as emergency landing area under extreme circumstances. The safety of gliding approaches are also heavily impacted by wind shear created when multi-story buildings encroach on the airfield surrounds. Unlike powered aircraft, gliders are unable to mitigate these hazards with use of additional power from an engine.

Recommendations that would provide additional safety for neighbouring areas have been made, in particular the extension of the current acceleration strips on Glider Strip 08/26. This would allow tugs and gliders to achieve a higher altitude above residential areas by making the full length of the runway safely usable for larger gliders which are fully ballasted.

Similar acceleration strips for 17/35 would also assist in launching large gliders safely.

These safety considerations **have not been addressed** in the published masterplan.

Historical traffic data

The masterplan calls out that there are currently no records of aviation traffic at YBLA. This is not true, as we have considerable data records for airfield use by the gliding community. These are available; however, no request was made by the authors, and no opportunity was available to furnish it during the development of this masterplan.

Data Errors in Movement Forecasts

The data presented to forecast future movements has been amended after the raising of the issue of shortcomings in the original data collection, presentation and forecasting.

None-the-less:

- There are significant numerical inconsistencies with the basic data sets presented between the previous and current drafts, giving cause for concern.
- The conclusions drawn about future movements remain incongruent with the data presented and the assertions made in establishing the forecast trends.
- The growth assumptions have remained consistent with the previous report, however the baseline data used to support at least one of the conclusions has changed significantly.

The previously presented data indicated a significant decline in LSA movements over time, whilst *this new data indicates a marked increase*. In the commentary of this revised document, the authors continue to state, “Based on the BITRE data, the LSA movements have decreased over the years from 2014 to 2022 but are rising to pre-covid levels”. This statement is not consistent with the data presented.

Furthermore, the conclusions for forecast movements remain questionable. Taking the data from the new Figure 14 into consideration, we summarise the conclusions drawn in the section “Forecast of Future Operations”:

Activity	Current Draft Interpolated Growth (2015-2024)	Forecast growth
Ballooning	assumed 0% pa	+1% pa
LSA	+2% pa	+2% pa
Gliding	+2% pa	+1% pa

We do not understand how these conclusions have been drawn. It makes no sense to us to forecast higher growth in a category that has experienced decline, and to forecast decline in an evidently growing category (namely gliding). Consequently, we have no confidence in the voracity of this masterplan to cater for the future of any of our current aviation activity here at YBLA.

Recognition of GCV community contribution: 2023 Airshow

Of minor concern but worth pointing out is the lack of acknowledgment of GCV's role in the 2023 airshow. This event was initiated, organised and financed (at considerable expense) by the GCV initially as an open day for the gliding club, which grew to be a large-scale airshow that was enjoyed by the community and benefited all airfield users.

BRCC should also be recognised for their support in hosting the airshow, and their assistance in providing logistical support for road traffic management and facilitation of rubbish management to ensure the airfield remained free of foreign debris.

Precinct definitions

The following are key areas of concern with respect to the definition of precincts on the airfield.

Precinct 1 “Airport Core and Runways Precinct”

This has been illustrated as covering an existing staging area currently reserved for glider staging. This is the field to the west of the 08/26 runways and is marked by white posts in the ground. It contains anchoring hardware and water infrastructure for use in hosting competition events such as the state, national and World events here.

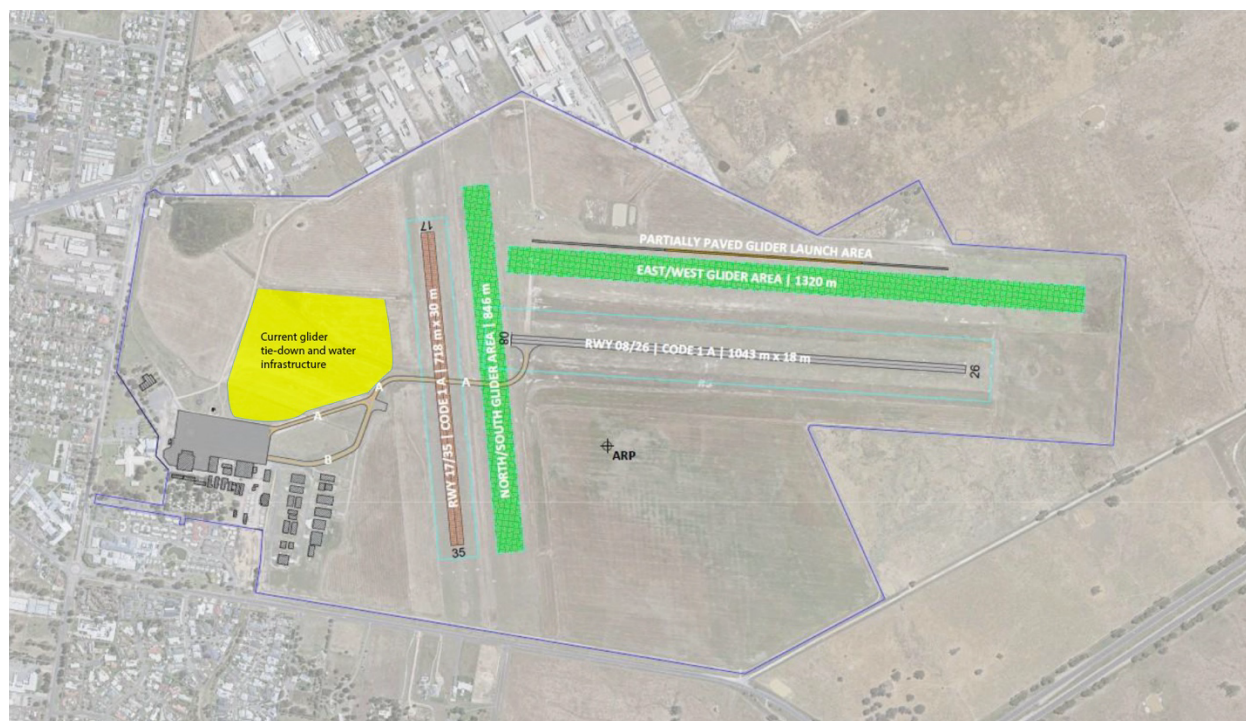


Figure 1 Indicating the existing infrastructure for secure glider tie-down and water

This area has not been acknowledged in the masterplan at all, and worse it will be demolished with the westward expansion of Runway 08/26. In this event we would require the relocation of this infrastructure to an area that is still within reasonable walking distance of the State Gliding Centre and the GCV hangars and workshop. Failure to safeguard this facility will jeopardise Benalla's ability to attract large competition events in the future.

Precinct 3 may represent one such alternative area, however it is commonly wet and susceptible to flooding, so significant earthworks would be required to make this possible.

Precinct 3 "Recreation & Events/Hangar & Passenger Terminal Precinct"

The masterplan makes suggestions for the utilisation of Precinct 3 for use as hangar space and a passenger terminal. Once again gliding does not seem to have been considered when devising the master plan, as this area now represents one of the only safe emergency landing areas within the airport confines. This area was critical in averting an air emergency in the not-too-distant past, so whilst it is infrequently called on, with the surrounding areas continuing to present decreasing options for emergency situations these areas within the confines of the airport become increasingly important.

A possible mitigation would be to secure land surrounding the airport to be reserved for emergency landing situations.

We note also that the SWOT analysis for this masterplan has indicated:

- **Strength and Advantage:** Flooding has been mitigated by Council investment in infrastructure.
- **Weaknesses and Constraints:** Flooding remains an issue, and further investment in drainage facilities is a common theme among stakeholders.

Whilst this inconsistency makes no sense to us, of most importance is the fact that the airfield and in particular the hangar precinct remains under constant threat of closure due to flooding caused by rain. This needs to be addressed going forward, perhaps via a retarding basin in the southern precinct of the airfield.

Precinct 5

This section alludes to, but does not explicitly mention, the plan to provide a modern accommodation facility catering for female and disability pilots and those with other accommodation requirements not currently satisfied by our present "dorm-style" accommodation. This has been verbally agreed between Council and State Gliding Centre as an approved project and is awaiting allocation of land to proceed to a funding stage.

Precinct 6B “Visitor Accommodation”

The masterplan designates this precinct for affordable temporary accommodation for airport visitors and other users. Currently, it is primarily utilised by the gliding club, which has managed the area since our arrival at the Commonwealth facility in the early 1950’s. At that time, the huts were unused and in poor condition; the GCV initiated efforts to restore habitability, including setting up a clubhouse in one hut. Two huts were later acquired from the Council by the club, with the requirement that they be relocated and refurbished at the club's expense. GCV also installed the current male, female and disability ablution facilities and a laundry. More recently, the Balloon association has acquired one hut for use as their clubrooms.

Members of the GCV established the Aeropark in 2000 to expand our temporary accommodation options. Some huts are available for hire by members, while others are privately owned. Without such accommodation, GCV would expect a significant reduction in visitation to Benalla by glider pilots.

This precinct is most accurately described as GCV accommodation; however, discussions regarding increased capacity and amenities for other airfield users are welcome.

Consideration may be given to recognising the area as **“Airfield Users Accommodation”**.

Precinct 7 - Open Space & Passive Recreation

The use of this area has not changed since the 2015 masterplan and still lacks genuine utility. Proposed viewing decks on the north and south edges offer poor visibility of activity on the main 08/26 runway and are far removed from 17/35; as a consequence, they are unlikely to be used as intended. Without a clear purpose, these spots may attract unwanted visitors involved in criminal behaviour.

In addition, the area covered by Precinct 7 represents the only area west on the airfield for emergency mitigation. If the proposed runway extension was to go ahead, there would be only 100m from this area to the runway threshold, placing observers and the public in danger from overrun events.

As such the proposals for Precinct 7 represent cause for concern on a number of safety aspects. A better option would be to open part of the glider staging area for public viewing, providing a direct view of the busy 08/26 runway. This proposal requires a public path to the perimeter road and fencing to prevent vehicle and pedestrian access to airside areas.

In constructing such a “public access perimeter track”, **we suggest that utilising the current airfield entrance is the most appropriate approach**. This allows for a centralised

point of access to all airport services, enabling visitors and users engaged in gliding (for example) to discover the other services on the field (e.g. the museum). Suggestions such as providing access from the north (e.g. via Yellow Brick Road) would fracture the airport community by providing activity specific entrances with little opportunity for “cross pollination” and would therefore be detrimental to our vision for a “Connected Airfield Community”.

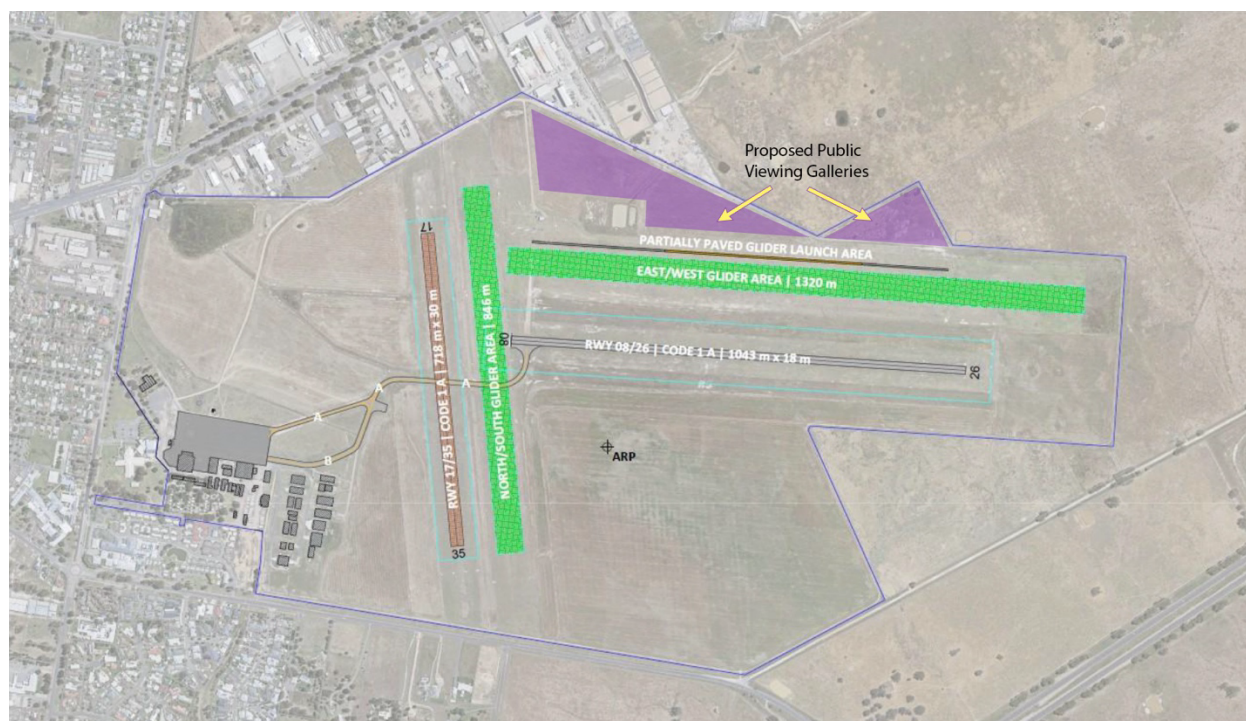


Figure 2 Proposed location of airfield viewing with improved vantage compared to the Precinct 7 proposal contained in the Masterplan

Fuel Facilities

The masterplan has failed to recognize the MoGas fuel tank and filling station located on the north side of Glider Strip 08/28. Recently there has been a steady flow of enquiries to make this facility available to other aviation users, which GCV could easily support with a relatively small investment in pump infrastructure.

Points not considered by the Masterplan

Operational issues to support growth in gliding and recreational aviation

We are seeing a slow but steady growth of interest in gliding in Australia, driven in part by a rise in young influencer pilots successfully promoting the sport on social media, and in part by the attractively low relative price point for those wishing to enter aviation and aerospace careers. We expect this to translate to increased demand for memberships, hangars and competitive events at Benalla.

To support this growth the airfield dimensions are currently smaller than ideal for the staging of large numbers of aircraft at the eastern end of the glider strip. Ideally there would be additional space at the north-eastern area of the airfield to safely tie down a large number of aircraft off-strip. This would facilitate safer operations for large events such as a modern world championship (attracting up to 200 international pilots and their crews).

Currently the eastern-most strip area is used for this marshalling activity, which restricts its use to displace launch movements as far to the east as possible.

To safeguard for this growth, it would be prudent to acquire land at the north-east end of the airfield as a staging environment for use as a staging area (indicated as “Stage 1” below).

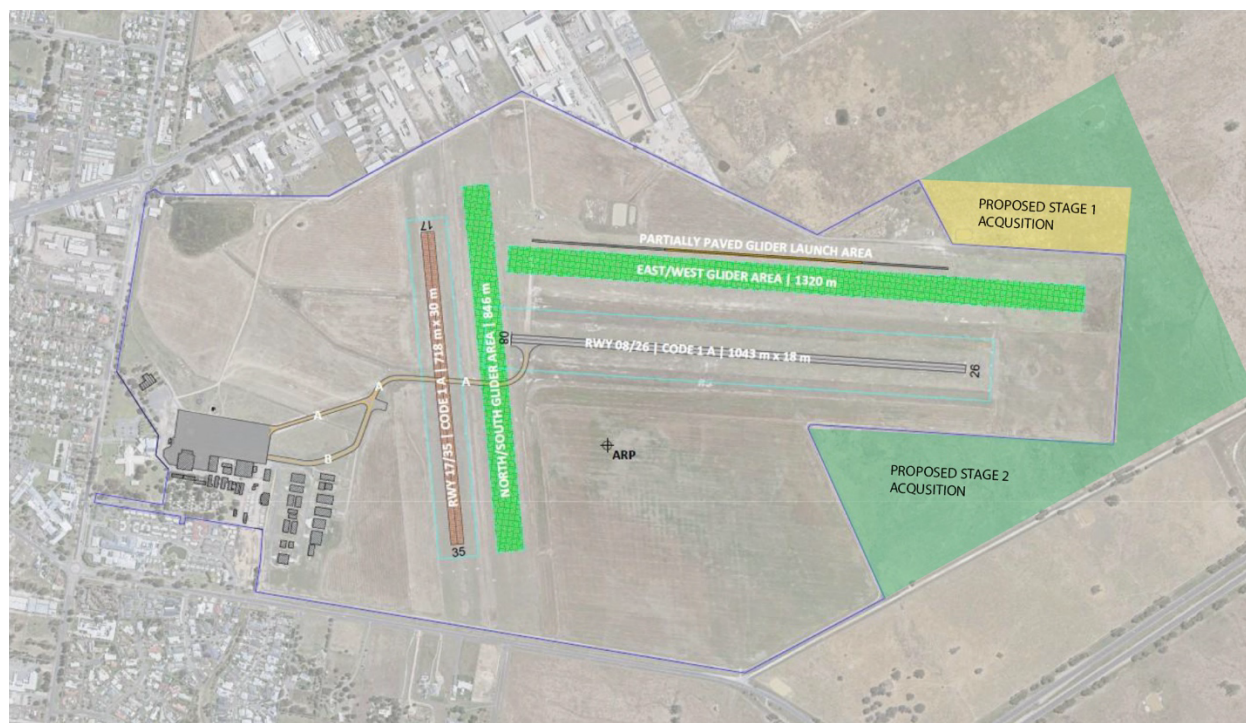


Figure 3 Potential land parcels that would afford improved aviation activities for YBLA

More broadly, the paddock area to the east could be acquired to enable:

- Provide additional clearance from residential areas for all aircraft on take-off and approach.
- Provide additional undershoot/overshoot allowances for all aircraft.
- Future east-ward extension of the 08/26 strip to further distance launch activities from western neighbours
- Future development of the Southeast sector as a prime “Sky Park” residential area.

Considering our fellow airfield users, there is likewise little consideration given for improved facilities for their activities. Notably the current infrastructure for public amenities is poor, and accommodations are rudimentary. Whilst this indirectly results in affordable spaces for organisations who are not wealthy, it is not a particularly welcoming image to attract growth of activities at the airfield.

There is also a need for more casual parking for aircraft to support club “safari” activities which would see flocks of aircraft arriving in Benalla as part of a larger tour. Such stops bring financial benefit to the Council, directly through visitor movement fees and fuel purchases but also providing indirect benefit to the local community as these aviators venture into town for food, supplies and accommodation.

Perimeter road access to the public

Currently, secure access requirements for the launch areas at YBLA limit the ability of GCV and potential future balloon activities to accommodate public interest. While many visitors schedule their visits in advance, those who arrive without prior booking are generally unable to observe activities or participate in flights, as staff are often not available to receive them. Additionally, escorting guests onto and from the airfield requires a crew member to leave operational duties to facilitate visitor access airside.

Historically, unplanned visitors constituted a notable portion of overall traffic served by GCV. Since implementing secured airfield access, there has been a substantial decline in these spontaneous visits.

Opening accessibility to the proposed launch space also makes Benalla an ideal launch field for Ballooning activities, which would attract accommodation bookings and town venue utilisation for meals etc.

As has been discussed, utilising the current gate entrance for the public access to the observation area means that visitors become exposed to all of the airfield activities, potentially driving increased participation for all of the airfield users.

Whilst discussing casual visitors to the airfield, it is also relevant to note that the original discussions about placing the RV dump point at the airport included an expectation that users could increase demand for visitor flights. In practice, individuals using the dump point are transitory; although they typically remain for about an hour, they currently do not have access to the launch areas to participate in aviation-related activities. This situation might change if public access were permitted and communicated at designated locations around the airfield.

Trailer Parking

There is no mention in the masterplan of glider trailers. In our sport, the glider and the trailer are considered a single entity. Our aircraft are most almost exclusively transported in a trailer that is customised for that glider. These trailers are an essential part of the equipment required to recover an aircraft from an out-landing (an event where a glider lands outside the confines of its home aerodrome). As such the glider and trailer exist as a single entity from an operational context.

There is therefore a natural “capacity” question that will arise with additional hangars – each hangar will attract up to about 6 trailers, all requiring space to park safely.

It is also worth noting that glider trailers are an extra-long vehicle, spanning up to 12m in length. They therefore have additional considerations which must be accounted for to permit safe manoeuvring.

Currently the GCV trailers reside in an insecure and run-down area of the aerodrome, where breaking concrete result in the need for weed management. Some of these trailers are home to gliders when not in use, and so security of this area is a constant concern – not so much for theft but for vandalism.

It has been discussed that we would move these to airside to increase security. The new entrance via BARC Ave would provide simple ingress and egress to airside, however a number of criteria would need to be met, in order of decreasing priority:

- **Hard Stand**

It is essential that any trailer parking area should have a hardstand with a reasonable margin area to prevent exposure to moisture from contact with weeds and grass. This contact can accelerate corrosion of the trailer.

The hard stand will also discourage vermin and snakes, both of which represent a safety hazard to trailer storage.

- **Security Surveillance**

As these assets remain exposed to foot traffic on airside, it would be advisable to have recorded surveillance on site to identify any unauthorised interference with the trailers.

- **Rain and UV protection (roofing)**

Many of the trailers are composed of composite plastic materials to reduce their weight. These trailers are highly susceptible to degradation through exposure to UV radiation, so protection from the harsh mid-day sun would be highly desirable for a trailer storage area. Other trailers are metal, and can suffer through exposure to rain, potentially damaging the gliders stored within.

- **Wind Protection (walls or fences)**

Glider trailers have a significant side profile, resulting in them presenting large “sail areas”. During significant wind events, the trailers can easily be moved by wind events. Providing tie down points can help to an extent, however the best protection is via windbreaks or walls. The current location provides a very effective wind break, with buildings present on all sides of the area.

Given these concerns, it may be worth considering retaining the current area at least in the short term as the trailer storage area. This area currently provides an adequate hard-stand area for the current occupants, and could be made more serviceable in an affordable manner by:

- Supplementing security moving the proposed secure access gate further to the west on BARC Ave and impeding vehicular access on Hangar Lane. This latter measure would also help address current concerns about speeding in Hangar Lane.
- Adding video surveillance for the area
- Installation of shade cloth to minimise direct UV exposure to trailers, or alternatively construction of roofing to inhibit both UV and rain.





There are some considerations that would have to play into any decision to implement this:

- There needs to be sufficient space or ingress to permit appropriate manoeuvring of the oversized trailers.
- We need to remember that there is a commercial business (CRM) positioned at the east of the trailer park who would most likely be inconvenienced by these security measures. They may be open to this suggestion due to the resulting increase in security.

Hangar Availability

GCV are concerned that the proposed additional hangar row may be designed and/or priced to exclude being within reach of glider pilots. We do not know how to safeguard this, as we understand how attractive commercial GA hangar rates must be to Council. However, in the spirit of driving uptake of recreational aviation in Benalla, everything possible should be done to ensure that recreational aviators are given priority over GA housing at YBLA.

This also means accounting for utility for gliders by:

- Ensuring at least 35m separation from the existing second hangar row
- Ensuring accessibility from both sides of the hangar, to permit multiple hangar doors. This enables safe and efficient resource sharing
- Two additional north-south taxiways enabling such access.

Safeguarding for an unrealisable dream

GCV's View of masterplan ambition to host larger aircraft and safeguarding for RPT and commercial traffic

We preface this discussion by acknowledging we are not experienced airport designers but have sought informal professional advice to ensure our thoughts here are not uneducated or unreasonable. We refer here to definitions provided in Part 139 and have made some rudimentary, mathematical estimations in the following discussion. We would naturally defer to advice from a professional body as to why any of our assumptions below are incorrect.

The majority of the masterplan discusses the need to safeguard future options for the airport. In particular there is considerable mention of safeguarding the possibility of accepting larger aircraft into the aerodrome. The proposal to achieve this has Runway 08/26 extended to the east and west. It also discusses the concerns with noise experienced by neighbouring residential areas.

Our concern is whether the resulting design has considered the impact on residents from the likely approach surface required to support aircraft of category 3. The Part 139 legislative instrument defines these requirements in the table copied in Table 1. This table indicates a likely requirement for a 2% slope for 3000m measured at a distance of 60 metres from the runway threshold.

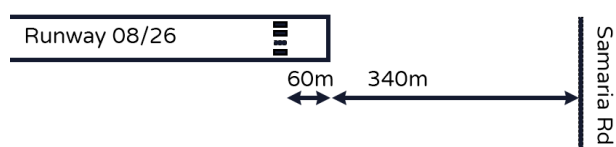


Figure 4 Illustration of measurement displacements for the Inner Approach Surface

Using the drawings provided in the masterplan (which do not include dimensions, so we are interpolating), we assess the proposed Runway 08 threshold to be approximately 400m from Samaria Road. Accounting for the required distance from the threshold, an additional 60 metres are required before the commencement of the inner approach surface. We are assuming that 2% will accommodate for the design aircraft anticipated (Dash-8 Q400).

With these requirements in mind, this means that the approach surface at Samaria Road will be at a height of 6.8 metres, clearing the houses in that vicinity by not significantly more than the height of a small gum tree.

Accounting for a nominal 3-degree approach path on runway 08, this would have aircraft at a height of approximately 21.6m for those residents closest to the airport. A Dash-8 Q400 aircraft on approach from this altitude would not only be a daunting visual experience but also generate significant noise which is likely to receive significant protest from residents, and vibration causing structural complaints which may not make themselves evident for some years.

In the illustration below, the height of the Inner Approach Surface is indicated in relative scale to the typical height of a modern single storey residence (approximately 3m tall) and a small gum tree (5m). As the proposed design aircraft, the Dash-8 Q400 illustration is provided as an indication of the relative size of the aircraft, which has a wingspan of 28.4m. By comparison:

- the width of the block for 34 Samaria Rd is approx. 15.7m
- the wingspan of a Boeing 737-800 is 34m
- the wingspan of a Cessna 152 is 10.1m (typical of most powered traffic at YBLA)

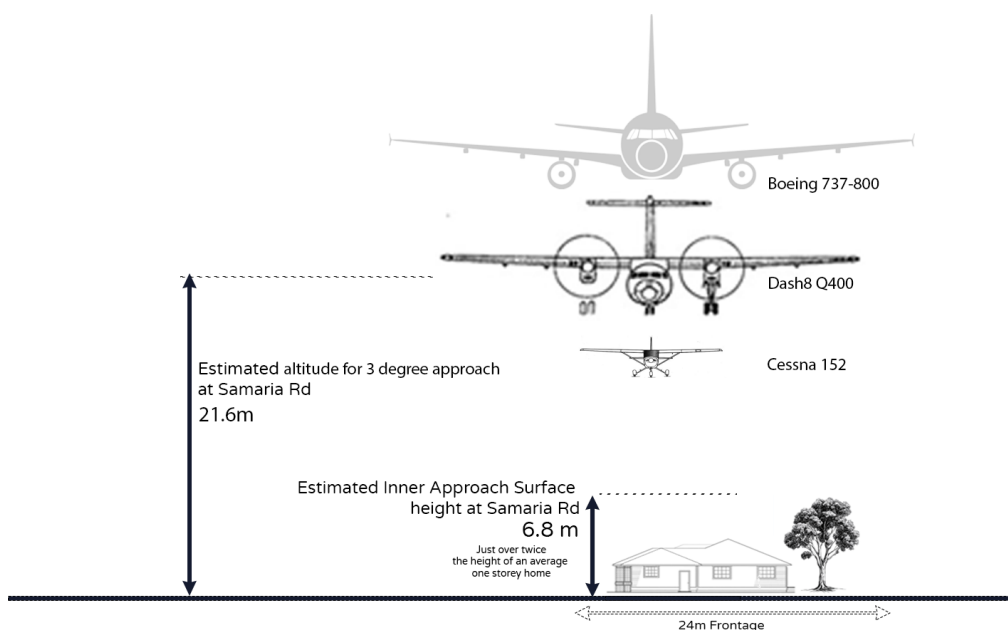


Figure 5 A scale illustration to show the relative sizes of aircraft compared to the proposed "Design Aircraft", the Dash-8 Q400. Also shown are the height of the required approach surface and the likely height of an aircraft approach above properties near the airport

We understand the goal of hosting larger aircraft at Benalla Airport. Whilst its proximity to Benalla City serves many positive functions, when it comes to consideration for use by larger aircraft the present masterplan does not appear to appropriately safeguard for that purpose.

It may be argued that it is possible to operate at the eastern end of the runway (inbound 26, outbound 08). Doing so would mean neighbouring properties remain exposed to the risk of an overrun event, where the aircraft fails to stop and leaves the end of the runway. The proposed runway would allow only 350m overrun in the event of an emergency.

In order to appropriately safeguard this as an option, we believe it would be necessary to acquire land to the east of the airfield and displace the west-most runway threshold 400m to the east of its current location at a minimum.

This would, unfortunately, place the eastern threshold of a 1750m runway untenably close to the Hume Highway (marked in yellow on the aerial photo below).



Figure 6 Positioning of a 1750m runway to permit safe Category 3 operations near built-up urban environments

It is our conclusion that extension of the runway for the purposes of supporting category 3 aircraft will most likely:

- Result in severe negative impacts to the safety and amenity of residents to the west of Samaria Road
- Require significant investment and ongoing operational expense which is unlikely to see a commensurate return.

We therefore believe that the interests of the community and the airport users at large would be best served by Council exploring alternative ambitions which are able to deliver short and long-term value to the community.

Table 1 Replication of the “Physical Dimensions of the OLS for an approach runway” from the Part 139 legislative instrument governing airports in Australia

OLS (in bold) and dimension items (in italics)	Runway type and code, and OLS values in percentages and metres									
	Non-instrument				Instrument					
					Non-precision			Precision		
	Code				Code			CAT I Code	CAT II & III Code	
	1	2	3	4	1, 2	3	4	1, 2	3, 4	3, 4
OUTER HORIZONTAL										
<i>Height (m)</i>									150	150
<i>Radius (m)</i>									15000	15000
CONICAL										
<i>Slope</i>	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
<i>Height (m)</i>	35	55	75	100	60	75	100	60	100	100
INNER HORIZONTAL										
<i>Height (m)</i>	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
<i>Radius (m)</i>	2000	2500	4000	4000	3500	4000	4000	3500	4000	4000
APPROACH										
<i>Length of inner edge (m)</i>	60	80	150 ^a	150	140	280	280	140	280	280
<i>Distance from threshold (m)</i>	30	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
<i>Divergence each side</i>	10%	10%	10%	10%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
<i>First section length (m)</i>	1600	2500	3000	3000	2500	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000
<i>Slope</i>	5%	4%	3.33%	2.5%	3.33%	2%	2%	2.5%	2%	2%
<i>Second section length (m)</i>	-	-	-	-	-	3600 ^c	3600	12000	3600	3600
<i>Slope</i>	-	-	-	-	-	2.5% ^c	2.5%	3%	2.5%	2.5%
<i>Horizontal section length (m)</i>	-	-	-	-	-	8400 ^c	8400	-	8400	8400
<i>Total length (m)</i>	1600	2500	3000	3000	2500	15000 ^d	15000	15000	15000	15000
INNER APPROACH										
<i>Width (m)</i>								90	120	120
<i>Distance from threshold (m)</i>								60	60	60
<i>Length (m)</i>								900	900	900
<i>Slope</i>								2.5%	2%	2%
TRANSITIONAL										
<i>Slope</i>	20%	20%	14.3%	14.3%	20%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%
INNER TRANSITIONAL										
<i>Slope</i>								40%	33.3%	33.3%
BAULKED LANDING										
<i>Length of inner edge (m)</i>								90	120 ^g	120 ^g
<i>Distance from threshold (m)^e</i>									1800 ^f	1800
<i>Divergence each side</i>								10%	10%	10%
<i>Slope</i>								4%	3.3%	3.3%

Proposal: Benalla Recreational Aviation Hub

An alternative, and short-term realisable, vision for Benalla Airport

We consider instead a viable (and immediately achievable) vision for the future of Benalla Airport (YBLA) to be that of a Recreational Aviation Hub for Victoria.

We propose that efforts be made to secure YBLA as the premier locale for Sport and Recreational Aviation (SRA) pursuits in Victoria, accommodating compatible activities such as ballooning, Gliding, Paragliding, ultra-light and other SRA activities.

We strongly encourage that the BRCC focus on attracting aviation sporting clubs and associations, rather than attracting individuals. While individuals will bring in hangar lease revenue, the growth in clubs will elevate the level of social and community activity on the airfield and engagement with the broader Benalla community, creating opportunities for local participation where individual operators can/will not. A club or community-oriented focus will also attract funding, such as that in the recently opened 2025-26 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund.

Challenges facing recreational aviation

Currently SRA activity is under pressure at many airports through increased Commercial Pilot License (CPL) training at aerodromes around Australia. CPL training involves a significant amount of “Touch and Go” (T&G) activity, where pilots complete a landing approach (including circuit) and then power up to continue into a take-off. Commonly the student will then “go around” and complete this approach multiple times in order to become proficient.

This type of training very quickly causes congestion and is very difficult to carry out at high traffic airports. Australia has become a popular destination for international pilot schools due to our relatively high number of low traffic airports, particularly in regional areas.

This has resulted in new schools opening up to service international pilots with increasing frequency, making airspace at those airports increasingly congested (due to a large amount of T&G traffic), more difficult to navigate (due to varying levels of competency of student pilots) and, at worst, displacing smaller SRA operations as a result of these activities.

YBLA is now being seen as an attractive alternative for CPL traffic to practice T&G approaches as their local aerodromes are becoming congested; YBLA represents a zero-cost alternative for adjacent schools like Mangalore.

Why Benalla?

There are many locations that would like to make themselves home to recreational aviation, however there are a number of supporting factors that make Benalla the ideal candidate for the accolade of Victoria's prime destination and home for SRA activities:

- **Proximity to Benalla City Centre**

Whilst this is a detractor for commercial traffic, it is a significant advantage when discussing recreational traffic. Being a short walk away, Benalla offers a level of access to local businesses and food vendors which does not exist for many aerodromes. Visiting pilots would be able to park their aircraft and walk casually up the road for a meal or coffee. Local pilots would be able to make use of the train services and local taxis to transit to and from their aircraft.

- **Existing status as the gliding capital of Victoria**

Benalla is globally recognised as a "Mecca" for gliding activity, with many international pilots choosing to visit Benalla on a regular basis. The State Gliding Centre is located in Benalla and has played host to multiple state and national championships, as well as two World Championships for gliding.

There is therefore already a valid claim in part to being the Victorian epicentre for SRA. By formally acknowledging a slightly broader remit and investing in the supporting infrastructure Benalla would very quickly become the obvious aerodrome of choice for recreational pilots.

- **Restricted commercial activities**

The absence of high levels of commercial traffic would be seen as a positive reason to come to Benalla to enjoy SRA. Many other centres have combined commercial and recreational traffic which creates a higher-pressure experience when undertaking flight. With the lower levels of commercial activity Benalla could expect to attract pilots who are looking principally to enjoy their flying rather than it being another chore.



- **Ability to define airspace for Aerobatic activities**

Presently there are few airports who have a defined Aerobatics “Box” for aerobatic training or competition in Victoria. Benalla is an ideal location to attract aerobatic activities, as the airspace to the east is well clear of urban environments, and the limited amount of heavy traffic would permit undertaking of training and competition activities (as an example, Tocumwal is playing host to the Victorian Aerobatic Championships from 24-27 September, 2025 – this is an event we could attract back into Victoria under the this proposal).

Our proximity to Benalla township allows for the spectacular nature of aerobatic activity to create significant economic traffic for the town.

Revenue Generation

Traditionally Council generates revenues from YBLA through leasing arrangements with hangar operators. For the purposes of this discussion, we refer to “residents” as those who have hangarage at YBLA or a membership with a local airfield group, and “visitors” as those who are coming to YBLA for a short duration as part of a larger mission.

Opening YBLA up to be a recreational aviation hub provides opportunities to establish new revenues through:

- Attracting recreational aviation clubs to base themselves at YBLA, increasing leased tenancies and elevating social activity at the airfield and within Benalla
- Attract casual “visitor” aviators to Benalla through the availability of local lounge and café facilities, as well as the many regional attractions in the immediate surrounds
- Attract movement fees from “visiting” aircraft landing to take on fuel
- Attract movement fees from CPL training aircraft who are unable to conduct operations at their own aerodrome (such as “Touch and Go” flyovers)
- Attract “casual parking rates” from “visiting” aircraft
- Attract international aviators to enjoy rural Victoria
- Attract visitors to the Benalla region due to a “centralisation” of recreational aviation experiences (experience a balloon flight one day, a glider flight another, and enjoy the delights of the Benalla and wider region in between).

We recommend refraining from imposing such fees on resident aviators in order to attract clubs and associations to become resident at YBLA, establishing a market desire for tenancy.

Threats to Benalla Recreational Aviation Hub

- **Drone Operations**

There are an increasing number of operators looking to undertake drone activities. Drone movements are considered an extreme risk for all aviation as the devices are typically extremely difficult to see. We would recommend strongly against locating drone operations at, or near, YBLA.

- **CPL Training**

There is a notable increase in amount of CPL training (especially T&G). This appears to be related to the growth in CPL schools, particularly servicing overseas students, and the overcrowding of the airspace above their home aerodromes.

- **Encroachment of bounding properties**

Sports & Recreational Aviation, whilst a relatively safe pursuit, does operate in an environment of some risk, so facilities playing host to SRA activity do need to be aware of the role played by land surrounding participating aerodromes. Particularly for gliding but not limited to it, the space around an aerodrome can play a critical role in the safe return to ground for pilots in emergency situations. Continued build-up around the airport does represent a risk for SRA traffic.

Acquisition of the land parcel to the east of the airport would safeguard this to a large extent.

Grant Access: Local Sports Infrastructure Fund

The 2025-26 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (the Fund) is a competitive Victorian Government program, open to Victorian Local Government Authorities and Alpine Resorts Victoria. The Fund aims to increase and promote opportunities so Victorians can participate in ways that suit them and is targeted towards individuals and communities who participate less.

The investment priorities for this fund include:

- supporting communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, particularly projects that support suburbs and towns within the 2 most disadvantaged deciles in Victoria as per the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, 2021 (Benalla ranks in decile 2, and so qualifies under this criteria)
- demonstrating multi-use, shared and integrated facilities including those on school land that can ensure long-term community access
- providing a confirmed active recreation benefit through improved facility availability, scheduling, public access, and policy development (for projects with lighting elements).

We believe that a proposal based around developing a Sports and Recreational Aviation Precinct, particularly one focused primarily around club activities (rather than purely individual focused) would attract funding under this grant scheme.

Review of priorities

The list of priorities stated in Table 10 is lacking in its recognition of current issues impacting the day-to-day operations of the airport. We table the following alternative with commentary in red regarding changes each existing item and the additions that have been made.

We would suggest that “Immediate need” is not a sufficient indication of the nature of the immediate need and does not assist in verifying the priorities prescribed by the consultants and have tried to provide more meaningful triggers where possible.

No.	Action	Trigger	Timing	Priority
NEW	Extension of acceleration strips on gliding strip 08/26	Need to commence take-offs on 26 from eastern boundary to avoid tug traffic overhead residential areas to the west.	Short-term	High
1	New hangar precinct development	Long-standing demand for additional hangars	Short-term	High
2	Improve entrance point from Samaria Road in the South-West corner of Precinct 5 (border between Precinct 5 and Arts Centre)	Increased traffic arising from cohabitation with neighbouring school	Short Term	High
3	New entrance point in Precinct 6C * Needs to consider relocation to provide security to trailers without needing relocation	Need for direct access to hangar precinct * Improved security for trailer parking	Short-term	High
4	Visitor accommodation expansion in Precinct 6B	Demand for additional Accommodation * GCV is not directly aware of such demand but would welcome additional accommodation for aviation users on site.	Short-term	Medium
5	Construction of an MRO facility	Increase in the number of aircraft * GCV have observed growth in aircraft, but not sufficient to make this a short-term priority	Medium to long-term	Low
6	Retardation basin (s)	Remove flooding from hangar precinct	Short-term	High
7	Civil works to improve drainage facilities to avoid water stagnation along airside infrastructure	Airport is currently experiencing frequent closures (particularly over winter) due to SWS.	Short-term	High
8	Dash-8 Q400 as design aircraft (Code 3C)	Remove this as this class of aircraft is incompatible with an airfield in close proximity to built-up urban environs	N/A	N/A
9	Existing TWY upgrades	Remove necessity for aircraft to hold whilst aircraft backtrack to the taxiways	Medium	Medium
NEW	Establish hard-stand areas at ends of RWAY 08/26 for glider staging and aircraft movements in wet conditions	Current need to shuffle gliders off the runway to make it available for powered aircraft during wet season operations	Medium	Medium
10	Apron Expansion	Provide additional manoeuvring and parking room to provide for visiting recreational aircraft	Medium to long-term	Low
11	Passenger terminal facilities * Re-focus to provide amenity to recreational aviation users	Repurpose to support ambition to establish Benalla as a Recreational Aviation Hub	Medium to long-term	Low
12	New parallel taxiways (TWY to RWY 17/35 and TWY to RWY 08/26)	Prioritise TWY 08/26 to prevent backtracking on RWY, with multiple “slip-ways” to allow aircraft to exit the RWY as soon as possible to allow other traffic to proceed.	Long-term	Medium

Conclusion

In short, we believe that the masterplan is proposing to “safeguard” an activity that is

- probably not economically feasible,
- is playing into an area that is already serviced by a number of airfields in the immediate vicinity,
- will require additional ongoing investment in Council staffing
- is unlikely to be welcomed by residents who would need to become accustomed to large aircraft approaching at relatively low altitudes above their town
- will require the investment of significant amounts of money with a low likelihood of achieving a return on investment
- will disrupt current airport users or worse displace them.

The alternative vision of a Sports and Recreational Aviation hub would establish a new “Hero Brand” for Benalla, giving it a new purpose in the eyes of Victorians and heralding a positive future for the city and its residents.

Sabine Smyth 17-9-2025

Submission to the DRAFT Benalla Airport Masterplan

CONTEXT

I participated in the development of the new Council Plan as one of 15 selected community panel members. I have lived in Benalla for over forty years.

Since 2013 I lead a local community project to create a unique visitor experience based on a collection of over a thousand photos, as well as hundreds of stories and items based on the rich history of the Former Benalla Migrant Camp 1949-1967 in Hut 11 at Benalla Airport.

In May 2016 our organisation successfully achieved a State Heritage listing of the remaining structures, with Council support. Council also approved a **Conservation Management Plan for the site in 2018**. This plan (with many others of course) underpins our Council Plan.

For the past twelve years our project has operated a tourism enterprise at the airport out of Hut 11, an exhibition with regular open days, site walking tours and large reunion events. We have regularly contributed community events to Australia Day, the Benalla Festival, the Benalla Heritage Festival etc. For more information (if needed) about what we do as part of our project visit www.benallamigrantcamp.com.au or TripAdvisor or join our 1.5k followers on Facebook.

One of the historic huts, Hut 65, is currently being restored with funds through the Living Heritage Fund and when this is completed, we will sign a 10 year lease with Council, to create an added space from which to tell the migrant camp story and hold community events. We feel we are at a very crucial and exciting stage of our project.

Benalla Rural City through the **Regional Industry Development Fund** has formed an Arts Culture Industry Working Group which I actively contribute to, on behalf the Benalla Migrant Camp Exhibition. An application for a Feasibility Study for the Benalla Migrant Camp Exhibition has just been lodged. Our vision for the site is as a sustainable heritage tourism precinct, a contributor to Benalla's visitor economy that can create its own income to sustain itself.

Further development of our exhibition at the airport is an integral part of Benalla's latest **Benalla Rural City Destination Management Plan**.

I was part of the community workshops for the last Airport Masterplan 2015. That plan was done by specialist airport consultants and focused on the overall viability of the airport. It included an analysis of the dire financials of the airport. It was approved by Council in August 2015 but abandoned after Stage 1.

I provided feedback to this latest 2025 draft airport masterplan via the online form and some time later I had a brief, telephonic meeting with someone from the consultancy. I was told the plan was mainly about the airport. I am writing this submission in part because I do not think I was understood.

This draft document is a disappointment to me for a range of reasons, see below.

MY FEEDBACK & MY SUBMISSION

1- The connection of this plan to the Benalla Rural City Destination Management Plan, the Council

Plan and the Regional Development Fund's Arts Culture Working Group is entirely unclear to me and it appears to me as if this draft is in its own world, unconnected to the rest of the Council plans. This is not acceptable in today's corporate world where plans need to be interconnected, and all pull in the same direction. The consultants need to address this.

2- At the beginning of this draft plan, an explanation of why the last airport masterplan was abandoned after Stage 1 is needed – there must have been reasons for it? Why (after such extensive community consultation) was it almost entirely disregarded in this draft? It seems like such a waste, that we are starting all over again. At least there should be an explanation.

3- There is little to no information on the consultants' „multi criteria assessment“ – what did this consist of? If this draft relies on it, could we find out some detail? I have concerns around the level of research, and the consultant's familiarity with Benalla. I am concerned when I read that „the airport is conveniently located near the town centre“, as that is just not the case last time I looked. The consultants may be unaware that Benalla has just undergone a costly relocation of our cinema for the exact opposite reason. The airport is not near the town centre, and everyone knows it.

Also references to the need to „improve linkages with BPACC and GOTAFE“ and „GOTAFE and BPACC being located surrounding land (P51&25) might need a rethink, as this information is out of date by a couple of years at least.

I also note the consultants' comment that there are challenges for the airport due to its „low activity level and potentially limited demand.“ On page 80 the consultants speak of addressing „existing growth pressures“, and I am wondering what growth this is in view of the first statement?

It also states on P48 that „the masterplan should exercise caution in areas of uncertain returns“. I agree with those sentiments and wonder which recommendation in this draft will provide the community with certainty for economic growth?

4- This draft masterplan explains that Benalla Rural City is responsible for the airport's safety management – rather than the private businesses and clubs using it. What exactly is the cost to the ratepayer? If we are realistic about measuring the true economic impact of the airport for our town, the cost of the safety management, and the rationale behind this must be included in this plan.

5- There appears to be no independent information about the airport's financial position. The last airport Masterplan outlined that the airport had been losing significant amounts of money for decades. Could this draft report expand on the obvious question: how is this going, has it improved? The airport is a community asset and the community has a right to hear how the recommendations within this plan will improve the financial position of the airport - or serve them in some other way.

6- How is the „economic benefit“ of the airport defined - I can see no data or evidence or measurable indicator. The community would benefit most if the site was cost neutral instead of incurring a substantial loss each year.

Where will the proposed economic benefit come from, particularly when it is stated in this plan that „the airport's affordability makes it appealing to residents and visiting aircraft“? Statements such as „businesses are eager to use Benalla airport and contribute to its continued growth“ need clarification – which type of businesses are they? I have lived in Benalla long enough to know that most local businesses (except perhaps the supermarkets) do not benefit from the current airport users.

7- There has been a State Heritage listing on the site in May 2016, so there is no need to „extend the significance beyond local significance“ (p33-34) . Before the listing, the National Trust had classified the site as well.

8- Council has stated since the early 2000s that the aerodrome caravan park needs to be moved to another place on the site; there is no mention of this important step in improving the site, in this plan. What is happening in this regard?

9- Drainage is an issue across the whole airport site - and not just around the airside. Why is there not a recommendation to address drainage on the landside as well?

10- It is not helpful to good relations to point out in this draft masterplan, and to the migrant camp community, that „the heritage status creates confusion over tenants’ ability to upgrade buildings“ (how so?) and that there is a need to develop plans on how to „handle heritage structures“. The site already has a very detailed Council endorsed CMP so there is no need to develop another plan. There is a need in a shift in attitude, and some common courtesy and goodwill by respecting migrant heritage alongside the aviation history and the airport functions.

11- I see no evidence that the consultants have checked in with the direct neighbours to the site. The Christian School as well as Cooina are both direct neighbours and stakeholders and would have valuable feedback to offer.

12- Specific recommendations need close attention and review:

Action 3 - A new entrance point in Precinct 6C is a huge concern from both a heritage and a tourism point of view. We ask to be directly involved in the planning of this new entrance as it will most likely adversely affect what we are trying to do in creating a safe, welcoming and inviting visitor experience.

Action 15- paving next to the BARC huts is not in line with the CMP and we object to it.

Action 16 - „Local heritage overlay covering the BARC huts“ is not correct. It is a state heritage overlay, please update the plan.

I look forward to hear your confirmation that this submission is received, and I regret not to be able to speak to it personally, as I am overseas until October 21.

Regards

Sabine Smyth

From: [Mark Tylinski](#)
To: [Benalla Council Email](#)
Subject: Submission on the draft Benalla Airport Masterplan - Mark Tylinski
Date: Tuesday, 9 September 2025 11:23:27 PM
Attachments: [Benalla Airport Master Plan 2025 submission by Mark Tylinski.docx](#)

Please be cautious

This email was sent from outside of your organisation

Benalla Airport Master Plan 2025

Submission suggestions:

1. Benalla Aviation Museum / Men's Shed suggestions.

Improve lighting. i.e Modernise the overhead lighting such as high intensity LED highlighting the aircraft and exhibits more effectively. Highlight the smaller static displays such as engines, aircraft models, and signage with LED spot—lighting or similar. Floor to roof lighting under aircraft exhibits and cockpit lighting would draw visitor's attention to the most interesting aspects of the displays. Improved lighting would also give visiting photographers a chance to share higher quality images with their family, friends and social media, thereby promoting the Museum and indeed one of our key tourism destinations for Benalla.

The Bellman Hanger has an area currently not available to the Museum exhibit area. This almost ¼ of the hanger needs to be made available for further displays so as to improve visitor experience and increase the tourist promotional value.

The hanger floor could really be enhanced by an industrial floor coating such as used in other aviation museums and commercial hangers. The visual impact of a high quality floor in this environment would be astounding while also adding an element of safety for visitors and staff. Heating for the museum could also be provided such as "Heatray" Tube radiant Heaters (TRH Heaters). These can be installed high in the roof space providing a comfortable "all year round" experience for both visitors and exhibit staff whilst also providing a "safe" heating solution around the "operational" aircraft on display (Considering aviation fuel proximity in the aircraft). An example of this heating system is utilised in the local "Zeus Café" in Main Street Benalla. This may require Natural Gas Mains work to the Hanger to facilitate its use.

Sealed and level parking area in close proximity to the museum would be advantageous. The demographics of the attendees to the museum often include older generation folks including RSL, Probus and veterans who come to visit. Providing safe parking and walking area to the Museum precinct and indeed a couple of disabled parking locations would be greatly appreciated by them.

2. Sealing of Hanger Lane all the way to the B.A.M Men's shed and including the Glider trailer parking area rather than the mud and potholes that have to be traversed at the current time.
3. Improved or more efficient lighting down Hanger Lane for the visitors and users of the "Cadet /BARC Huts". (e.g HIGHLUX Smart Solar lighting or similar?)
4. If not already provided, Hi Res security cameras for the re-fuelling area, taxi way in front of the hangers and parking apron areas.
5. Inclusion and/or encouragement of Aviation Maintenance facilities and Aviation related business to grow at the airport. Some instances call for LAME staff to travel to the Benalla airport to maintain aircraft and systems that render those aircraft not airworthy.

Wangaratta is the current closest facility where there is increased expense and down-time for those aircraft operators that are able to fly to those facilities. Encouraging an expansion for such facilities including advertising would bring much desired business, maintenance facilities and employment to Benalla. A development such as an Aviation Business Park located on the Northern end of the Airport for example. This could utilise an extension to Irwin Road with access directly to the field, taxiways and an appropriately sized parking apron. This would turn an already popular airfield into a marketable aviation hub for the North East of Victoria and certainly put Benalla "on the map" for visiting tourists, aviation enthusiasts and potential employment alike. This calibre of business would surely bring a financial boost to Benalla's economy whilst also expanding such facilities to North East Victoria.

6. Provision of more prominent "No Drone Zone", "Drone Rules Apply" signage around the airport perimeter, surrounding area (up to 5.5 km) and on "approach paths" as per CASA recommendations.

Kind Regards,

Mark Tylinski

2. Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 – Hearing Of Submissions

Ref: 6755727-102
Nilesh Singh – Manager Development
Wayne Rich – Compliance Coordinator

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029*.

BACKGROUND

The current *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* was developed as an operational document by Authorised Officers of the compliance team, over-viewed by the Manager Development, utilising current data and statistics available through Council and publicly accessible research and reporting. It was adopted by Council at its meeting on 23 February 2022.

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act), Council is required to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan (The Plan) every four years on 4 December. The Plan deals with strategies and services that Council must provide with regards to dogs and cats, which are the only domestic animals identified and dealt with by The Act.

The purpose of The Plan is to evaluate and monitor if Council animal management strategies and services are meeting community needs and adequately addressing the requirements of the Act and the *Domestic Animal Regulations 2015* (The Regulations).

A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must:

- a) set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and
- b) outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and
- c) outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—
 - i. to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
 - ii. to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
 - iii. to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
 - iv. to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
 - v. to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
 - vi. to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
 - vii. to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with the Act and the regulations; and

- d) provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
- e) provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
- f) provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

Every Council must

- a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
- b) provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
- c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

The Council at the Finance and Planning Committee on 27 August 2025, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolved:

That the Finance and Planning Committee, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolve that the draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 be endorsed and placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029* (the Plan) was given on the Council's website and the *Benalla Ensign* on 3 September 2025.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and social media.

Public listening posts were conducted by Compliance staff in Bridge Street East, Benalla in the central business district on 24 and 30 September 2025.

The submission period closed 5pm Wednesday 1 October 2025.

DISCUSSION

At the close of the submission period six submissions had been received from:

- Cally Grogan
- Anonymous
- Emily Watt
- Dianne Simpson
- Carol McNulty
- Monique Tolliday.

Submissions are attached as **Appendix 1**.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters have been invited to address the Finance and Planning Committee in support of their submissions.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Community

- *A healthy, safe and resilient community.*
- *A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

Liveability

- *Vibrant public spaces and places.*

Environment

- *Healthy and protected natural environment.*

Leadership

- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, community engagement was undertaken at the 'Consult' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Consult	We will provide information and consider feedback prior to making a decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Draft Plan presented in a public report to the Council.▪ Draft Plan to be published on Council's website.▪ Feedback and submissions invited via the Council's website and social media.▪ Public Notice of community consultation in the Benalla Ensign and on Council website.▪ 'Pop-up' information sessions at the Benalla Farmers Market and CBD area by Council Authorised Officers.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are currently no financial impacts associated with the development of the draft Plan. However, some of the identified future initiatives may have cost implications to be considered as part of the annual budget development process.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

Submissions will be considered at the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 5 November 2025.

The draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on Wednesday 19 November 2025.

Recommendation:

That submissions on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029* be received.

**Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic
Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 -
Submission Results**

Response No:
1

Contribution ID: 3738

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Oct 01, 2025, 11:42 AM

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Long Text

I think there are far too many domestic cats out and about in Benalla and in my neighbourhood, with some using my garden as kitty litter. I worry about the impact they have on native bird species.

It would be great to see some kind of set up like Albury Animal Care which works under the auspice of Albury Council to have impounded animals available to adopt here instead of at Burwood RSPCA.

I do think initiatives like the ones proposed to offer subsidised cat desexing and subsidised microchip and desexing to low income families is also a great idea and should absolutely be implemented! I'm saying this, providing discounted registration fees is a great incentive to pay them, but I do fear that those who aren't registering their dogs, probably also don't care much about desexing? I don't really know?

Q2

Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3

Your name

Short Text

Cally Grogan

Response No:
2

Contribution ID: 3716

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 07, 2025, 10:59 PM

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

The process of registering your animal and renewing is too difficult. Most other councils allow pet registration and renewal completely online. With everything going online, it's time to catch up.
Best way to increase animal registration, it too make it as easy and accessible as possible.

Q2

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documents.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Response No:
3

Contribution ID: 3714

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 07, 2025, 10:18 AM

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Long Text

How does Council plan to reinforce the Kitty Curfew for those cats who roam at night?
Are ratepayers going to be responsible for paying for Rangers to roam the neighborhoods at night?

Q2

Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3

Your name

Short Text

Emily Watt

Response No:
4

Contribution ID: 3713

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 06, 2025, 11:06 AM

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Long Text

There needs to be better enforcement of the cat curfew law. I have neighbourhood cats coming into my yard on a regular basis, the owners refuse to contain them. I have trapped some of these cats in the past and passed them on to the bylaws officers, each time the cats have been back on my property within a few days. My garden is designed to attract birds, so finding them dead because of these wandering cats is very distressing. The loss of some families of blue wrens in particular is very noticeable.

Q2

Please upload any supporting documents.

File Upload

Q3

Your name

Short Text

Dianne Simpson

Response No:
5

Contribution ID: 3712

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 06, 2025, 10:54 AM

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

All cats should be confined to own premises. All call outs for nuisance cats should be addressed with in reasonable time line not two weeks. There should be a cats curfew at night.
Council should monitor walking tracks to enforce on leach areas. To many entitled residents think the walking tracks are their own personal space with no awareness of others. Dog parks should be divided for those who wish to exercise their dogs with no interaction from others. People need to be educated on local laws as they currently are not.

Q2

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documents.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Carol McNulty

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Please see in detail my concerns within emails I have sent to Council. They are too big to load within this form.

- Emails to Mayor Councillor Bernie Hearn: 20/04/22 & 04/09/25.

There were other correspondence emails and phone calls to the BRCC Compliance Department as well.

Things to consider/feedback:

- The proposed document doesn't specify how they stop people having more than 2 dogs on property.
- It doesn't have supports in place to verify and ensure that multiple extra dogs aren't staying on property on full time basis (on holidays/visiting doesn't cut it when the dogs live full time on premises & go for weekend drives once in a blue moon).
- If that's the case then everyone can have an infinite amount of dogs on a property with loophole of 'visiting'. Would you like 7 dogs or more in a town house living next door to you? Mere meters from your living space? Barking, growling and impacting your family? Because that's exactly what happened to us! It was awful!
- The only reason dog numbers reduced in our situation was because their pitbulls smashed through a glass pane window to attack their other dogs. They were both removed from premises and x1 red nose pitbull was put down. Imagine if that was my toddler in our yard that it attacked. We weren't helped or supported. Council did not care.
- Letters aren't sent out to neighbouring houses to help decide if people can have register extra dogs (in our case Council said said they would but never did, no consultation and let them keep extra dogs).
- Noise complaints (persistent and constant barking) aren't taken seriously. Even with proof (keep a diary etc) nothing will be done.
- Aggressive dog complaints aren't taken seriously.
- There are no consequences.
- People are left unsupported by the to just deal with the said issues.
- Lack of tracking/records/keeping up to date of dog numbers & dog breed of individual dogs on registration papers on premises. Huge issue.

Q2

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documents.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Monique Tolliday

3. Benalla Airport – Intention To Lease Land

Ref: 1964932628-360

Greg Robertson – Manager Facilities and Information Technology

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report finalises the matter of intention to lease land to Balloon Across Australia Pty Ltd, trading as Goldrush Ballooning, for the development of aircraft hangarage at the Benalla Airport.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* Council intend to enter a lease with Balloon Across Australia Pty Ltd, trading as Goldrush Ballooning, for a land lease at the Benalla Airport.

The leased land will be developed for the purpose of a Commercial Ballooning Centre to be used as a base of operations.

The principal terms of the lease will be:

1. A term of five years commencing on 1 December 2025 with an option of five further terms of five years.
2. To waive until 30 November 2026 lease costs, excluding the Fire Services Property Levy. From this date, all applicable lease fees will be payable for the remaining term of the lease.

The lease will be adjusted annually by the All-Groups Consumer Price Index except for the fifth anniversary of the commencement of the lease where the fee will be reviewed to market value.

A Public notice was placed in the *Benalla Ensign* on 17 September 2025 inviting interested persons to make a submission.

Surrounding stakeholders were contacted to provide feedback on the lease proposal on 1 September 2025.

The submission period closed 5pm 3 October 2023

DISCUSSION

No submissions were received regarding the lease.

Ballooning has an established presence at the Benalla Airport. The Balloon Association of Victoria (BAV) maintains a base of operations and accommodation facility at Hangar Lane, Benalla.

The BAV recently leased airport land to install a Liquified Petroleum Gas balloon fuel facility which attracts balloonists from around the region. The addition of a commercial ballooning operation is a positive development for the Benalla Airport.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Leadership

- Good governance
- High performance culture
- Engaged and informed community

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy* community engagement was undertaken at the 'consult' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum.

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Consult	We will provide information and consider feedback prior to making a decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Feedback invited via the Council's website and social media.▪ Public Notice of community consultation in the Benalla Ensign and on Council website.▪ Invited stakeholders to provide direct feedback.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

The proposal to lease land for hangar development is consistent with the Benalla Airport Masterplan 2015 and the matter has proceeded in compliance with *the Local Government Act 2020*, Section 115.

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In recognition of the development costs, it is proposed to waive the first 12 months lease costs, excluding the Fire Services Property Levy.

At a rate of \$8.80 (inc GST) per square meter the hangar land lease site would have produced lease income of \$4,180 (inc GST) for the 12 months, which will increase annually in line with the consumer price index.

The lessee will be responsible for civil works required to develop the hangar site, including building up the site, installing power, water, sewer and stormwater drainage works.

After year one of the lease, all applicable lease fees will be payable for the remaining term of the lease.

The lease will be adjusted annually by the All-Groups Consumer Price Index except for the fifth anniversary of the commencement of the lease where the fee will be reviewed to market value.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The proposed lease to Balloon Across Australia Pty Ltd, trading as Goldrush Ballooning, is appropriate for the Benalla Airport precinct and will compliment other aviation related activities at the Benalla Airport.

Recommendation:

- 1. In accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, a lease agreement will be entered into with Balloon Across Australia Pty Ltd, trading as Goldrush Ballooning, for 19 Hangar Lane, Benalla for a term of five years commencing 1 December 2025 with an option for five further terms of five years.**
- 2. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to execute lease documentation on behalf of the Council.**

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4. Draft Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029 – Consideration of Submissions

Ref: 388623326-448

Jane Archbold – Manager Community
Robert Barber - General Manager Corporate

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029*.

BACKGROUND

The Council at its meeting on Wednesday 6 August 2025 resolved:

That the draft Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029 be endorsed and placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* was given on Council's website on Thursday 8 August 2025 and in the Benalla Ensign on Wednesday 13 August 2025.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and promoted on social media.

The submission period closed at 5pm Thursday 11 September 2025.

DISCUSSION

At the close of the submission period six submissions were received from:

- Fiona Machin – Taungurung Land and Waters Council
- Jo
- Justine Osborne – Cancer Council
- Molly O'Connor
- Raelene Stratton
- Sam Niedra – Trust for Nature

Submissions are attached as **Appendix 1**.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters have been invited to address the Finance and Planning Committee in support of their submissions.

No submitters spoke in support of their submissions.

A summary of submissions and officer comments can be found in the table below:

No.	Name	Summary	Officer Comments
1.	Fiona Machin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of Country could be refreshed to include locally specific wording Inclusion of first nation's history in the <i>About Benalla Rural City</i> section of the plan Embedding traditional owner perspectives throughout the plan, including within cultural tourism Inclusion of traditional owners in environmental strategies Ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage be highlighted in the action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group were consulted when formulating the Acknowledgement of Country wording. This could be reviewed with the appointment of the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, however, would not be in time for the finalisation of the Council Plan. Recommend refreshing the <i>About Benalla Rural City</i> information in the final plan. Recommend that the remainder of suggestions be considered in the development of the Council Plan Action Plan.
2.	Jo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical of focus on nighttime economy not consistent with Benalla demographics, questions the need for more accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to verify this submission as email was incorrect and no surname given.
3.	Justine Osborne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocates for UV protective shade in public spaces Highlights public health benefits of climate adaptation Suggests integrating UV protection into design guidelines and greening strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend suggestions be considered in development of the Council Plan Action Plan.
4.	Molly O'Connor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges strong community engagement and environmental foundations of the plan Recommends net zero by 2030 for Council operations, 30% increase in tree canopy set out in an urban forest strategy, commitment to 100% renewable energy by 2027, planning and emergency preparedness to increase climate resilience, increased partnerships with schools, waste reduction targets and introduction of further circular economy measures such as repair cafes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This submission is reflective of the consultation done for the Council Plan and of the significant consultation done over the past few years for other documents including the draft Climate and Environment Strategy. A net-zero target has not yet been adopted by Council; more support for the community to significantly reduce emissions could be considered. Council converted its electricity over to renewable energy with the VECO 2.0 contract as of 1 July 2024. Supporting and inspiring the community to embrace sustainable practises is listed considered in 13.2, this could be adjusted to Support, inspire and provide opportunities for the community. Adoption of the draft Climate and Environment Strategy and an action plan to implement the Council Plan should address many of these issues raised.

No.	Name	Summary	Officer Comments
5.	Raelene Stratton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengths of the Council plan include integration of health, wellbeing and disability, five clear themes, strong community engagement and recognition of key challenges Gaps include need for more measurable outcomes, greater emphasis on connectivity and accessibility through advocacy, housing affordability, lack of recognition of arts, culture and heritage, alignment with Destination Management Plan, stronger vision for tourism, clearer alignment with state and federal government policy directions and targets, identification of priority projects to strengthen Council's ability to attract funding and investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurable outcomes to be considered in the development of the Council Plan Action Plan Recommend other suggestions be considered in the development of the Council Plan Action Plan.
6.	Sam Niedra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater recognition and support for permanent protection of nature on private land Minimal detail is provided in the draft Council Plan on how Council is going to increase tree canopy cover to achieve significant and lasting impact in this area Encourage the investigation of a Conservation Covenant Rate Rebate Policy and apply conservation covenants to Council owned freehold reserves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These suggested actions could be considered when finalising the draft Climate and Environment Strategy.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

COMMUNITY

- A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

Leadership

- Good governance.*
- High performance culture.*
- Engaged and informed community.*
- Effective and responsive advocacy*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has allocated \$50,000 to the development of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* in the *2024/25 Budget*. \$68,433 has been expended, \$57,500 in payments to Ninety Mile Consulting and the remaining covering printing and community engagement expenses.

Most actions from the *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* will be accommodated within existing budget allocations. Where additional funding is required, external funding opportunities will be explored.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy* community engagement on the *draft Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* was undertaken at the 'Involve' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to the used
Involve	Work with the community to ensure their concerns or aspirations are reflected in the alternatives developed. Feedback provided on how community input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive engagement with the community in the development of the draft plan including themed workshops, listening forums, pop-ups, individual interviews, community survey, and the establishment of a Community Panel. ▪ Draft Council Plan presented in a public report to the Council. ▪ Draft Council Plan published on Council's website. ▪ Submissions invited via Council's website and social media. ▪ Public notice seeking community feedback in the Benalla Ensign. ▪ Community Panel members invited to provide feedback.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council meeting on 29 October 2025.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 - Submission Results

Q1 Would you like to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q2 Please provide your feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Long Text

Strengths / What stands out:

1. Integration of health, wellbeing and disability into the Council Plan.

It combines the Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan, and the Disability Action Plan into one strategic document.

2. Clear themes.

The plan is organised around five broad themes: Community, Economy, Environment, Liveability, Leadership.

3. Community engagement.

You used both qualitative and quantitative methods (surveys, workshops, pop-ups, etc.). There's a list of what people said and challenges raised.

4. Recognition of challenges.

Ageing population, workforce shortages, housing affordability, climate change, digital exclusion, transport for outlying/rural areas

Gaps

1. More concrete targets.

Some measures of success are quite general. For example "improved health indicators", "increased opportunity for active participation" — these are good but not always specific. Stronger, measurable targets (e.g. % increase, by when) could help or I looked at the Wodonga Council and they linked back to % completed of projects and strategies (e.g. complete an active travel strategy)

2. Public transport & connectivity.

The cost, frequency, accessibility of transport for people outside main townships is raised by community voices. It might need more emphasis, especially for people without cars. Council needs to advocate for hard for changes in this area. I have seen other Councils come up with their own advocacy plans.

3. Housing affordability and availability.

It's acknowledged, but what are the precise steps and funding for this? There could be more detail about strategies like social housing, incentives for affordable dwellings, ensuring development is integrated with service. Additionally, there is no acknowledgement of, or strategy to meet, the housing target set by Plan for Victoria.

4. Heritage / culture / arts infrastructure.

There's mention of heritage, arts, tourism, but what about maintaining or upgrading physical infrastructure for culture or creative sectors (venues, gallery spaces, support for artists)?

The Council Plan really doesn't feel like values its arts, culture and heritage, which in my mind is our biggest asset.

5. Tourism

Strongly linked to above, I note that Benalla Rural City has prepared a Destination Management Plan, which sets a clear vision for tourism development and growth. However, the Council Plan does not appear to strongly reflect or integrate the actions from that plan.

Like with arts, culture and heritage Council doesn't appear to have a strong enough vision for Tourism in Benalla. I believe Benalla needs to be aspiring to be the next Bright, with boutique shopping, heritage, arts and the great outdoors.

recommend the Council Plan more explicitly commits to:

Aligning Council's economic development priorities with the Destination Management Plan.

Embedding measurable actions from the Destination Management Plan into the Council Plan's implementation and reporting framework.

Ensuring tourism is linked with broader goals such as arts and culture, heritage, environment, and liveability.

This would help strengthen accountability and give industry and community greater confidence that the tourism vision is supported by Council's core strategic planning document.

It may/will also help to attract funding.

5. Funding and Investment

The Council Plan should act as a strong foundation for securing external funding. Most often the State and Federal Government grants require demonstrated alignment with Council's strategic documents. If the Council Plan does not clearly set out actions with measurable outcomes, opportunities for funding may be lost.

I recommend the Council Plan explicitly:

- Identifies priority projects and programs that are grant ready, such as the sports stadium, or require master planning, such as the main street redevelopment
- Aligns with State and Federal policy directions to maximise eligibility - for state I would be looking to Plan for Victoria, Housing Statement and Economic Plan

This would strengthen Council's ability to attract investment and ensure our community benefits from the full range of available funding opportunities.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Raelene Stratton

Q1 Would you like to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q2 Please provide your feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Long Text

I am providing feedback on the draft Council Plan on behalf of Taungurung Land & Waters Council. Key comments are:

- Acknowledgement of Country – this is quite basic wording and could be reworded to make it more meaningful and to be more specific to Benalla, especially as it is for your Council Plan. Suggest it also includes the names of each Traditional Owner Group (as both Yorta Yorta and Taungurung are the Registered Aboriginal Parties). This would also help increase understanding to the general reader of different TO Groups in the shire. E.g “Benalla Rural City acknowledges the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and waters....”
- Unless this is something that has been discussed with your Aboriginal Advisory Group and with Yorta Yorta? Is there preference why ‘custodians’ is used? Have written it above as including both ‘Traditional Owners and custodians’

The Acknowledgement can also include wording in a second paragraph around acknowledging local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents for their ongoing contribution to your community. To make distinction between TOs and wider First Nations community. I noted that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are referenced further down in the Plan.

- ‘About Benalla Rural City’ – can this section also include additional, brief wording about the diverse Aboriginal history and culture of the region and being on Yorta Yorta and Taungurung lands? Could be part of paragraphs giving more context around Benalla as a whole? Again, this would be an easy way to raise understanding of Traditional Owners with the general reader and also help embed Traditional Owners more across the whole Plan.

- pg 21 – add Traditional Owners to the following strategy: "Respectfully engage, include and celebrate Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and communities". This gives that clear distinction between TOs (who have RAP status and are considered a part of the ‘municipal community’ under the LG Act) and wider Aboriginal community.

Also change ‘Engagement activities held in partnership with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities...’

- Theme 12 – where would efforts to support tourism, and cultural tourism, be included? Obviously would mostly apply to YYNAC and Winton Wetlands.

- Strategy 13.1 – Partner to manage and enhance our environmental assets’ – Would be good to see Traditional Owners visible in the Environment section given this section is related to land and Country. Would this come out in the annual action plan? Understand relationships might still be growing (and be mostly with Yorta Yorta).

- Strategy 14.1 – ‘Protect and promote heritage to preserve local character and culture’ – is this referring to both Aboriginal, European and other heritage? Will Aboriginal cultural heritage be highlighted in the Action Plan? Again, would be good to see linkages and as a way of slowly highlighting Traditional Owner priorities throughout different parts of the Plan.

Q3 Your name

Short Text

Fiona Machin

Response No:
3

Contribution ID: 3722

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 09, 2025, 08:13 PM

Q1

Multi Choice

Would you like to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Yes

Q2

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Night time economy - let's be real and focus on getting daytime economy working right. No one in Benalla goes out at night as all old.

Don't we have enough accommodation? What more do we need.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Jo

Q1

Multi Choice

Would you like to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Yes

Q2

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Congratulations on the development of the draft Council Plan 2025-2029 - an impressive and well-considered document that clearly reflects extensive consultation, expertise, and commitment to community health and well-being.

As you continue refining the plan, we respectfully ask that you also consider a crucial yet often overlooked element: cool, UV-protective shade.

With over 95% of skin cancers linked to UV exposure, effective shade solutions are an important public health measure. Beyond reducing cancer risk, shade supports equitable access to outdoor spaces by creating cool, safe, and comfortable environments for recreation, active mobility, and community connection. Natural, green, shaded spaces also contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

We encourage the final plan to include specific reference to UV-protective shade, ensuring that public, play, and mobility space designs consider both thermal comfort and UV safety. Without thoughtful integration, some shade and surface materials may inadvertently increase UV exposure or heat retention, leading to unintended health risks.

We understand that budget constraints may limit new infrastructure investment, but integrating UV protection into planning principles, design guidelines, and greening strategies is a low-cost, high-impact step towards an even healthier, more liveable Benalla.

Thank you.

Q3

Short Text

Your name

Justine Osborne

Q1 Would you like to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q2 Please provide your feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029?

Long Text

As a resident of Benalla Rural City, I am writing to provide feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029. I commend Council for undertaking extensive community engagement and developing a comprehensive plan that addresses our community's priorities. However, I believe there is a significant opportunity to strengthen the environmental and climate commitments within the plan to better serve our community's long-term interests and align with community expectations.

Current Environmental Commitments - A Good Foundation

I acknowledge the environmental initiatives currently outlined in Theme 3: Environment, including:

- ☐ Enhancing climate change resilience
- ☐ Partnering to manage and enhance environmental assets
- ☐ Promoting circular economy and renewable energy initiatives
- ☐ Improving environmental sustainability of Council assets
- ☐ Supporting community sustainability initiatives

These represent a solid foundation, and I particularly appreciate the integration of climate considerations into the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, recognising the health impacts of climate change.

Community Support for Stronger Environmental Action

The community consultation data clearly demonstrates strong support for enhanced environmental action:

- ☐ 58.72% of survey respondents selected upgraded footpaths and roads as a top liveability priority (which can incorporate sustainable design)
- ☐ Tree canopy and urban greening received an average rating of 8.13 out of 10 as an environmental priority
- ☐ 41.28% identified low community awareness as the biggest barrier to environmental progress
- ☐ Community feedback highlighted that "tree canopy is limited in key public areas" and there is "strong support for visible environmental leadership"

Recommendations for Strengthening the Plan

1. Set Ambitious Climate Targets

Current Gap: The plan lacks specific, measurable climate targets.

Recommendation: Include a commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030 for Council operations and support the community to achieve significant emissions reductions. This aligns with community survey data showing support for climate action.

2. Expand Urban Greening and Tree Canopy

Current Gap: Limited specific commitments to address the identified tree canopy deficits.

Recommendation:

- ☐ Set a target to increase urban tree canopy coverage by 30% by 2029
- ☐ Establish a dedicated urban forest strategy
- ☐ Prioritise tree planting in newer housing estates, town entrances, and along footpaths
- ☐ Include climate-resilient native species selection

3. Strengthen Renewable Energy Leadership

Current Gap: Renewable energy initiatives are mentioned but lack specific commitments.

Recommendation:

- ☐ Commit to 100% renewable energy for Council operations by 2027
- ☐ Establish a community solar program or bulk-buy scheme
- ☐ Investigate opportunities for community energy projects
- ☐ Support local businesses to transition to renewable energy

4. Enhance Climate Resilience Planning

Current Gap: Climate resilience is mentioned but lacks detail on specific adaptation measures.

Recommendation:

- ☐ Develop a comprehensive Climate Adaptation Plan

- Integrate climate resilience into all infrastructure planning
- Establish cooling centres and heat-resilient public spaces
- Strengthen emergency preparedness for extreme weather events

5. Improve Environmental Education and Engagement

Current Gap: Limited focus on community education despite 41.28% identifying low awareness as a barrier.

Recommendation:

- Establish regular environmental education programs
- Create a sustainability hub or resource centre
- Partner with schools on environmental education initiatives
- Develop community-led environmental projects

6. Strengthen Circular Economy Initiatives

Current Gap: Waste management is addressed but broader circular economy opportunities are limited.

Recommendation:

- Establish targets for waste reduction and diversion from landfill
- Support local repair cafes and reuse initiatives
- Investigate opportunities for local composting programs
- Partner with businesses on circular economy initiatives

Benalla Rural City has the opportunity to be a regional leader in environmental sustainability and climate action. The community consultation clearly shows support for stronger environmental initiatives, and the current plan provides a foundation to build upon.

I urge Council to strengthen the environmental commitments in the final Council Plan 2025-2029 by incorporating specific targets, expanded initiatives, and enhanced community engagement around sustainability. This will ensure our beautiful region remains resilient and thriving for future generations.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Q3 **Your name**

Short Text

Molly O'Connor

11 September 2025

Benalla Rural City Council
PO Box 227
Benalla VIC 3671
council@benalla.vic.gov.au

Dear Council,

RE: Draft Council Plan 2025–29 (Plan)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Plan.

For more than 50 years, Trust for Nature has collaborated with Victorians to create a future where native plants and animals are valued, protected, and thriving. Established under *The Victorian Conservation Trust Act 1972*, we hold unique legislative powers to permanently protect nature on private land, contribute to biodiversity targets locally and globally, and help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Trust for Nature helps to protect nature by partnering with private landholders to implement conservation covenants – which are voluntary, legally-binding agreements - that permanently protect important wildlife habitat on private land. To date, Trust for Nature has partnered with 1,800 landholders across Victoria, safeguarding over 110,000 hectares of important native habitat.

There are currently twenty-four conservation covenants in the Benalla Rural City Shire (map on page 3). Collectively, these covenantors are protecting more than 1,089 hectares of high-value biodiversity habitat on private land across the shire. The largest conservation covenant is 338 hectares, the smallest is 2 hectares, and the average is 45 hectares.

Trust for Nature would like to see greater recognition and support by Council for permanent protection of nature on private land within the shire. The Plan currently contains minimal reference to nature conservation, and no reference to nature conservation on private land.

Page 35 of the Plan recognises the importance of increasing tree cover to cool the urban area, improve air quality and support wildlife, with 40% of survey respondents considering this as ‘Very Important’. Appendix 3 of the Plan includes the following statement ‘There is strong support for visible environmental leadership: Projects such as tree planting are seen as effective ways for the Council to demonstrate its environmental commitment. Actions that leave a lasting impact on the landscape and contribute to regional resilience are considered a priority for future investment.’

However, the Plan provides little detail on how Council is going to achieve significant and lasting impact in this area.

The Plan does not reference conservation covenants nor covenantors and the significant role they play regarding nature conservation on private land across the shire. Such recognition would strengthen the Plan, highlight the vital role of conservation covenants in achieving Council’s environmental and sustainability objectives, and encourage greater uptake of conservation covenants over the next four years.

The Shire’s network of covenantors is making a significant contribution to permanently protecting important wildlife habitat, conserving threatened species, and addressing biodiversity loss. According to Council’s website, *“Our Council works with local organisations and the community to safeguard these species and their habitats.”*

Trust for Nature

ABN 60 292 993 543

trustfornature@tfn.org.au | (03) 8631 5888

Wurundjeri Country, Level 5

379 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

trustfornature.org.au



We encourage Council to explicitly acknowledge the efforts of covenantors in the shire, and to consider including the following initiatives in the Plan:

- Investigate a Conservation Covenant Rate Rebate Policy – recognising and supporting landholders who voluntarily protect their land through a conservation covenant. For example, Mitchell Shire Council provides such a rebate.
- Apply conservation covenants to Council-owned freehold reserves containing significant natural assets, such as remnant native vegetation. Local examples include Mitchell Shire Council's Seymour Bushland Park and Colin Officer Flora Reserve in Broadford.

We appreciate the opportunity to advocate for private land conservation in shaping this important Plan and look forward to working with Benalla Rural City Council to protect the shire's natural assets for current and future generations.

Kind regards,



Sam Niedra
Area Manager, North East
Trust for Nature
Wangaratta Government Centre
Level 3, 62-68 Ovens Street
Wangaratta Vic 3677
samn@tfn.org.au



Trust for Nature

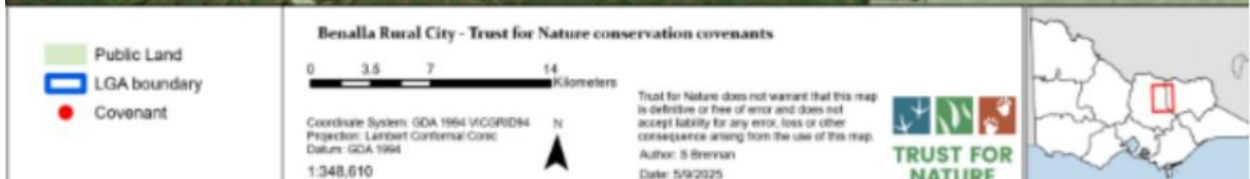
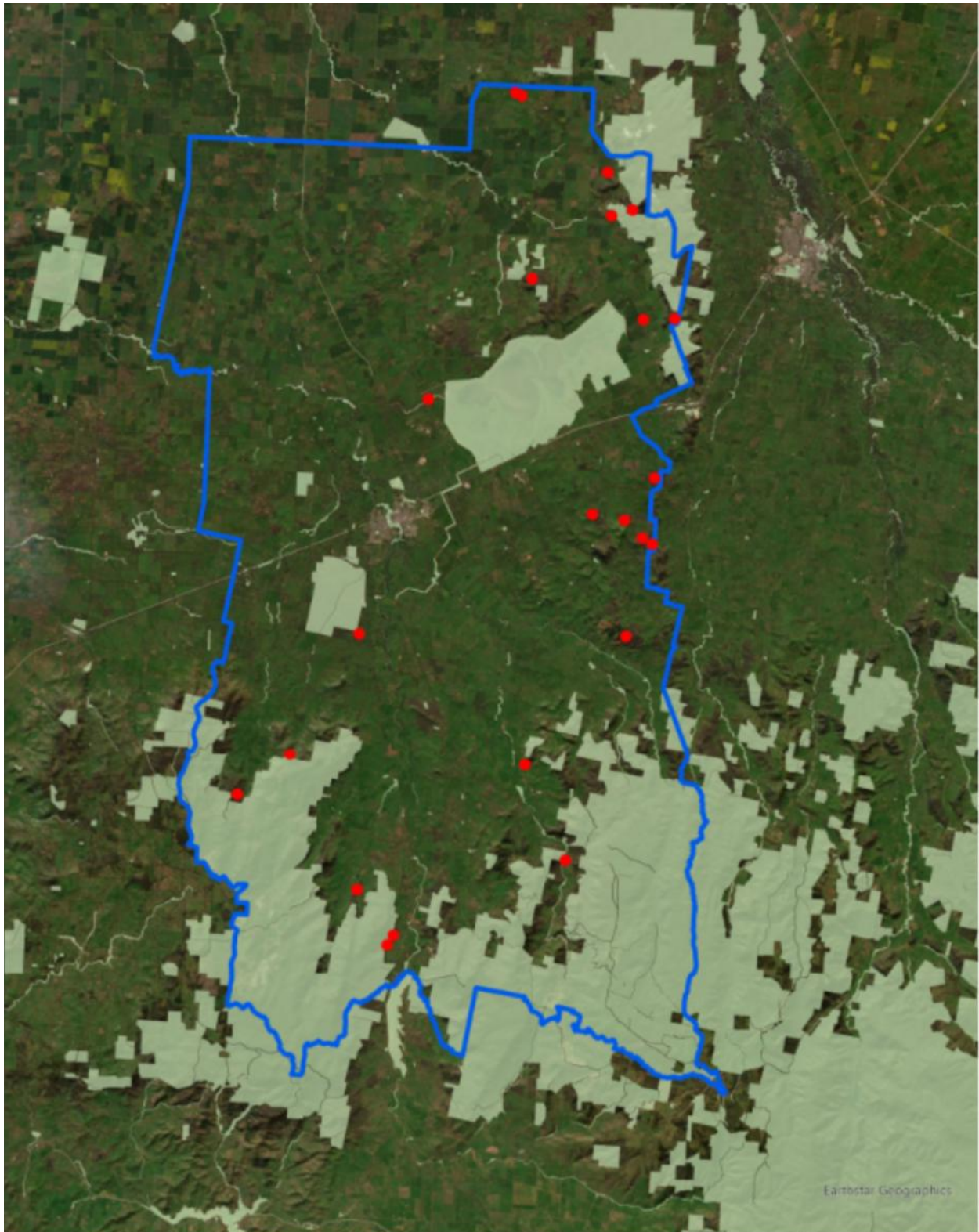
ABN 60 292 993 543

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5. Draft Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025-2029 – Consideration of Submissions

Ref: 1573044422-1232

Joel Ingham – Acting Manager Assets and Infrastructure

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025-2029*.

BACKGROUND

The Council at its meeting on Wednesday 6 August 2025 resolved:

That the draft Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025–2029 be endorsed and placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025–2029* was given on the Council's website on 7 August 2025 and in the *Benalla Ensign* on Wednesday 8 September 2021.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and promoted on social media.

The submission period closed 5pm Thursday 11 September 2025.

DISCUSSION

At the close of the submission period three submissions were received from:

- Anne Cahill Lambert
- Jenny Doxey
- Millicent Lang

Additional feedback was collected throughout the 2024/25 financial year from members of the public as road management issues arose. Seven requests to add roads to the *Road Register* were received from:

- Wendy Dodd – Aquila Rise, Samaria
- Colin Squires – Yellum Track, Swanpool
- James Melani – Kemp Lane, Tatong
- Grant Donaldson – Kemp Lane, Tatong
- Darren Carter – Kirby Lane, Thoona
- Daryl Owen (Goorambat CFA) – Un-named Road, Goorambat
- Michael Zammit – Pritchard Track, Lima South

Submissions are attached as **Appendix 1**.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters were invited to address the Finance and Planning Committee in support of their submissions.

Anne Cahill Lambert, Colin Squires and Grant Donaldson spoke in support of their submissions at the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on 1 October 2025.

A summary of submissions, customer requests, officer recommendations and officer comments can be found in the table below:

No	Name/Source	Road Name	Summary of Request	Distance	Estimated cost	Road Class	Submission Type	Officer Comments
1.	Ann Cahill Lambert	Kilfeera Road, Benalla	Extend the 50 km speed limit on Kilfeera Road to just past Willis Little Drive. There are no footpaths and quite a number of people walk along the road.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Online	Not a request that is considered as part of the Draft RMP, however the request will be considered as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The speed reduction along Kilfeera Road will be referred to our Local Safety and Traffic Liaison Committee, for consideration before applying for the speed reduction through DTP; and ▪ For consideration as part of Council's Active Transport Strategy.
2.	Jenny Doxey	Nixon Street, Benalla	Requesting footpath in Nixon Street Benalla. Pedestrians have to walk on the roadway.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Online	Not a request that is considered as part of the Draft RMP, however the new footpath on Nixon Street will be referred for consideration as part of Council's new Active Transport Strategy.
3.	Millicent Lang	Nixon Street, Benalla	Add more footpaths in CBD streets such as Nixon Street, Benalla.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Online	Not a request that is considered as part of the Draft RMP, however the new footpath on Nixon Street will be referred for consideration as part of Council's new Active Transport Strategy.

No	Name/Source	Road Name	Summary of Request	Distance	Estimated cost	Road Class	Submission Type	Officer Comments
4.	Wendy Dodd	Aquila Rise, Samaria	Road currently only maintained to Spinney lane. Extend road to provide access to two new properties with dwellings.	390m	\$30,000 – Access Road cost	Limited Access Track from Spinney Lane	Customer Request	The recommendation is to include the additional 390m of Aquila Rise in the Road Register. This is a limited access track with no Resheeting. Reactive maintenance only. The cost to upgrade this road to an Access Road would be more than \$30,000.
5.	Colin Squires	Yellum Track, Swanpool	Extend track to gain access to a landlocked property and to allow for emergency vehicle access.	200m	\$0	Limited Access from current road to land locked parcel.	Customer Request	The recommendation is to include the extension of Yellum Track in the road register. No Action required to upgrade the track. Track will be included as Limited Access Track from the current access road section. This will create access to internal paddock that is landlocked.
6.	Officer Recommendation	Yellum Track, Swanpool	Remove limited access section of track.	200m	\$0	Limited Access Rural	Officer recommendation	Remove the limited access section of Yellum Track (north of the creek crossing NPR). Track currently not maintained from Yellum Track and is not accessible from Warnock Road due to a grazing license in place.
7.	James Melani	Unnamed road (Kemp Lane?) Benalla-Tatong Road, Tatong	New house being constructed. Road is currently not named or maintained by Council. Submission for Council to upgrade access and maintain the road.	810m	\$100,000	Not a Public Road. Currently a road reserve only.	Customer Request	The recommendation is to reject this request due to the extensive cost to Council. Landowner can construct road to standard then Council may consider adding to road register in the future.

No	Name/Source	Road Name	Summary of Request	Distance	Estimated cost	Road Class	Submission Type	Officer Comments
8.	Grant Donaldson	Unnamed road (Kemp Lane?) Benalla-Tatong Road, Tatong	Submitter owns a 100ac. Property at the end of an Unnamed road referred to as Kemp Lane, Tatong. The road runs off Benalla – Tatong Road, Tatong at the intersection of Molyullah – Tatong Rd and Colehurst Rd. There are four individual properties located on the unnamed road. Request to add the unnamed road to the Road register for Council to upgrade access and maintain the road.	N/A	\$100,000	Not a Public Road. Currently a road reserve only	Customer Request	The recommendation is to reject this request due to the extensive cost to Council. Landowner can construct road to standard then Council may consider adding to road register in the future.
9.	Darren Carter	Kirby Street from Johnson Street to Wray Street, Thoona	Kirby Street from Johnson Street to Wray Street is not currently on the Road Register. The road provides access to three properties and one dwelling in the process of being sub-divided, currently unformed road. Request to have road added to the road register.	220m	\$12,000	Access Road	Customer Request	The recommendation is to add the road to the register as an Access Road from Johnston Street to Wray Street only. The section from Wray Street to the North has a current grazing license on the road reserve so this cannot be included or maintained.
10.	Daryl Owen (Goorambat CFA)	Un-Named Road (Solar farm) Benalla Yarrawonga Road to Hooper Road, Goorambat	Request for road to be added to road register for strategic access to Goorambat Solar Farm in case of fire emergency. The road also provides rear access to several properties.	3,121m	\$20,000	Limited Access	Customer Request	Further investigation to be undertaken.

No	Name/Source	Road Name	Summary of Request	Distance	Estimated cost	Road Class	Submission Type	Officer Comments
11.	Michael Zammit	Pritchard Track, Lima South	Request from landowner at 3231 Midland Highway Lima South requesting that Pritchard Track, Lima South from the Midland Highway Road reserve to the Broken River be included on Council's Road Register. Track includes a bridge over the Broken River in good condition not owned or maintained by Council	362m	\$0	Limited Access	Customer Request	Council staff have contract DECCA and confirmed that the Bridge was declared a Council asset, however, was never placed on the Asset Register. The recommendation is to treat the bridge as a found asset in the next financial year. It is recommended that Pritchard Track be added to the road register as a Public Road at Limited Access class from Midland Hwy to the Bridge only.
13	Officer Recommendation	Lake Mokoan Road to Lakeside Drive, Chesney Vale	Add extra length of road to the road register as it is an access road to service properties.	650m	\$0	Access Road	Officer recommendation	Add the extra length of road to the road register as it is an access road to service properties. Old sub-division road that was never handed over to Council. Currently maintained from Lake Mokoan Road to 720m.
13.	Officer Recommendation	Baines Lane, Thomson Road to Reef Hills, Benalla	Add 350 metres of road to the road register as it is an access road.	350m	\$5,000	Access Road	Officer recommendation	Add to the Road Register for a further 350m. The road is currently unofficially maintained by Council as an access along with the rest of Baines Lane. Currently maintain for 440m to the first property.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Community

- *A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

Livability

- *Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking.*

Leadership

- *Good governance.*
- *High performance culture.*
- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The gravel resheet budget for the current financial year has been allocated. Any expenditure of funds to upgrade roads as part of the works required above will most likely be undertaken within the current 2025/26 financial year. It is expected that the \$74,000 allocated to the works above can be absorbed within the projected budget moving forward.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

GENDER EQUALITY ACT

Under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* the Council is required to undertake a gender impact assessment when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service that has a direct and significant impact on the public.

A gender equity assessment found the Road Management Plan has an overall neutral gender impact.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, community engagement was undertaken at the 'Consult' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Consult	We will provide information and consider feedback prior to making a decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Draft Road Management Plan presented in a public report to the Council.▪ Draft Road Management Plan to be published on Councils website.▪ Feedback invited via the Council's website and social media.▪ Public Notice of community consultation in the Benalla Ensign and on Council website.

Once adopted, the Road Management Plan will be advertised in the *Victorian Government Gazette*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025–2029* will be considered for adoption at the additional Council meeting on 29 October 2025.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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**Draft Benalla Rural City Road Management
Plan 2025–2029
- Submission Results**

Response No:
1

Contribution ID: 3723

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 10, 2025, 03:45 PM

Q1

Long Text

Please provide your feedback on the draft Road Management Plan

It would be prudent to extend the 50 km speed limit on Kilfeera Road to just past Willis Little Drive. The reason is that there are no footpaths and quite a number of people walk along there. We have had some close shaves turning into our driveways and into Willis Little Drive from people overtaking because we have slowed down but they are keen to move beyond the 80 km speed limit.

Q2

Multi Choice

Would you like to see a road added to the Public Road Register

No

Q3

Short Text

What is the name of the road you would like added to the Public Road Register?

Q4

Long Text

Please tell us why you believe this road should be added to the Public Road Register.

Q5

File Upload

Please upload any supporting documentation.

Q6

Short Text

Your name

Anne Cahill Lambert

Response No:
2

Contribution ID: 3721

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 09, 2025, 04:30 PM

Q1

Please provide your feedback on the draft Road Management Plan

Long Text

Nixon Street Benalla has been waiting for a footpath for 150 yrs
Pedestrians have to walk on the roadway
After looking around Benalla Streets I see many established streets are also without footpaths
Council priorities should be to the rate payers and residences of Benalla

Q2

Would you like to see a road added to the Public Road Register

Multi Choice

No

Q3

What is the name of the road you would like added to the Public Road Register?

Short Text

Q4

Please tell us why you believe this road should be added to the Public Road Register.

Long Text

Q5

Please upload any supporting documentation.

File Upload

Q6

Your name

Short Text

Jenny Doxey

Response No:
3

Contribution ID: 3720

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 09, 2025, 04:16 PM

Q1 Please provide your feedback on the draft Road Management Plan

Long Text More footpaths in CBD streets such as Nixon

Q2 Would you like to see a road added to the Public Road Register

Multi Choice No

Q3 What is the name of the road you would like added to the Public Road Register?

Short Text

Q4 Please tell us why you believe this road should be added to the Public Road Register.

Long Text

Q5 Please upload any supporting documentation.

File Upload

Q6 Your name

Short Text Millicent Lang

Requests for Roads to be added to the *Road Register*

Submitter	Road Name	From	To	Township	Discription of Request	Distance	Road Class
Wendy Dodd	Aquila Rise	Spinney Lane		Samaria	Road only maintained to Spinney Lane, lane required to be extended to provide access to two new properties with dwellings. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	390m	Limited Access Track from Spinney Lane
Colin Squires	Yellum Track	Yelleum Track		Swanpool	Property is landlocked. Request for track to be extended to the next unnamed road reserve in case of emergency. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	200m	Limited Access from current road to land locked parcel.
James Melani	Unnamed Road (Kemp Lane)	Benalla Tatong Rd		Tatong	New house being constructed. Road currently not named or maintained by Council. Application by owner for Council to upgrade his access. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	810m	Not a Public Road. Currently a road reserve only
Grant Donaldson	Unnamed Road (Kemp Lane)	Benalla Tatong Rd		Tatong	Submitter owns a 100ac. Property at the end of Kemp Lane, Tatong. Kemp Lane runs off Benalla – Tatong Rd. at the intersection of Molyyullah – Tatong Rd and Colehurst Rd. There are 4 individual properties on Kemp Lane. They have had some issues with the poor condition of Kemp Lane and getting trucks through. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	810m	Not a Public Road. Currently a road reserve only.
Darren Carter	Kirby Street	Johnson Street	Wray Street	Thoona	Kirby Street from Johnson Street to Wray Street is also not currently on the Road Register provides access to three properties and 1 dwelling in the proses of being sub-divided. Currently unformed road. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	220m	Access Road
Daryl Owen - Goorambat CFA	Un-Named Road (Solar farm)	Benalla-Yarrawonga Rd	Hooper Rd	Goorambat	For strategic access to Goorambat Solar Farm in case of fire emergency. Also provides rear access to several properties. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	3121m	Limited Access
Michael Zammit	Pritchard Track	Midland Hwy	Mt Samaria State Park	Lima South	We have been approached by a landowner 3231 Midland Highway Lima South requesting that Pritchard Track, Lima South from the Midland Highway Road reserve to the Broken River be included on Council's Road Register. Track includes a bridge over the Broken River that is in good condition and not owned or maintained by Council. Requesting Road be added to Road Register.	362m	Limited Access

6. Daft Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029 – Consideration of Submissions

Ref: 1573044422-1233

Joel Igham – Acting Manager Assets and Infrastructure

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029* and draft *Asset Management Policy*.

BACKGROUND

The Council at its meeting on Wednesday 6 August 2025 resolved:

That the draft Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029 and draft Asset Management Policy be endorsed and placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029 and Asset Management Policy* was given on the Council's website on 7 August 2025 and in the *Benalla Ensign* on Wednesday 8 September 2021.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and promoted on social media. The submission period closed 5pm Thursday 11 September 2025.

DISCUSSION

At the close of the submission period one submission was received from Mr Roger Harrop on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029*.

The submission is attached as **Appendix 1**.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters have been invited to address the Finance and Planning Committee in support of their submissions. No submitters spoke in support of their submissions.

A summary of submissions and officer comments can be found in the table below:

No.	Name	Summary	Officer Comments
1.	Roger Harrop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Throughout the Asset Plan reference is made to Asset management Plans being framed in delivering the service levels expected by the community, community expectations, the expected outcomes and defining a level of service.Are these service levels already defined and documented for each asset type which BRCC manage on our behalf?how have these "expectations" been derived and subsequently agreed - or is this process yet to be undertaken?Are these or will these "service expectations" referred to, be included in the Service plans that will inform the Asset Plans for each Asset Class?	<p>Service Levels are a set of standards or targets that are developed in consultation with the community to ensure we are delivering community expectations around performance measures such as, but not limited to compliance, safety, reliability and quality. These performance measures need to take into account capacity to ensure we are able to meet the levels set. The performance targets will be developed following a broader community engagement campaign, where Council will be seeking community input to ensure everyone appreciates and understands achievable performance measures and targets.</p> <p>The performance/service level targets will be separately developed and considered for each asset class.</p>

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Livability

- *Vibrant public spaces and places.*
- *Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking.*

Leadership

- *Good governance.*
- *High performance culture.*
- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development and implementation of Asset Plan and Asset Policy will be accommodated within the existing budget allocation.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

GENDER EQUALITY ACT

Under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* the Council is required to undertake a gender impact assessment when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service that has a direct and significant impact on the public.

A gender equity assessment found the plan has an overall neutral gender impact.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, it is proposed that community engagement be undertaken at the 'Consult' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Consult	We will provide information and consider feedback prior to making a decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Draft Asset Plan and Policy presented in a public report to the Council.▪ Draft Asset Plan and Policy to be published on Councils website.▪ Feedback invited via the Council's website and social media.▪ Public Notice of community consultation in the Benalla Ensign and on Council website.

Community consultation on the draft Asset Plan opened Thursday 7 August 2025 and closed 5pm Thursday 11 September 2025.

Once adopted, the Asset Plan will be advertised in the *Victorian Government Gazette*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025-2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council meeting on 29 October 2025.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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**Draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan*
2025–2029 - Submission Results**

Response No:
1

Contribution ID: 3727

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 11, 2025, 11:35 PM

Q1

Would you like to provide feedback on the draft Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025-2029?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q2

Please provide your feedback on the draft Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025-2029

Long Text

Throughout the Asset Plan reference is made to Asset management Plans being framed in terms such as those below.

- delivering the service levels expected by the community.
- community expectations
- the expected outcomes.
- defining a level of service

1 Are these service levels already defined and documented for each asset type which BRCC manage on our behalf?

2 how have these "expectations" been derived and subsequently agreed - or is this process yet to be undertaken?

3 Are these or will these "service expectations" referred to, be included in the Service plans that will inform the Asset Plans for each Asset Class?

Your name

Roger Harrop

7. Urgent Business

Closure of Meeting