

Benalla Rural City Council

Finance and Planning Committee

Agenda

Date: Wednesday 10 December 2025

Time: 6pm

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

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Agenda

Chair	Councillor David Blore	
Councillors	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)	
	Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)	
	Councillor Peter Davis	
	Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne	
	Councillor Jillian Merkel	
In attendance	Councillor Nathan Tolliday	
	Peter Keane	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Courtney Naughton	Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
	Nilesh Singh	Manager Development
	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.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes have been circulated to Councillors and posted on the Council website www.benalla.vic.gov.au pending confirmation at this meeting.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Finance and Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 5 November 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Business

1. Planning Permit Application For Building And Works To The Existing Office Building At 18 Bridge Street East, Benalla

Ref: 683252461-12

PO40-25

Joel Ingham – Planning Coordinator
Nilesh Singh – Manager Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report discusses the planning application received for buildings and works at 26 Bridge Street East, Benalla to replace the door and window and repaint a section of the front façade.

BACKGROUND

A report on the planning application was presented to the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 23 July 2025, where the committee resolved:

That business item 3. Planning Permit Application for Buildings and Works to the Existing Office Building at 18 Bridge Street East, Benalla be deferred to the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 27 August 2025 for the provision of additional information.

A further report was presented to the Finance and Planning Committee on Wednesday 27 August 2025, where the committee resolved:

That a report on Planning Permit Application for Buildings and Works to the Existing Office Building at 18 Bridge Street East, Benalla be presented to the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 10 December 2025.

DISCUSSION

The application seeks retrospective approval for buildings and works within a Heritage Overlay that have been undertaken without a planning permit. The works undertaken include:

1. Repainting the front façade in Monument Grey.
2. Replacement of the existing timber-framed front door and associated trim with a new aluminum-framed glazed door.
3. Replacement of the front steel-framed window with a new aluminum-framed window to match the new door.

Following the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 23 July 2025 an on-site meeting was undertaken with the proponent on site with Council representatives including the planning coordinator and heritage advisor.

The application was scheduled to be considered by the Council in December 2025.

It was agreed that the proponent would seek alternative designs to be more in-line with the historical significance of the building. More time has been given to the proponent to seek assistance and advice from others, including Council's heritage advisor, to submit an appropriate design response.

The applicant emailed Council on 27 November 2025 advising that due to personal circumstances she has not had enough time to seek alternative designs as raised in the on-site meeting on the 23 July 2025. The applicant seeks that the matter be deferred to a meeting in the new year.

Based on correspondence received from the applicant, it is considered that there will be a genuine attempt to seek alternative designs to try and resolve the issues. For this reason, it is recommended that a report be presented to a Finance and Planning Committee meeting in 2026.

COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 IMPLICATIONS

Community

- *A healthy, safe and resilient community.*

Liveability

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

Economy

- *Sustainable growth.*

Environment

- *Healthy and protected natural environment.*
- *Circular economy.*
- *Sustainable waste management.*

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

A decision by the Council to determine that a permit should be granted for the proposal may be appealed to VCAT by the objectors and/or the applicant against conditions of the permit.

In the instance that the Council decides to refuse to grant a permit the applicant also has a right of appeal to VCAT.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council, as the responsible authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, must determine the permit application.

If the Council decision is appealed by any party to VCAT, the Council has a statutory role in being a party to the appeal and informing and assisting VCAT.

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

Additional time has been granted to the proponent to seek advice and submit an alternative design that is more in-line with the historical significance of the building.

Recommendation:

- 1. That the report be noted.**
- 2. That a report on Planning Permit Application for Buildings and Works to the Existing Office Building at 18 Bridge Street East, Benalla be presented to the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 25 March 2026.**

2. Building and Planning Approvals – October 2025

Ref: 2005329054-543
Sarah Ford - Building Coordinator
Joel Ingham – Planning Coordinator
Nilesh Singh – Manager Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details planning permit applications and building approvals for October 2025.

Planning Permit Applications Determined under Officer Delegation

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	P109-25	48 lot staged subdivision and the creation and removal of easements	1,3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 Nicholson Court, and 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 Kelly Court, Benalla	Approved
2	P070-25	The use and development of land for a warehouse	9-11 Railway Place, Benalla	Approved
3	P072-25	Use and development of a dwelling	8 Goodwin Street, Benalla	Approved
4	P111-25	Alterations and additions to the existing dwelling	1 Bennison Court, Benalla	Approved
5	P029-25	Construction of a shed	4 Mayfair Drive, Benalla	Approved
6	P054-25	Subdivision of land into three lots	Whites Road, Warrenbayne	Approved
7	P113-25	Two-lot subdivision and creation of access to a Road in a Transport Zone 2.	18 Racecourse Road, Benalla	Approved

Planning Permit Amendments Determined Under Officer Delegation

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	P0033-24-1	Use and development of the land for a Child Care Centre, to display and construct business identification signage and the removal of native vegetation	1-21 Four Mile Road, Benalla	Approved
2	P0157-23-1	Subdivision of land into three lots	1-21 Four Mile Road, Benalla	Approved
3	P0082-24-2	Construction of six dwellings	3-5 Senator Drive, Benalla	Approved

Planning Permits Issued Under VicSmart

There were no VicSmart planning permits issued during the month of October 2025.

Planning Permit Applications Determined by the Council

There were no planning permit applications determined by the Council during the month of October 2025.

Planning Permit Amendments Determined by the Council

There were no planning permit amendments determined by the Council during the month of October 2025.

Planning Permit Applications Withdrawn or Lapsed

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	P065-25	Alteration of an existing crossover and creation of a new crossover to a Transport Zone 2.	9 Nunn Street, Benalla	Lapsed

Notices of Decision

There were no Notice of Decisions issued during the month of October 2025.

A Notice of Decision (NOD) is issued when Council has decided to grant a planning permit when an objection(s) are received regarding the application.

An objector may appeal to Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) against the decision to grant the permit within 21 days of a Notice of Decision being issued. After 28 days if no appeal has been lodged Council will issue the Planning Permit.

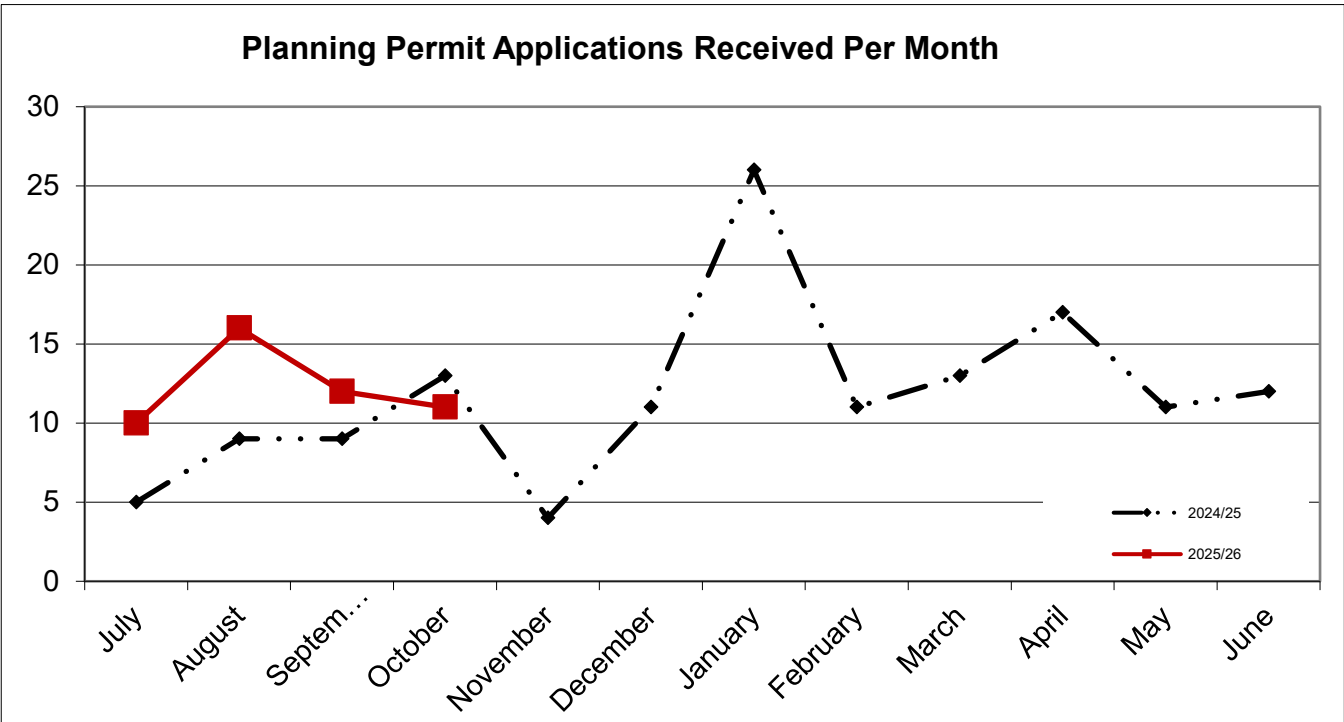
Planning Permit Applications Determined by VCAT

There were no planning permit applications determined by VCAT during the month of October 2025.

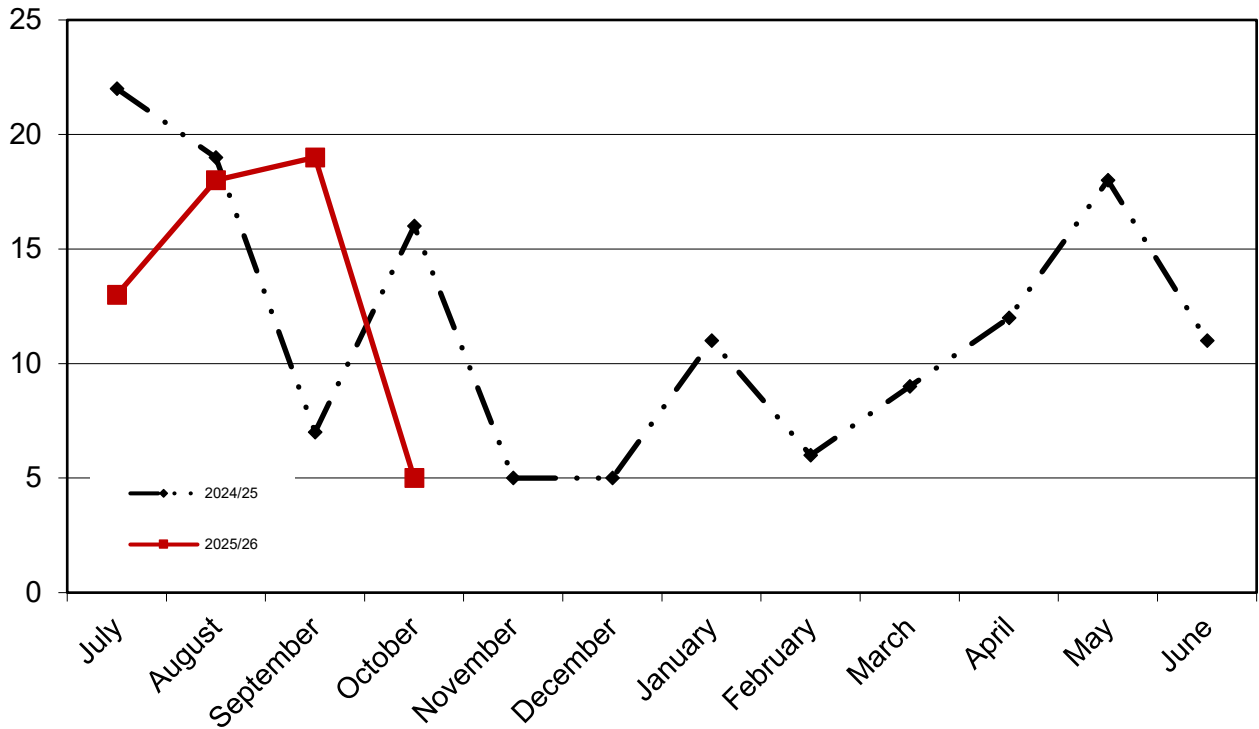
Matters Before VCAT

P012-25	26 Bridge Street East, Benalla
Status	Planning Permit No. P012-25 was refused by Council on 10 September 2025 to construct and display an electronic promotion sign at 26 Bridge Street East, Benalla. The applicant has appealed this decision to the Tribunal. On the 24 September 2025 the Tribunal ordered that a compulsory conference (mediation) would be conducted on 12 December 2025 with the main hearing date to be heard on 6 March 2026.

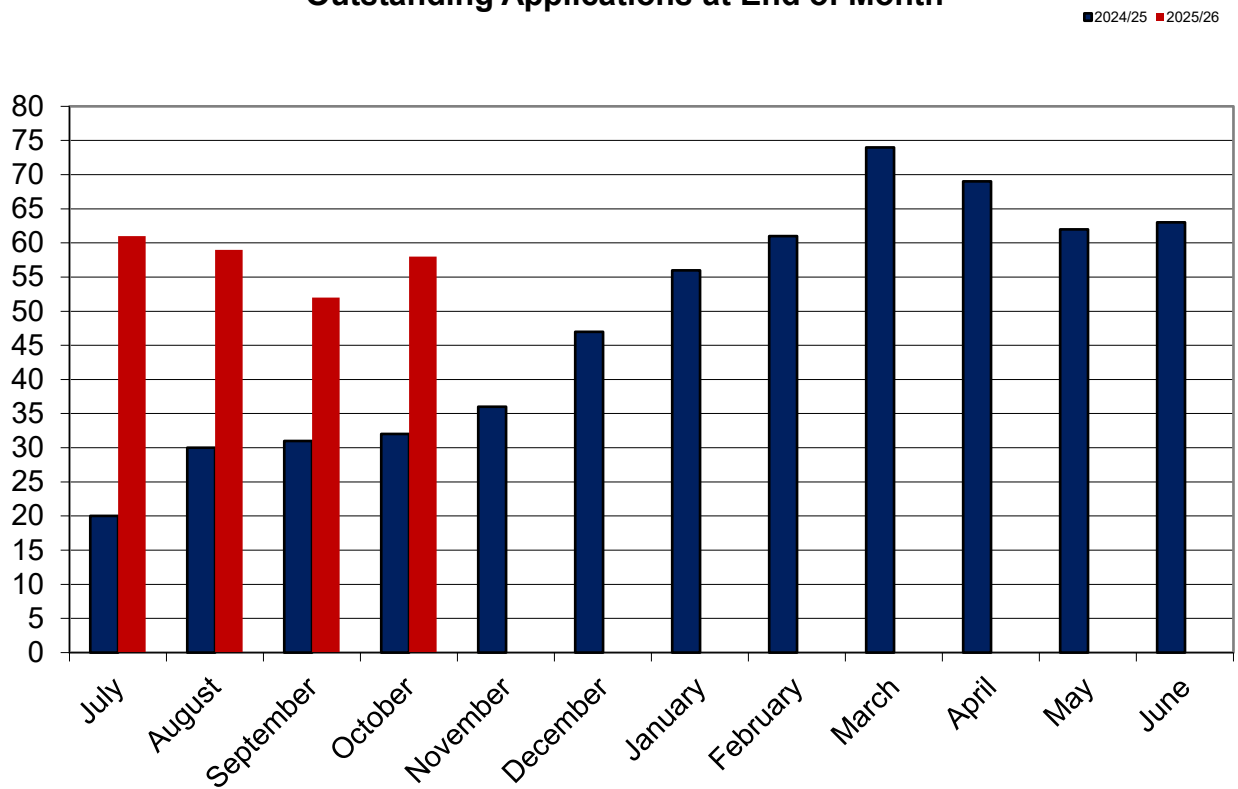
Planning Permit Applications



Planning Permit Applications Decided Per Month



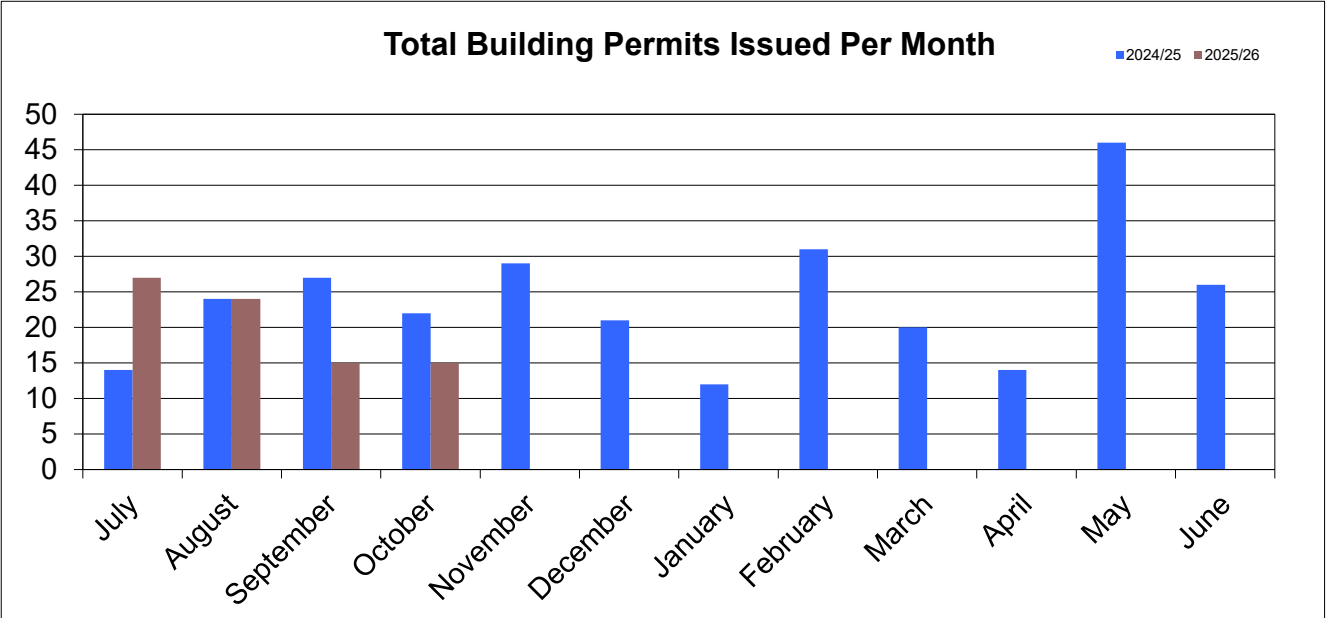
Outstanding Applications at End of Month



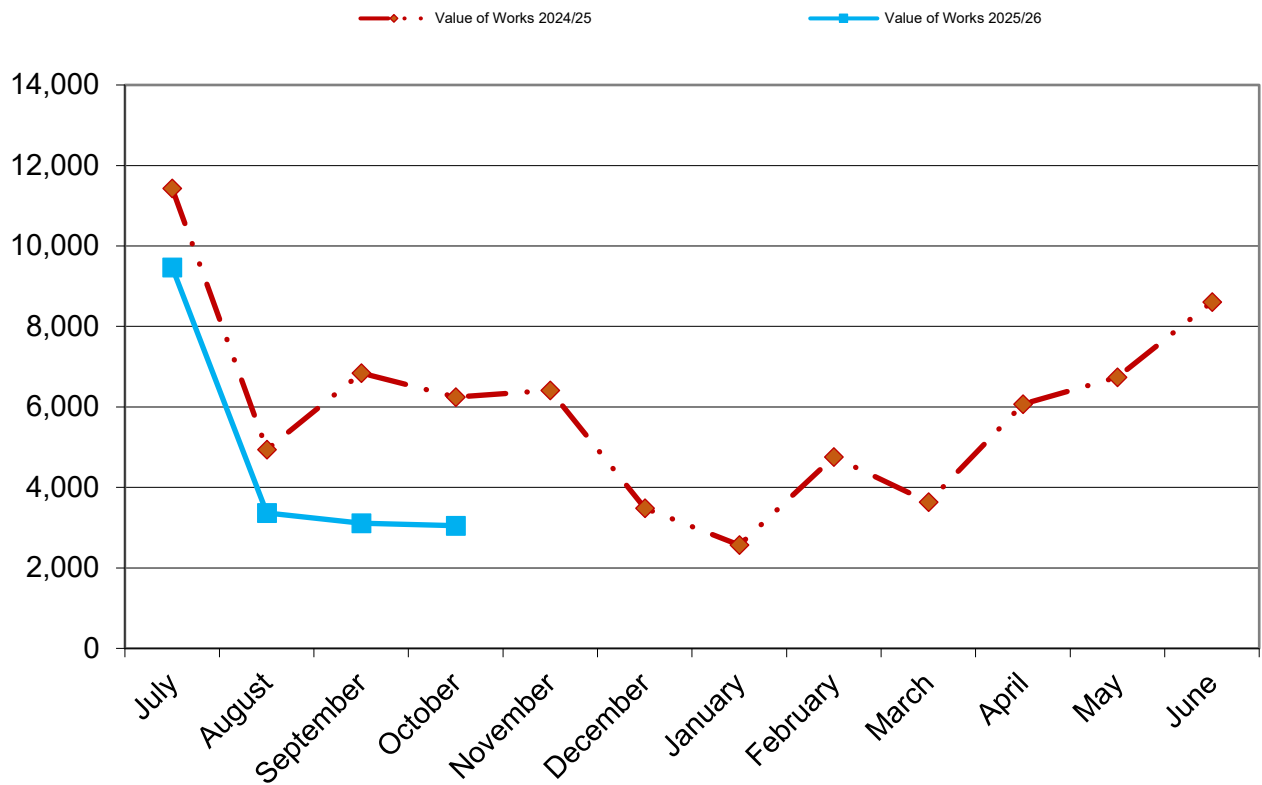
Building Approvals Issued by Council and Private Practitioners

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Value
1	3722469805676	Construction of horse stables	51 North Road, Benalla	\$80,000
2	5279102236492	Construction of a domestic shed	5a Nunn Street, Benalla	\$25,273
3	1385084079638	Installation of prefabricated single storey dwelling	248 Gardiner Road, Lurg	\$600,000
4	5014715458003	Additions and alterations to the existing dwelling	35 Cecil Street, Benalla	\$41,030
5	7298743887529	Construction of a shed	128 Coach Road, Winton	\$15,380
6	7210160839925	Construction of a dwelling and shed	32 Weary Dunlop Drive, Benalla	\$565,330
7	6558084075618	Construction of a dwelling and garage	20 Honeyeater Street, Benalla	\$357,680
8	1457960697668	Installation of a security gate in an existing Woolworths tenancy	49-55 Smythe Street, Benalla	\$50,000
9	3939834811316	Construction of a dwelling and Garage	8 Kookaburra Street, Benalla	\$370,000
10	6399079610790	Construction of a swimming pool and safety barrier	74 Murray Road, Benalla	\$85,739
11	9221987152498	Alterations to an existing building	53 Bridge Street East, Benalla	\$172,441
12	2574196052900	Construction of a carport	9 Margaret Street, Benalla	\$4,000
13	1306926262230	Construction of a swimming pool	28 Clarendon Street, Baddaginnie	\$82,000
14	3747120567539	Construction of a carport	20 Bond Street, Benalla	\$0
15	7111689457141	Alterations and additions to an existing dwelling	1 Bennison Court, Benalla	\$600,000
Total				\$3,048,873

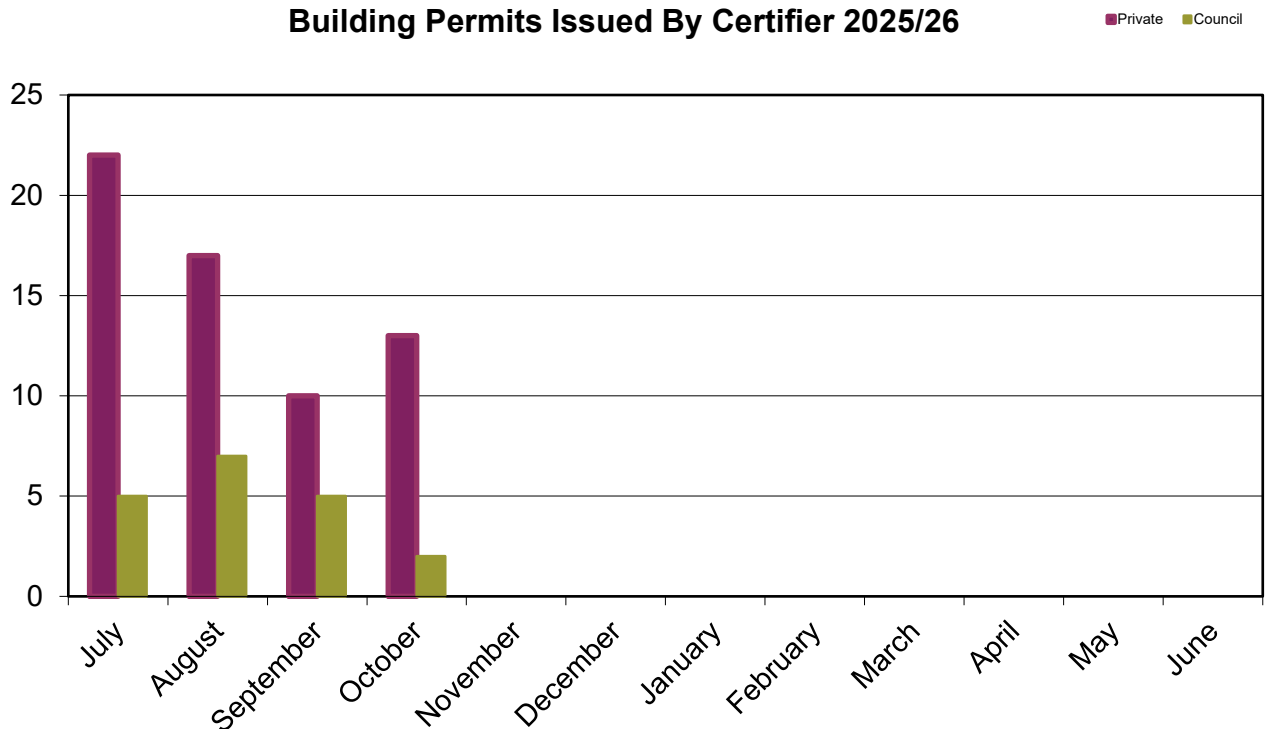
Building Permits Issued by Certifier by Month



Value of Building Permits Issued (\$'000)



Building Permits Issued By Certifier 2025/26



COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 IMPLICATIONS

Community

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

Liveability

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

Economy

- *Sustainable growth.*

Environment

- *Healthy and protected natural environment.*

Leadership

- *Good governance.*

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.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

3. 2025/2026 Major Events Grant Program

Ref: 1766899222-1072

Courtney Naughton – Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
Kate Nolan – Tourism and Events Officer

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents a funding application for the 2025/26 Major Event Funding Program.

BACKGROUND

The Council's Major Event Funding Program enables local community groups, clubs, organisations and external event groups to seek up to \$2,000 in funding to assist in the staging of events that will provide measurable economic benefit and enhance the image and liveability of Benalla Rural City.

Eligible Applicants

- Incorporated community based and not for-profit groups and organisations.
- An unincorporated organisation sponsored by an incorporated organization.
- Have the potential to raise the awareness of Benalla Rural City as a destination and showcase its facilities and attractions.
- Encourage overnight stays in the municipality, maximize visitor yield and/or promote repeat visitation.
- Provide an opportunity for a significant injection of new money into the municipality.
- Provide economic benefit to local business.
- Provide opportunities for social benefit to the local community.
- Have the potential to become financially sustainable without Council support.
- Comply with all relevant regulations and Council requirements including event permits, insurances, risk management plans, traffic management plans.

Ineligible Applicants

- Individuals.
- Individual businesses, government agencies, political groups, religious groups and organisations and national and international service clubs.
- Applicants who have not satisfactorily acquitted previous Council grants or who have outstanding debts to the Council.
- Have the majority of revenue coming from the Council.
- Are private functions.
- Are outside Benalla Rural City.
- Generate financial profits for commercial companies and/or individuals.
- Pay staff wages and salaries out of the Council's funding.
- Are of a religious or political nature.
- Are completed or events that have already begun.

DISCUSSION

Major Event Funding

Applications for consideration under the 2025/26 Major Event Funding program are detailed in the table below.

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Benalla Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club inc.	<p>100th annual Benalla Lawn Tennis Club Tournament – 3 to 5 January 2026</p> <p>For the past 100 years the Benalla Lawn Tennis Club has hosted a three-day tournament. In the 1950's and 1960's the top Australian players used it as a warm-up for the Australian Open which was then played on grass. The first day of play on the Saturday will be singles (male and female from the open section down to junior's events). On the Sunday there will be double action (for males and females) on the Monday, mixed doubles action.</p> <p>They have invited past club champions and former players to attend the one hundredth staging of our annual tournament. Locals will have the opportunity to watch some very competitive tennis.</p> <p>Social benefits of the event include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Committee members have been heavily involved in planning the event for the past three months. This includes organizing catering for the event, ensuring that the clubhouse is presentable and most of all ensuring that the 24 grass courts are in pristine condition.▪ Provides an event for locals to come down and watch tennis free of charge during the holiday period. The open singles finals for both men and women will be held at 6.00pm on the evening of Saturday 3 January.▪ Provides opportunities for members to participate in catering, court preparation, serving at the bar and administering the smooth running of the tournament over the three days. <p>Economic Benefits of the event include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 200-300 people coming to Benalla from across the state and interstate. Beneficial for accommodation venues, hospitality venues and fuel stations.▪ The tournament is the major fundraiser for the club. It costs up to \$50,000 per year to maintain the courts. As well we have commenced renovating the clubhouse and next year will replace the floor in the hall at a cost of around \$10,000.▪ Attract future major tennis events to Benalla (as well as grow the tournament), for example the inter-regionals which the club hosted successfully in October of this year (140 players from across the state and their families).	\$2,000	\$2,000

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an opportunity for participants to sample other Benalla and district attractions. <p>Opportunities for Community Participation in the event include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spectating Playing singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Assisting with the running of the event. <p>They anticipate a total of approximately 500 participants and spectators. They will be competing in over 30 singles and double events over the three days of the event. This event will follow the successful hosting of the Victorian inter-regional tennis championships over a weekend on our courts in October of this year.</p> <p>The intended use of funding: Prizes to purchase winner and runner-up prizes. Note all prizes will be purchased locally, catering and tennis balls.</p>		
Molyullah Recreation and Public Hall Reserve Committee	<p>Molyullah Easter Sports - Monday 6 April 2026</p> <p>This will be the 123rd Molyullah Easter Sports. A day where families can gather to enjoy a fun day together with activities for young and old. Vintage tractor displays, horse events and children's activities such as train rides, face painting, horse and cart ride, and an animal nursery will be sure to please. There will also be traditional picnic games like three legged races and an egg throwing competition.</p> <p>Our community, family and friends have attended this Aussie Icon as part of their Easter tradition for many years. This community event draws the small rural community together for a fun day for the wider Benalla community and visitors to the area.</p> <p>Social Benefits of the event include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the connection of community members through meetings and working bees to prepare for the day and volunteering at the event. Provides a family fun day over the easter weekend for Benalla residents and visitors to the area. Increases number of volunteers in the community. <p>Economic Benefits of the event include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase business to local producers through food orders and requirements for the day. Raise funds for the maintenance and improvements to the public hall and recreation reserve. Increase tourism to the Benalla Rural City, in particular with relation to the horse events and wood chop as many people travel from out of town to attend this event. Cheap day out for families, no extra costs for rides and activities. <p>Opportunities for Community Participation in the event include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in planning of the event 	\$2,000	\$2,000

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Become involved in working bees to prepare for the sports day. ▪ Help out on the day of the sports with a variety of activities or displays ▪ Be involved in the sports - horse events, dog jump, foot races etc ▪ Have a market stall to display home made wares or produce ▪ Enter the children's colouring in competition or grow a pumpkin to display ▪ Provide goods for the trash n treasure stall ▪ Pot up some plants for the plant stall ▪ Train your dog for the dog jumping competition. <p>It is anticipated that the event will attract approximately 2400 participants and spectators. With 60 estimated participants and visitors staying overnight.</p> <p>Intended use of funding will be for assistance towards event running costs: First aid services, additional toilets and waste removal.</p>		
Total		\$2,000	\$2,000

COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 IMPLICATIONS

Community

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

Leadership

- *Engaged and informed community.*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, it is proposed that community engagement be undertaken at the 'Inform' 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
Inform	We will provide information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of program via media, website and social media. ▪ Program presented in public reports to the Council. ▪ Outcomes advised directly to applicants. ▪ Outcomes detailed in Annual Report. ▪ Media release.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *2025/26 Budget* allocated \$12,000 to the Major Event Funding program. This application is the fourth and fifth application for this financial year. The inclusion of these events will bring the total budget spend to \$9,000.

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.

Recommendation:

That the Finance and Planning Committee, acting under its delegated authority of the Council allocates \$2,000 grants from the 2025/26 Major Event Funding program to the Benalla Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club and the Molyullah Recreation and Public Hall Reserve Committee.

4. Urgent Business

Closure of Meeting