



Notice is given that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on:

Date: Tuesday, 10 December 2019
Time: 3pm
Location: Council Chambers, Serpentine

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

10 December 2019

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1 OPENING PRAYER

“Almighty God, we humbly ask you to bless this Council, direct and prosper its deliberations towards the true welfare of your people of the Shire of Loddon.”

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

“The Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered and pays its respects to their Elders both past and present.”

3 APOLOGIES

4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

5 PREVIOUS MINUTES**5.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

File Number: 02/01/001

Author: Lynne Habner, Manager Executive and Commercial Services

Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm:

1. The minutes of the Council Briefing of 26 November 2019
2. The minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 26 November 2019

REPORT

Seeking approval of the unconfirmed minutes of the previous meetings.

6 REVIEW OF ACTION SHEET**6.1 REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

File Number: 02/01/002

Author: Lynne Habner, Manager Executive and Commercial Services

Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: 1. Action sheet

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the action sheet.

REPORT

Refer attachment.

Finalised	Division: Committee: Officer:	Council	Date From: Date To:
Action Sheets Report			Printed: Friday, 29 November 2019 2:22:15 PM

Actions completed since last meeting

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Caserta, Deanne Morrison, Sharon	Decision Reports	Proposed Procurement Strategy 2019-2021
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/261</p> <p>Moved: Cr Geoff Curnow Seconded: Cr Colleen Condliffe</p> <p>That Council adopts the Procurement Strategy 2019-2021 v1.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>27/11/2019 4:11:15 PM - Deanne Caserta</i> Action completed by: Caserta, Deanne Sent to Exec for finalisation and publishing onto website</p>			

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Caserta, Deanne Morrison, Sharon	Decision Reports	Disposal of Council Assets Policy
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/262</p> <p>Moved: Cr Colleen Condliffe Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie</p> <p>That Council adopts the Disposal of Council Assets Policy v1.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>27/11/2019 4:11:22 PM - Deanne Caserta</i> Action completed by: Caserta, Deanne Sent to Exec for finalisation and publishing onto website</p>			

Finalised	Division: Committee: Officer:	Council	Date From: Date To:
Action Sheets Report			Printed: Friday, 29 November 2019 2:22:15 PM

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Morrison, Sharon Morrison, Sharon	Decision Reports	Proposed Privacy Policy version 2
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/263</p> <p>Moved: Cr Geoff Cumow Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie</p> <p>That Council adopt the Privacy Policy version 2.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>28/11/2019 12:31:53 PM - Sharon Morrison</i> Action completed by: Morrison, Sharon Policy is being finalised and updated on the internet.</p>			

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Caserta, Deanne Morrison, Sharon	Decision Reports	Finance Report for the period ending 31 October 2019
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/264</p> <p>Moved: Cr Geoff Cumow Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. receives and notes the 'Finance report for the period ending 31 October 2019' 2. approves budget revisions included in the report for internal reporting purposes only. <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>27/11/2019 4:10:52 PM - Deanne Caserta</i> Action completed by: Caserta, Deanne For information only</p>			

Finalised	Division: Committee: Officer:	Council	Date From: Date To:
Action Sheets Report			Printed: Friday, 29 November 2019 2:22:15 PM

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Gladman, Wendy Gladman, Wendy	Decision Reports	ENDORSEMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND PLAN TEMPLATE
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/265</p> <p>Moved: Cr Neil Beattie Seconded: Cr Geoff Cumow</p> <p>That Council endorse the Community Planning Framework and Plan template as attached to this report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>27/11/2019 4:36:30 PM - Wendy Gladman</i> Action completed by: Gladman, Wendy The Community Planning Framework document has been forwarded for finalisation and placement on Council's website.</p>			

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Gladman, Wendy Gladman, Wendy	Decision Reports	APPLICATIONS FOR 2019-20 COMMUNITY GRANTS UNSPENT FUNDS
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/266</p> <p>Moved: Cr Colleen Condliffe Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie</p> <p>That Council allocate the following amounts from the 2019/20 Community Grants unspent funds</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$2,000 to the Dingee Bowling Club in support of the east end recladding project 2. \$10,000 to the Boort Croquet Club in support of stage 1 of the fence replacement. <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>27/11/2019 3:53:54 PM - Wendy Gladman</i> Action completed by: Gladman, Wendy Community Support Officer has been advised that applications have been approved and will progress the required grant acceptance with the groups to allow payments to be made.</p>			

Finalised	Division: Committee: Officer:	Council	Date From: Date To:
Action Sheets Report			Printed: Friday, 29 November 2019 2:22:15 PM

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Habner, Lynne Pinyon, Phil	Decision Reports	Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/267</p> <p>Moved: Cr Colleen Condliffe Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie</p> <p>That Council adopt the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>28/11/2019 4:07:54 PM - Lynne Habner</i> Action completed by: Habner, Lynne Completed - arrangements have been made for document to be finalised and uploaded to Council's website.</p>			

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 26/11/2019	Morrison, Sharon Morrison, Sharon	Compliance Reports	Proposed Election Period Policy version 2
<p>RESOLUTION 2019/276</p> <p>Moved: Cr Colleen Condliffe Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt</p> <p>That Council adopt the Election Period Policy version 2.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <p><i>28/11/2019 12:46:16 PM - Sharon Morrison</i> Action completed by: Morrison, Sharon Policy is being finalised, placed on the internet, made available to councillors and shared with staff.</p>			

7 MAYORAL REPORT**7.1 MAYORAL REPORT**

File Number: 02/01/001

Author: Lynne Habner, Manager Executive and Commercial Services

Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report

REPORT

The Mayor will present a report at the meeting.

8 COUNCILLORS' REPORT

8.1 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

File Number: 02/01/001

Author: Lynne Habner, Manager Executive and Commercial Services

Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports

REPORT

Each Councillor will present a report at the meeting.

9 DECISION REPORTS**9.1 PLANNING APPLICATION 5496- USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND FOR A RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITY (100MW SOLAR FARM), UTILITY INSTALLATION AND NATIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL**

File Number: 5469
Author: Alexandra Jefferies, Planning Officer
Authoriser: Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance
Attachments: 1. **Decision Report 5469: Use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100MW solar farm), utility installation and native vegetation removal**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council move to issue a notice of decision to grant a planning permit for application 5469 for the use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100 MW solar farm), utility installation and the removal of native vegetation subject to the conditions defined in the attached decision report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

There have been no previous Council discussions on this matter.

BACKGROUND

Applicant: Derby Project Pty. Ltd.
Contact: Duncan Lowis- Chris Smith & Associates
Subject Land: 26 Derby-Serpentine Road, Derby & 2830 Calder Highway, Derby

Application 5469 proposes the use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100MW solar farm), utility installation and the removal of native vegetation. The application has received three objections. The objections are included in the attached decision report.

The proposed solar farm consists of approximately 270 ha of land proposed to be developed with solar panels and other associated infrastructure for the purpose of producing energy. The subject site is located within close proximity to the Calder Highway and will be accessed via the Derby Serpentine Road.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 the Minister for Planning delegates a municipal council power to become the planning authority for any planning scheme in force in its municipal district.

A municipal council is obligated to enforce and administer the relevant Planning Scheme and must use the Scheme to determine relevant applications.

For Council the Loddon Planning Scheme is the relevant Planning Scheme which must be used by Council when determining applications.

Council has delegated authority to its Planning officer to determine outcomes of applications, however it is the policy of Council to make the final determination for applications which:

- receive one or more public objection and/or
- are to be recommended for refusal by the Planning officer.

This application received three objections. A detailed decision report is included in attachment 1 outlining the Planning officer's assessment and considerations in determining the recommendation to Council. The three objections in full are also included in that report.

COST/BENEFITS

There are various cost associated with having a delegated Planning Officer consider an application and make a recommendation as well as with the time of the Councillors to consider this recommendation.

The benefits associated with this cost are the ability for Council to fulfil its requirement under law and provide the community with a statutory service that delivers well managed and appropriate development.

RISK ANALYSIS

The risks of Council not fulfilling its statutory obligation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 include:

- inappropriate development which could endanger life and property
- Council's reputation as a responsible Authority
- breaches of the Act requiring compliance action.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Please refer to the decision report for further detail on the application including copies of the objections lodged and the applicants response to these objections.

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

DECISION REPORT 5469: Use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100MW solar farm), utility installation and native vegetation removal



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SUMMARY

Application Number:	5469
Applicant:	Derby Project Pty. Ltd.
Subject Land:	26 Derby-Serpentine Road, Derby
Owner:	Peter Garth & Diane Burnett
Zone:	Farming Zone
Overlay(s):	Bushfire Management Overlay
Existing use:	Agriculture
Proposal:	Use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100 MW solar farm), utility installation and native vegetation removal.

1 RECOMMENDATION

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act 1987 requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to approve planning permit 5469 for the use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100 MW solar Farm), utility installation and native vegetation removal subject to the following conditions:

Plans to be provided

- 1) Before the use and development starts (or stages thereof), the following documentation must be provided to the Responsible Authority for consideration and referral to North Central Catchment Management Authority:
 - a. a detailed flood risk assessment for the proposed development that:
 - i. defines the extent of inundation in the event of a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event
 - ii. demonstrates that the proposed works do not alter the flood characteristics of the site to the detriment of surrounding properties.
- 2) Details of proposed security fencing.
- 3) Before the use and/or development start(s) (or stages thereof), detailed development plans must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. Once approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions, be generally in accordance with the plans provided in the application and three copies must be provided. The detailed plans to be provided for each applicable stage (where applicable) are:
 - a. a project layout plan (site plan) detailing the following:
 - i. the location of all solar panels that are to be constructed showing a setbacks to boundaries, roads and the cultural sensitivity overlay
 - ii. construction compound(s)
 - iii. location of the transmission line
 - iv. location and type of security/perimeter fencing
 - v. vehicle access points to the property
 - vi. internal access tracks
 - vii. proposed finished surface levels of the site
 - viii. location of native vegetation to be removed and retained.
 - b. elevation and floorplans of all buildings including, substation(s), battery storage area(s) and terminal station(s)
 - c. elevation plans of the transmission towers and solar panels to be constructed
 - d. vehicle access points to the property designed to accommodate the vehicles (size and type) to be accessing the site during construction and operation.
- 4) Before the commencement of buildings and works, a Landscape Plan detailing visual screening of the site must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and three copies must be provided. The Landscape Plan must show the location of all proposed vegetation and must include the following:
 - a. the site boundaries and building envelope as detailed on the endorsed development plans including
 - b. location of crossovers, power poles, nature strips and any street trees

- c. location, height and construction materials of all fences
- d. a complete plant schedule of proposed vegetation including full botanical names; common names; pot sizes at maturity; height and width of plants at maturity and total quantities of each plant
- e. details of landscape screening to be provided before the construction phase of the development begins
- f. ongoing maintenance regime and plantings survival target
- g. all species selected must be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority
- h. before the use starts, a traffic management plan which is to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and VicRoads and generally in accordance with the Traffic Impact Assessment submitted with the application dated August 2019 must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit.

No alteration to plans

- 5) The use and development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Local Roads

- 6) Before construction commences a condition report of the existing council managed/owned infrastructure along the preferred construction vehicle route(s) identified for use during construction, including but not limited to sealed surface, pavement, drainage, culverts and bridges and condition of such infrastructure must be recorded to Council's satisfaction. The pre-construction condition report must be facilitated and paid for by the applicant.
- 7) It will be the applicant's responsibility to inspect the roads (and the associated infrastructure) nominated for use during construction at a frequency no lesser than stipulated in Council's Road Management Plan 2017.
- 8) It will be the applicant's responsibility to maintain and repair throughout construction the sections of the road nominated for use during construction to a standard no lesser than that identified in the pre-construction condition report.
- 9) At the end of the construction period, a post-construction condition report of the council managed/owned infrastructure (including any new infrastructure constructed by Council during the construction period) along the preferred construction vehicle route(s) identified in the condition report required by condition 6 of this permit or subsequent inspections, must be undertaken. The condition of such infrastructure must be recorded to Council's satisfaction. Any variation in the condition of the infrastructure must be identified within the post-construction condition report. The post-construction condition report must document how any variation in the condition of the infrastructure will be addressed. The post construction condition report must be facilitated and paid for by the applicant.
- 10) Any repair work identified within the post-construction condition report required to re-instate local roads (to at least their pre-existing condition as per condition 6) must be addressed and repaired by the applicant at their cost to Council's satisfaction.
- 11) Any repair, maintenance and/or rehabilitation work on Council infrastructure identified within the post-construction condition report must be undertaken to current engineering standards and to the satisfaction of Council's Technical Services Department.

Construction management

- 12) During construction phase(s) appropriate dust suppression measures must be implemented to ensure that a nuisance is not caused to adjoining landowners or the general public to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- 13) Appropriate screening of the site from the Calder Highway must be provided during the construction phase of the development in order to reduce visual impacts of the development to passing traffic.
- 14) Dust suppression measures must be incorporated during the construction phase of the development.
- 15) Construction may only occur during the following times:
 - a. Monday through to Sunday from 7 am to 7 pm

General Amenity

- 16) The use of land including but not limited to the following must not negatively affect the amenity of the surrounding area to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:
 - a. the transportation of materials, goods or commodities to or from the subject land
 - b. the appearance of any buildings, works or materials
 - c. the emission of noise, artificial light, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke vapor, steam, soot, ash, dust, waste water, waste products, grit, or oil
 - d. the presence of vermin, or otherwise.
- 17) Any complaints or matters raised by members of the public in relation to the site must be recorded within a complaint and investigation record. A copy of this record must be made available on request to the Responsible Authority.

Landscaping

- 18) The landscaping area, as shown on the endorsed landscaping plan must be planted within the first 12 months of the project.
- 19) Once established landscaping must be maintained to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Decommissioning

- 20) The site must be decommissioned and rehabilitated for agricultural purposes to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- 21) Twelve month prior to the planned decommission of the site the proponent must supply to council a plan/document which outlines details relating to the decommission of the site and should include, but not limited to the following details:
 - a. a timeframe for the decommission of the site
 - b. nominate a responsible party and contact for the decommission of the site
 - c. details of any rehabilitation required as part of the decommission.

Permit Expiry

- 22) This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:

- a. the development is not started within 4 years of the date of this permit
- b. the use is not commenced within 4 years of the date of this permit
- c. the development is not completed within 6 years of the date of this permit.

23) The responsible authority may extend the periods referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or within three months afterwards.

VicRoads

24) Reflection of sunlight from the Solar Panels must not be visible from any part of the Calder Highway to cause dazzle to the traffic on the highway.

25) Before the commencement of transporting construction materials to the site the following works must be completed to the satisfaction of Regional Roads Victoria (RRV):

- a. A Channelised right turn lane treatment (type "CHR") must be provided on the Calder Highway at the Calder Highway / Derby-Serpentine Road intersection in accordance with Figure A 30 of the AUSTRROADS publication "Guide to Road Design Part 4: Intersections and Crossings – General" -2017.
- b. A Rural Basic Left-turn Treatment (type BAL) with full depth sealed shoulder must be provided in accordance with Figure 8.2 of the AUSTRROADS publication, "Guide to Road Design – Part 4A: Unsignalised and Signalised Intersections " – 2017.
- c. Existing unsealed Derby-Serpentine Road must be sealed from the highway seal to a minimum length of 10 metres.
- d. A functional layout of the proposed intersection upgrade works must be approved in writing by RRV and works associated with the above intersection must be designed by a VicRoads pre-qualified consultant/contractor to a standard approved in writing by RRV prior to the commencement of construction within the declared road reserve. Construction of these works must be completed by a VicRoads pre-qualified contractor to the satisfaction and at no cost to RRV.
- e. Subsequent to the approval of detailed design stage layout plan, a 'Detailed Design Stage' Road Safety Audit (RSA) must be submitted to RRV for approval. The RSA must be undertaken by an independent VicRoads pre-qualified audit team and be conducted in accordance with AustRoads – Guide to Road Safety Part 6 – Road Safety Audit (2009).
- f. The detailed engineering plans for road works must be amended to address any issue raised in the Road Safety Audit to the satisfaction of RRV and the Responsible Authority prior to the approval of the plans.

Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning

26) Before works start, the permit holder must advise all persons undertaking the vegetation removal or works on site of all relevant permit conditions.

27) Before works start, a native vegetation protection fence must be erected around all native vegetation to be retained within 15 metres of the works area. This fence must be erected at:

- a. a radius of 12 times the diameter of the tree trunk at a height of 1.4 metres to a maximum of 15 metres but no less than 2 metres from the base of the trunk of the tree and
- b. around the patch(es) of native vegetation at a minimum distance of 2 metres from retained native vegetation.

28) The fence must be constructed of star pickets and paraweb or similar to the satisfaction of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The protection fence must remain in place until all works are completed to the satisfaction of the department.

29) Except with the written consent of the department, within the area of native vegetation to be retained and any tree protection zone associated with the permitted use and/or development, the following is prohibited:

- a. vehicular or pedestrian access
- b. trenching or soil excavation
- c. storage or dumping of any soils, materials, equipment, vehicles, machinery or waste products
- d. construction of entry and exit pits for underground services; or
- e. any other actions or activities that may result in adverse impacts to retained native vegetation.

The total area of native vegetation permitted to be removed is 0.516 hectares, comprised of:

- 1 patch of native vegetation with a total area of 0.062 hectares (containing 3 large trees)
- 6 large scattered trees and
- 1 small scattered tree.

30) To offset the removal of 0.516 hectares of native vegetation, the permit holder must secure native vegetation offsets, in accordance with the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017) as specified below:

- a. a general offset of 0.093 general habitat units:
 - i. located within the North Central Catchment Management Authority boundary or Loddon Shire Council municipal district and
 - ii. with a minimum Strategic Biodiversity Value score of at least 0.110.
- b. the offset secured must provide protection for at least 9 large trees.

31) Before any native vegetation is removed, evidence that the required offset for the project has been secured must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. This evidence is one or both of the following:

- a. credit extract(s) allocated to the permit from the Native Vegetation Credit Register and/or
- b. an established first party offset site including a security agreement to the required standard, signed by both parties, and a 10-year offset management plan to the satisfaction of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and approved by the Responsible Authority. The offset management plan must detail the 10-year management actions and ongoing management of the site. Every year, for ten years, after the responsible authority has approved the offset management plan, the applicant must provide notification of the management actions undertaken towards implementing the offset management plan, to the responsible authority. An offset site condition statement, including photographs must be included in this notification.

32) A copy of the offset evidence must be endorsed by the responsible authority and form part of this permit. Within 30 days of endorsement of the offset evidence by the responsible authority, a copy of the endorsed offset evidence must be provided to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Country Fire Authority

Access

33) A four (4) metre perimeter road should be constructed within the ten (10) metre perimeter Fire Break.

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- 34) Roads are to be of all-weather construction and capable of accommodating a vehicle of fifteen (15) tonnes.
- 35) Constructed roads should be a minimum of four (4) metres in trafficable width with a four (4) metre vertical clearance for the width of the formed road surface.
- 36) The average grade should be no more than 1 in 7 (14.4% or 8.1°) with a maximum of no more than 1 in 5 (20% or 11.3°) for no more than fifty (50) metres.
- 37) Dips in the road should have no more than a 1 in 8 (12.5% or 7.1°) entry and exit angle.
- 38) Incorporate passing bays at least every 600 metres which must be at least 20 metres long and have a minimum trafficable width of 6 metres. Where roads are less than 600 metres long, at least one passing bay is to be incorporated.
- 39) Road networks must enable responding emergency services to access all areas of the facility.
- 40) Two but preferably more access points to the site, to ensure safe and efficient access to and egress from areas that may be impacted or involved in fire. The number of access points is to be informed through a risk management process.

Water Supply

- 41) On-site water supply is an important part of the fire suppression system which will assist in the safe, effective and timely fire suppression activities of responding brigades. Static water storage tank installations are to comply with AS 2419.1 and the following conditions:
 - a. The static water storage tank shall be of not less than 45,000 litres effective capacity.
 - b. The static water storage tank(s) must be an above-ground water tank constructed of concrete or steel. The location and number of tanks should be determined as part of the site's risk management process and in consultation with a CFA delegated officer.
 - c. The static storage tanks shall be capable of being completely refilled automatically or manually within 24 hours.
 - d. The hard-suction point shall be provided, with a 150mm full bore isolation valve equipped with a Storz connection, sized to comply with the required suction hydraulic performance. Adapters that may be required to match the connection are 125mm, 100mm, 90mm, 75mm, 65mm Storz tree adapters with a matching blank end cap to be provided.
 - e. The hard-suction point shall be positioned within 4 metres to a hardstand area and provide clear access for fire personnel.
 - f. An all-weather road access and hardstand shall be provided to the hard-suction point. The hardstand shall be maintained to a minimum of 15 tonne GVM, 8 metres long and 6 metres wide or to the satisfaction of the relevant fire authority.
 - g. The road access and hardstand shall be kept clear at all times.
 - h. The hard-suction point shall be protected from mechanical damage (i.e., bollards) where necessary.
 - i. Where the access road has one entrance, a 10 metre radius-turning circle shall be provided at the tank.
 - j. An external water level indicator is to be provided to the tank and be visible from the hardstand area.
 - k. Signage shall be fixed to each tank.

Fuel/Vegetation Management

- 42) Grass is to be maintained at below 100mm in height during the declared Fire Danger Period.
- 43) A fire break area of ten (10) metres width is to be maintained around the perimeter of the facilities, electricity compounds and substations. This area is to be of non-combustible mulch or mineral earth.
- a. The fire break area must commence from the boundary of the facility or from the vegetation screening (landscape buffer) inside the property boundary.
 - b. The fire break must be constructed using either mineral earth or non-combustible mulch such as crushed rock.
 - c. The fire break must be vegetation-free at all times.
 - d. No obstructions are to be within fire break area (e.g., no stored materials of any kind).
- 44) Adhere to restrictions and guidance during the Fire Danger Period, days of high fire danger and Total Fire Ban days (refer to www.cfa.vic.gov.au).
- 45) All plant and heavy equipment is to carry at least a 9-litre water stored-pressure fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 3A, or firefighting equipment as a minimum when on-site during the Fire Danger Period.
- 46) There is to be no long grass or deep leaf litter in areas where plant and heavy equipment will be working.

Solar installation

- 47) Solar facilities are to have a 6 metre separation between solar panel banks/rows. Where this cannot be achieved, advice is to be sought from CFA's State Infrastructure and Dangerous Goods Unit (sidgu@cfa.vic.gov.au).
- 48) Solar farm operators must provide specifications for safe operating conditions for temperature and the safety issues related to electricity generation, including isolation and shut-down procedures, if solar panels are involved in fire. This information must be provided within the content of the Emergency Information Book at the main entrance of the facility.
- 49) Solar arrays are to have grass or other vegetation maintained to 100mm under the array installation or mineral earth or non-combustible mulch such as stone.
- 50) Where practicable, solar energy installations can be sited on grazed paddocks. In this case, vegetation is to be managed as per the requirements of this guideline, or as informed through a risk management process.

2 DISCUSSION

2.1 Site & location

The subject site comprises of two properties under separate ownership measuring approximately 270 ha within the Farming Zone. It is partly covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay and Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 2. The site is an irregular shape which is bound to the south by the Calder Highway, Birkley Road to the north and an unused road reserve to the east, it is 'split' into two parts by the Derby-Serpentine Road.

The site is currently used for cropping and grazing and contains a single dwelling on the southernmost parcel (26 Derby-Serpentine Road). The site can be accessed via the Derby Serpentine- Road which is currently a gravel minor road. The site is mainly clear of vegetation

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with some scattered trees located across the property and a more significant patch located along the northern boundary of the site. The site is generally flat with no notable site features.

The Derby Recreation reserve is located on an adjoining lot to the south of the subject site.

Adjoining and surrounding properties are used for agricultural purposes with some containing single dwellings. Spring creek is located approximately 350 metres to the north of Birkley Road. The nearest dwelling in separate ownership is located at 197 Derby-Serpentine Road, approximately 450 metres to the north of the nearest proposed solar panels. The 66 KV line runs through the eastern portion of the site.



Subject site Source: Pozi Loddon

2.2 Site history

There is no relevant site history for the subject site.

2.3 Proposal

The application is proposing the use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility (100 MW solar farm), utility installation and removal of native vegetation. The proposed solar farm will have a total area of approximately 270 ha. The solar panels used will be tracking arrays which will be mounted on frames, there will be approximately 3,621 arrays installed on the site. The panels will rotate on a 2.5 metre axis, reaching a maximum height of 3.5 metres above ground level.

Associated works proposed as part of the application include:

- 18 prefabricated medium voltage power stations (equivalent size to shipping container)
- 2 metre high fencing around the development
- 3 rows of landscaping (10 metres wide) along boundaries that adjoin a road
- a number of all-weather internal roads
- switching station (53 x 60 metres)
- 197 metres of overhead powerline to connect the facility to the 66 KV line.

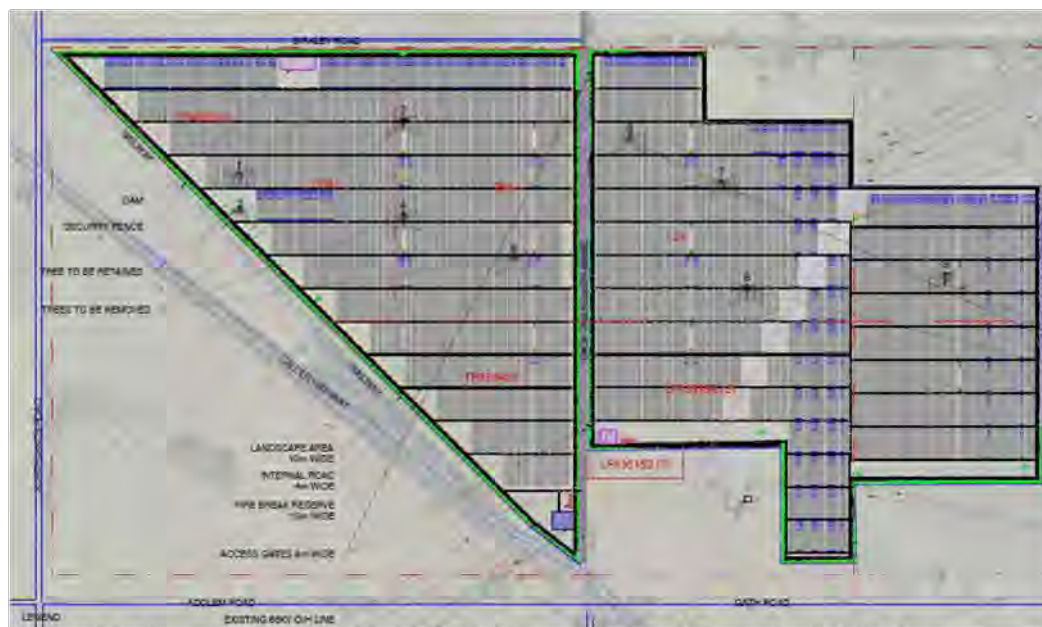
The proposal includes the removal of 0.516 ha of native vegetation and the removal of 9 large native trees.

To address impacts on the surrounding area the applicant is proposing to establish three rows of at least 2 metre high landscaping along the site boundaries which abut a road. The aim of this is to integrate the site into the surrounding landscape as much as possible. The species used within the landscape buffer will consist of a range of native vegetation. The applicant has also committed to implementing screening during the construction phase of the project through the planting of mature trees in selected spaces in an attempt to screen the development/construction phase from the Calder Highway. Details of which will be included in the landscape plan that is required to be submitted as stipulated in the conditions.

The construction phase of the application is proposed to take 10 months from the date of commencement. During construction the site will operate between 7 am and 7 pm Monday to Sunday. After completion the site will generally be controlled remotely, with the equivalent of one full time staff member employed to conduct general site monitoring and basic maintenance activities.

During the 10 month construction phase it has been estimated that a maximum of 9 truck movements and 60 light vehicle movements are likely to occur each day.

At the end of the lease period (30 years), if the lease is not renewed the development will be required to be decommissioned and potentially rehabilitated to the satisfaction of Council and the land owner(s).



Proposed development of solar panels & associated works on site source: ACenergy, Derby Solar Farm

2.4 Loddon Planning Scheme

2.4.1 Zone

The subject site is within the Farming Zone. Clause 35.07 states that the purpose of the Farming Zone is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework
- To provide for the use of land for agriculture
- To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land

To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture

To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.

To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision

To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone

2.4.2 Overlay

The site is partly covered by Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay and Clause 42.02 Vegetation Protection Overlay. However there are no planning permit triggers under these overlays.

2.4.3 Particular provision

Particular provision Clause 53.13 Renewable energy facility (other than wind energy facility) applies to this application. This provision states that the purpose of Renewable energy facility is:

- to facilitate the establishment and expansion of renewable energy facilities, in appropriate locations, with minimal impact on the amenity of the area.

Clause 53.12-3 provides a number of decision guidelines which should be considered:

- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The effect of the proposal on the surrounding area in terms of noise, glint, light spill, vibration, smell and electromagnetic interference.
- The impact of the proposal on significant views, including visual corridors and sightlines.
- The impact of the proposal on strategically important agricultural land, particularly within declared irrigation districts.
- The impact of the proposal on the natural environment and natural systems.
- The impact of the proposal on the road network.
- Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, August 2019)

2.4.4 Permit trigger

The requirement for a planning permit is triggered under the following clauses within the Loddon Planning Scheme:

- Clause 35.07-1 for the use of the land as a renewable energy facility within the Farming Zone
- Clause 35.07-4 for buildings and works associated with a section 2 use (renewable energy facility & utility installation) within the Farming Zone
- Clause 35.07-4 for buildings and works set back less than 100 metres from a Road Zone Category 1 (Calder Highway)
- Clause 52.17 for the removal of native vegetation

2.4.5 Restrictive covenant

There are no restrictive covenants listed on the titles included within the subject site.

2.4.6 Planning Policy Framework

The following section gives consideration to the relevant sections of the Planning Policy Framework for this application.

12.01-1S Protection of Biodiversity

Objective

To assist the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity

12.01-2S Native vegetation managementObjective

To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

13.02-1S Bushfire planningObjective

To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life

14.01-1S Protection of agricultural landObjective

To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland

17.01-1S Diversified economyObjective

To strengthen and diversify the economy

17.01-1R Diversified economy - Loddon Mallee South

The strategies of Clause 17.01-1R diversified economy- Loddon Mallee South are listed below:

- support the ongoing role and contribution of the region's small towns, settlements and non-urban areas through investment and diversification of their economies.
- Support and develop emerging and potential growth sectors such as tourism, renewable energy, resource recovery and other green industries.
- Facilitate new manufacturing and food processing industries that build on supply chains and take advantage of well-located and affordable land.
- Facilitate access to natural resources where appropriate, including sand and stone, minerals, timber and renewable energy potential.

19.01-1S Energy supplyObjective

To facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure

19.01-2S Renewable energyObjective

To promote the provision of renewable energy in a manner that ensures appropriate siting and design considerations are met.

2.4.7 Local Planning Policy Framework

The following section gives consideration to the relevant sections of the Local Planning Policy Framework.

19.01-2R Renewable energy - Loddon Mallee South Strategy

Support and facilitate development in renewable energy, waste to energy, carbon sequestration and other new energy opportunities

22.05 Development in rural areas

The objectives of Clause 22.05 Development in Rural Areas are listed below.

- To protect the natural and physical resources upon which agricultural industries rely
- To support the ongoing viability of existing farms
- To maintain farmland in productive agricultural use
- To promote the development of new and diverse agricultural industries, fulfilling the potential of existing infrastructure
- To prevent land use conflicts between sensitive uses and agricultural uses
- To ensure that new use and development in the Shire is not prejudicial to agricultural industries or the productive capacity of the land
- To encourage the most productive and sustainable uses of water and soil in the Shire
- To ensure that development in rural areas does not compromise landscapes of significant value
- To encourage safety from structure fires and bushfires

Clause 22.05 Development in Rural Areas specifically references renewable energy facilities as follows:

- Renewable energy facilities will be supported in Loddon Shire but should not be located on high quality agricultural land, in particular, not on land that is and is likely to remain irrigated (or may be irrigated in the future) due to soil type or access to irrigation infrastructure

2.4.8 Solar Energy Facilities: Design and Development Guideline

Clause 53.13-3 of the scheme requires that the Solar Energy Facilities: Design and Development Guideline (the Guideline) must be considered.

The Guideline has been created by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to help both applicants and Council make sound planning decisions when considering solar farm applications. The planning officer’s response to the Guideline is included within the assessment section of this report.

2.5 Referrals

Table 1: External referrals to Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP)

Response:	<p>As a <i>recommending</i> referral authority for the planning permit application, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning does not object to a planning permit being granted but recommends that the following condition/s are included on the permit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Before works start, the permit holder must advise all persons undertaking the vegetation removal or works on site of all relevant permit conditions. 2) Before works start, a native vegetation protection fence must be erected around all native vegetation to be retained within 15 metres of the works
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	<p>area. This fence must be erected at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) A radius of 12 times the diameter of the tree trunk at a height of 1.4 metres to a maximum of 15 metres but no less than 2 metres from the base of the trunk of the tree; and b) Around the patch(es) of native vegetation at a minimum distance of 2 metres from retained native vegetation. <p>3) The fence must be constructed of star pickets and paraweb or similar to the satisfaction of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The protection fence must remain in place until all works are completed to the satisfaction of the department.</p> <p>4) Except with the written consent of the department, within the area of native vegetation to be retained and any tree protection zone associated with the permitted use and/or development, the following is prohibited:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) vehicular or pedestrian access; b) trenching or soil excavation; c) storage or dumping of any soils, materials, equipment, vehicles, machinery or waste products; d) construction of entry and exit pits for underground services; or e) any other actions or activities that may result in adverse impacts to retained native vegetation. <p>The total area of native vegetation permitted to be removed is 0.516 hectares, comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 patch of native vegetation with a total area of 0.062 hectares (containing 3 large trees); • 6 large scattered trees; and • 1 small scattered tree. <p>5) To offset the removal of 0.516 hectares of native vegetation, the permit holder must secure native vegetation offsets, in accordance with the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017) as specified below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) A general offset of 0.093 general habitat units: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Located within the North Central Catchment Management Authority boundary or Loddon Shire Council municipal district; and b. With a minimum Strategic Biodiversity Value score of at least 0.110 b) The offset secured must provide protection for at least 9 large trees. <p>6) Before any native vegetation is removed, evidence that the required offset for the project has been secured must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. This evidence is one or both of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) credit extract(s) allocated to the permit from the Native Vegetation Credit Register, and/or b) an established first party offset site including a security agreement to the required standard, signed by both parties, and a 10-year offset management plan to the satisfaction of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and approved by the Responsible Authority. The offset management plan must detail the 10-year management
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	<p>actions and ongoing management of the site. Every year, for ten years, after the responsible authority has approved the offset management plan, the applicant must provide notification of the management actions undertaken towards implementing the offset management plan, to the responsible authority. An offset site condition statement, including photographs must be included in this notification.</p> <p>A copy of the offset evidence must be endorsed by the responsible authority and form part of this permit. Within 30 days of endorsement of the offset evidence by the responsible authority, a copy of the endorsed offset evidence must be provided to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.</p>
<p>Planning Officer Comment: Nil</p>	

Table 2: External Referral to VicRoads

<p>Response:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflection of sunlight from the Solar Panels must not be visible from any part of the Calder Highway to cause dazzle to the traffic on the highway. 2. Before the commencement of transporting construction materials to the site the following works must be completed to the satisfaction of Regional Roads Victoria (RRV): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A Channelised right turn lane treatment (type "CHR") must be provided on the Calder Highway at the Calder Highway / Derby-Serpentine Road intersection in accordance with Figure A 30 of the AUSTRROADS publication "Guide to Road Design Part 4: Intersections and Crossings – General" -2017. b. A Rural Basic Left-turn Treatment (type BAL) with full depth sealed shoulder must be provided in accordance with Figure 8.2 of the AUSTRROADS publication, "Guide to Road Design - Part 4A: Unsignalised and Signalised Intersections " – 2017. c. Existing unsealed Derby-Serpentine Road must be sealed from the highway seal to a minimum length of 10 metres. d. A functional layout of the proposed intersection upgrade works must be approved in writing by RRV and works associated with the above intersection must be designed by a VicRoads pre-qualified consultant/contractor to a standard approved in writing by RRV prior to the commencement of construction within the declared road reserve. Construction of these works must be completed by a VicRoads pre-qualified contractor to the satisfaction and at no cost to RRV. e. Subsequent to the approval of detailed design stage layout plan, a 'Detailed Design Stage' Road Safety Audit (RSA) must be submitted to RRV for approval. The RSA must be undertaken by an independent VicRoads pre-qualified audit team and be conducted in accordance with AustRoads – Guide to Road Safety Part 6 – Road Safety Audit (2009). <p>The detailed engineering plans for road works must be amended to address any issue raised in the Road Safety Audit to the satisfaction of RRV and the Responsible Authority prior to the approval of the plans.</p>
<p>Planning Officer Comment: Nil</p>	

Table 3: External Referral to County Fire Authority (CFA)

<p>Response:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) CFA acting under a notice in accordance with the provisions of Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Act) has considered the
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	<p>included documentation and makes the following recommendations.</p> <p>2) The following are based on CFA's Guidelines for Renewable Energy Installations, which can be found on CFA's website at https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/about/reports-and-policies.</p> <p>Risk and Emergency Management</p> <p>3) The undertaking of a comprehensive risk management process, as per CFA's Guidelines for Renewable Energy Installations 2018.</p> <p>4) The development of an Emergency Information Book, provided in an Emergency Information Container at site entrances, as per CFA's Guidelines for Renewable Energy Installations 2018.</p> <p>5) If applicable to the installation, adherence to (DR) AS/NZS 5139-2017: Electrical installations – Safety of battery systems for use with power conversion equipment for any battery installations, and CFA's Guidelines for Renewable Energy Installations 2018.</p> <p>6) If applicable to the installation, adherence to dangerous goods storage and handling requirements, as per the dangerous goods regulatory framework and any relevant Australian Standards.</p> <p>Access</p> <p>7) A four (4) metre perimeter road should be constructed within the ten (10) metre perimeter Fire Break.</p> <p>8) Roads are to be of all-weather construction and capable of accommodating a vehicle of fifteen (15) tonnes.</p> <p>9) Constructed roads should be a minimum of four (4) metres in trafficable width with a four (4) metre vertical clearance for the width of the formed road surface.</p> <p>10) The average grade should be no more than 1 in 7 (14.4% or 8.1°) with a maximum of no more than 1 in 5 (20% or 11.3°) for no more than fifty (50) metres.</p> <p>11) Dips in the road should have no more than a 1 in 8 (12.5% or 7.1°) entry and exit angle.</p> <p>12) Incorporate passing bays at least every 600 metres which must be at least 20 metres long and have a minimum trafficable width of 6 metres. Where roads are less than 600 metres long, at least one passing bay is to be incorporated.</p> <p>13) Road networks must enable responding emergency services to access all areas of the facility.</p> <p>14) Two but preferably more access points to the site, to ensure safe and efficient access to and egress from areas that may be impacted or involved in fire. The number of access points is to be informed through a risk management process.</p> <p>Water Supply</p> <p>15) On-site water supply is an important part of the fire suppression system which will assist in the safe, effective and timely fire suppression activities of responding brigades. Static water storage tank installations are to comply with AS 2419.1 and the following conditions:</p> <p>16) The static water storage tank shall be of not less than 45,000 litres effective capacity.</p> <p>17) The static water storage tank(s) must be an above-ground water tank constructed of concrete or steel. The location and number of tanks should be determined as part of the site's risk management process and in consultation with a CFA delegated officer.</p>
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	<p>18) The static storage tanks shall be capable of being completely refilled automatically or manually within 24 hours.</p> <p>19) The hard-suction point shall be provided, with a 150mm full bore isolation valve equipped with a Storz connection, sized to comply with the required suction hydraulic performance. Adapters that may be required to match the connection are 125mm, 100mm, 90mm, 75mm, 65mm Storz tree adapters with a matching blank end cap to be provided.</p> <p>20) The hard-suction point shall be positioned within 4 metres to a hardstand area and provide clear access for fire personnel.</p> <p>21) An all-weather road access and hardstand shall be provided to the hard-suction point. The hardstand shall be maintained to a minimum of 15 tonne GVM, 8 metres long and 6 metres wide or to the satisfaction of the relevant fire authority.</p> <p>22) The road access and hardstand shall be kept clear at all times.</p> <p>23) The hard-suction point shall be protected from mechanical damage (i.e., bollards) where necessary.</p> <p>24) Where the access road has one entrance, a 10 metre radius-turning circle shall be provided at the tank.</p> <p>25) An external water level indicator is to be provided to the tank and be visible from the hardstand area.</p> <p>26) Signage shall be fixed to each tank.</p> <p>Fuel/Vegetation Management</p> <p>27) Grass is to be maintained at below 100mm in height during the declared Fire Danger Period.</p> <p>28) A fire break area of ten (10) metres width is to be maintained around the perimeter of the facilities, electricity compounds and substations. This area is to be of non-combustible mulch or mineral earth.</p> <p>29) The fire break area must commence from the boundary of the facility or from the vegetation screening (landscape buffer) inside the property boundary.</p> <p>30) The fire break must be constructed using either mineral earth or non-combustible mulch such as crushed rock.</p> <p>31) The fire break must be vegetation-free at all times.</p> <p>32) No obstructions are to be within fire break area (e.g., no stored materials of any kind).</p> <p>33) Adhere to restrictions and guidance during the Fire Danger Period, days of high fire danger and Total Fire Ban days (refer to www.cfa.vic.gov.au).</p> <p>34) All plant and heavy equipment is to carry at least a 9-litre water stored-pressure fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 3A, or firefighting equipment as a minimum when on-site during the Fire Danger Period.</p> <p>35) There is to be no long grass or deep leaf litter in areas where plant and heavy equipment will be working.</p> <p>Conditions Specific to Solar Installations</p> <p>36) Solar facilities are to have a 6 metre separation between solar panel banks/rows. Where this cannot be achieved, advice is to be sought from CFA's State Infrastructure and Dangerous Goods Unit (sidgu@cfa.vic.gov.au).</p> <p>37) Solar farm operators must provide specifications for safe operating conditions for temperature and the safety issues related to electricity generation, including isolation and shut-down procedures, if solar panels are involved in fire. This information must be provided within the content of the Emergency Information Book at the main entrance of the facility.</p>
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	<p>38) Solar arrays are to have grass or other vegetation maintained to 100mm under the array installation or mineral earth or non-combustible mulch such as stone.</p> <p>39) Where practicable, solar energy installations can be sited on grazed paddocks. In this case, vegetation is to be managed as per the requirements of this guideline, or as informed through a risk management process.</p>
<p>Planning Officer Comment: Nil</p>	

Table 4: External Referral to Goulburn Murray Water (GMW)

Response:	No response was received from GMW
<p>Planning Officer Comment: Nil</p>	

Table 5: External Referral to North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA)

Response:	<p>North Central CMA considers that insufficient information has been provided in support of the application and consequently is unable to adequately assess the proposed developments impacts.</p> <p>Further information is requested from the applicant and should include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A detailed flood risk assessment for the proposed development that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Defines the extent of inundation in the event of a 1% AEP flood event; b. Demonstrates that the proposed works do not alter the flood characteristics of the site to the detriment of surrounding properties.
<p>Planning Officer Comment: NCCMA requested that this information be provided as "further information" – the applicant has not provided this information as yet. Given the circumstances it has been decided that the flood information can be placed as a condition on the permit to be completed before construction begins. See condition 1.</p>	

2.6 Public notification

The application was advertised to surrounding neighbours via letter in the mail on the 23 September 2019. Three objections were received. The grounds of objections are as follows:

- loss of regional productive agricultural land
- negative impact on the visual amenity of the area
- additional fire hazard
- lack of weed management
- possible land use conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses e.g. dust causing issues between land owners and solar farm developers
- impacts on deep lead aquifer as a result of chemical leaching (weed management chemicals).

The applicant was provided a copy of the objections submitted (appendix 1) and responded by providing advice from suitably qualified experts to address the matters raised within the objections. These include:

- advice from Cadeema (Scientific consultants specialising in soil, water and the environment) (Appendix 2) regarding the ground water issues.
- a Weed Management Plan (appendix 3)
- a response from Chris Smith and Associates (applicant) (Appendix 4) to address matters relating to agricultural values, bushfire risk and visual impacts.

The following is advice provided on behalf of the applicant by Cliff Dillion of Cadeema to addresses concerns raised by objectors in relation to impacts on ground water:

- *“Construction of the Project is aimed to minimise any negative impacts on surface water movement and whilst some earthworks on the Site may be undertaken to enhance surface drainage, the overall aim is to allow surface water movement to follow existing and/or natural drainage pathways. In relation to impacts to subsurface water assets, the proposed construction and management activities for the Project will not differ substantially from the current broad acre, dryland, cropping and grazing agricultural land use. It is therefore not anticipated that the Project will exacerbate any negative impacts to groundwater by comparison with current land uses. Any construction or maintenance works associated with the Project will not be more invasive than current district activities such as foundations for sheds, road or track construction, shallow surface drainage works and the excavation and maintenance of farm dams”.*

The Weed Management Plan sets out a number of measures that ACEnergy (Derby Project Pty Ltd) will adhere to in order to manage and control weeds on the site. These measures include:

- ground cover management
- agronomic support and ongoing advice
- appropriate herbicide application (guided by an agronomist)
- construction management techniques
- slashing, possible grazing
- appropriately targeting significant weeds and ongoing monitoring of the site.

The response prepared by Chris Smith and Associates discusses issues around agricultural land values by stating the following:

- *“Whilst we acknowledge that all land holds an inherent agricultural value, this falls on a spectrum. The subject site is not within a recognised irrigation district and is not identified through planning policy as high-value agricultural land in the context of either Loddon Shire or Victoria, as per the below extract of the Loddon Planning Scheme (Clause 21.06):*

“Generally, the more productive soils of the Shire are located along the Loddon and Avoca riverine plains, between Lake Marmal and Boort and north to Leaghur, and south west of Pyramid Hill to Bridgewater”.

Further, there are only limited locations within Victoria that are suitable to support Solar Energy Facilities, with the subject land being one such location. Whilst there will be a loss of agricultural land, this loss is not considered to be unacceptable when weighed against the competing policies that promote renewable energy facilities. Additionally, the subject site is further supported as being a suitable location through Clause 21.02-4 of the Loddon Planning Scheme:

“The Shire of Loddon ... has high levels of solar exposure. It is also bisected by an electricity transmission line and a 66kV line. These factors mean that the Shire of Loddon is highly suitable for solar energy generation. This suitability has been supported by the development of a demonstration facility at Bridgewater.”.

The applicant has met with objector(s) regarding their concerns on the following dates:

- 14 October 2019
- 28 October 2019

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- 13 November 2019

3 ASSESSMENT

3.1.1 Planner assessment

The officer's recommendation is to grant a notice of decision to approve planning application 5469. This recommendation is based on the following considerations.

The application is proposing the use and development of the land for a renewable energy facility within the Farming Zone.

The Victorian State Governments Solar Energy Design Facilities: Design and Development Guideline (August 2019) (The Guidelines), provide guidance to applicants and council when considering appropriate locations for solar farm facilities. The Guidelines state that a solar energy facility should not lead to:

- the loss or interruption of supply to the immediate or broader electricity transmission network
- the loss of vegetation, habitat or species of environmental importance
- the loss of cultural heritage or landscape values of significance
- the loss of productive, state-significant agricultural land
- increased exposure of the area to fire, flood or other natural or environmental hazard.

The Guidelines also state that, ideally a solar energy facility should be located:

- on land with topographical conditions that avoids the need for unnecessary or excessive earthworks or changes to the natural landscape
- to avoid the loss of native vegetation and biodiversity and if losses cannot be avoided, they are minimised and can be offset
- close to the electricity grid network, to minimise the need for additional infrastructure and associated impacts
- a sufficient distance from existing urban areas or designated urban growth areas
- where there can be adequate space between facilities within an area to avoid cumulative impacts of built form concentration
- away from the floodplain of a major water course or wetland
- where it has ready access to main roads.

The application put forth to Council is consider to be consistent with the above mentioned matters, as the subject site is:

- generally flat with minimal earthworks required for construction
- is within close proximity to the 66KV transmission line
- has access to the Calder Highway and relies on minimal access of the local road network
- is not located with close proximity to major residential development or significant environmental landscape
- the application proposes minimal loss of native vegetation and has avoided removal where possible.

The subject site is proposed to be located on land which is considered to be of a good quality in the context of the Loddon Shire. Clause 22.05 of the scheme, Development in Rural Areas states that land which is currently irrigated or likely to be irrigated in the future should be avoided when considering solar farm developments. While it is technically possible to irrigate this site, the site is currently not serviced by irrigation infrastructure.

The impact on visual amenity as a result of the proposal has been a topic of ongoing discussion between the applicant and council's planning officer. The subject site is within close proximity to the Calder Highway and therefore will be exposed to a number of passing vehicles. In order to reduce visual impact the applicant has proposed a 10 metre wide visual landscape buffer and has agreed to implement initial screening which will be established before construction of the project begins (refer to condition 4).

The proposed land use is considered to be able to exist cohesively with surrounding agricultural uses with appropriate ongoing site management including but not limited to:

- weed management responsibilities under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 and the Weed Management Plan provided by the applicant
- implementation of standards and measures within the Country Fire Authorities for Renewable Energy Installations (included within permit conditions)
- implementation of the landscape plan (condition 4)
- being responsive to complaints or matters raised by neighbouring property owners (complaint and investigation record; refer to condition 17).

The proposal is supported by both local and state planning policy framework and is not considered to result in significant impacts to agriculture.

4 CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to be compatible within the Farming Zone and is unlikely to cause significant impacts on surrounding agricultural uses, or have long term impacts on the sites future ability to be used for agricultural purposes.

APPENDIX 1: Objections

79 Northlands Road,
Bridgewater 3516.

To Loddon Shire re planning Application 5/10 Attention Ms Alexandra Jefferies

I drove to Wedderburn on Friday the 4th October to read the submission Acenergy has put to Council. Having read it I have some concerns.

In it they state that they and the landholders have consulted with adjoining landholders. **This is not**

We are landholders directly opposite on the south of the highway and have not been approached by anyone or notified of any meeting in June.

Apparently that meeting was attended by the person with the Hall key and persons related by marriage to the applicants and the applicants themselves.

My concerns to this proposal are: **Weeds: 1 growth between the panels: Amurhwa, Capri Trip, Pattersons Curse, and Horehound**, these are all weeds that are in our area and need constant control. They are not necessarily listed as noxious weeds. It was suggested that sheep could graze between rows but the company says they will spray with Roundup. Over 30 years this would build up a hotspot of chemical resistance weeds and if the ground is bare would be quite a watershed.

This is good agricultural land and has been cropped about 70% of the time - not grazing land as stated. I think it is a shame to take good land out of production and is not good for our local businesses - fertilizer, farm supplies etc. And being an unmanned facility doesn't provide employment in the Shire.

I also have a concern **on the fire risk of such a large installation** just over the road both during construction and in operation.

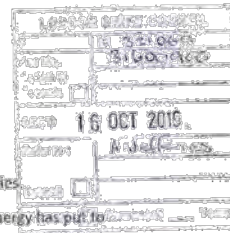
These are my main concerns. *objections*

Since our visit to the Shire Acenergy representatives visited us on the 10th October and have phoned today to arrange another visit on the 14th. However these are our concerns and need to be addressed.


Mervyn Broad.

Mervyn L Broad

ML + LY BROAD



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 OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 2019		District: <u>Shire of Loddon</u> Name: <u>A. J. Broom</u>
Objectors details		
Surname:	<u>BROOM</u>	Title: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mr <input type="radio"/> Mrs <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms <input type="radio"/> Cr
First name:	<u>RODNEY</u>	
Street:	<u>764 COLLINS ROAD</u>	
Town:	<u>BRIDGEWATER</u>	State: <u>VIC</u> Postcode: <u>3576</u>
Phone number:	<u>0427 373072</u>	
Email:	<u>broomstick@optusnet.com.au</u>	

The application being objected to	
Planning application number:	<u>5469</u> Proposal: <u>Derby Solar Farm</u>

Reasons for objecting to the application

Firstly, can I say that I don't want to be obstructive to this proposal but I believe there ^{are} several issues that council needs to consider.

Objection 1/ I am laying out irrigation near this proposed solar farm, which is a project already passed by council. Laser grading is a very dusty process which is likely to have an affect on the solar panels. I would request that council requires the developer and owners of this solar farm developed to supply to the council in writing a guarantee that there will not be any restrictions on the development of my irrigation because of the dust, and that I will not be liable for the cleaning of the solar panels. I am unable to afford to develop all this irrigation at present, so it will continue in stages over several years as I can afford to do so, so any guarantee would need to extend well into the future.


OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Objection 2/ There is a significant weed problem on the property which the proposed solar farm is to be built. The weeds known to me are amaranth and skeletal ^{weed}. There should be a condition placed on the developers that all **noxious weeds** be properly controlled if the project continues.

Objection 3/ I believe that these types of projects should, if possible, be **built on ground of low agricultural value**. The ground at Derby is of high agricultural value and I believe other, lower value country could have been found.

Objection 4/ The proposed solar farm is over the Loddon Deep Lead aquifer. If the operator of the site was using harsh chemicals and soil sterilants, I do have concern that there may be a risk of **leaching chemical into the aquifer**.

Please attach an additional sheet if more room is required

Loddon Shire Council
 41 High Street, Wedderburn, Victoria
 PO Box 21, Wedderburn, Vic 3618
 Telephone: (03) 5494 1200. Facsimile: (03) 5494 3003
 Email: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au
 Web: www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Page 2 of 2



Doc ID: 330960

To Whom it May Concern 8-10-19
 I, ST HARRISON of 174 Northlands Rd
 strongly object to a planning permit
 for solar farm installations on
 my unmediated next to me neighbors
 why I object is because **land**
values will go down it will
be not a good look in our district
Good agriculture land will be
not used any more for production
fire hazard and vegetation
growth is a big worry fires etc
Future Generations in future
is a major concern we have
a lovely farming district and
don't want it to be looking terrible
with solar panels hope you
 take this decision seriously
 Regards ST HARRISON

www.ruralbank.com.au

 Customer Service Centre
 1300 660 115

APPENDIX 2: Cadeema advice (groundwater)

Duncan Lewis

Subject: Derby Solar Project Groundwater

Hello Danny,

Please find hereunder our brief desktop assessment of the likely risks of adverse impacts to groundwater resulting from the Derby Solar Project.

Cadeema consist of a professional and appropriately qualified and experienced team covering fields of Agricultural Science, Hydrogeology, Environmental Science, Ecology and most aspects of soil and water earth sciences.

Cadeema are aware of the Derby Solar Project which is proposed by Derby Solar Project Pty. Ltd. (the 'Managers'), part of the AC Energy group. The Derby Solar Project, which is currently in the planning stages, consists of a 100 MW Solar Farm covering approximately 270 hectares (ha) (the 'Project') on land located approximately 27 km northwest of Bendigo in central Victoria. The land, located adjacent to the Calder Highway at Derby between Marong and Bridgewater, consists of two (2) separate rural dryland properties located at 26 Derby-Serpentine Road and 2830 Calder Highway, Derby. The 270 ha proposed for the Project is referred to herein as the 'Site'.

The Project will operate on the Site under a 30 year lease agreement. The Project is designed to co-locate with the existing landscape and with existing land uses, which are primarily dryland agricultural grazing and cropping, aiming to ensure a continuation of existing rural land uses on adjoining land and properties. The Project includes establishment of landscaping along Site boundaries, solar arrays with a separation distance of 6 metres, primary passageways typically 8 metres wide, a 10 metre perimeter firebreak (including a 4 metre wide perimeter road) and a 30 metre setback from all property boundaries. The Site will be surrounded by a secure, regularly maintained, steel and wire, 2 metre high security fence.

In relation to bushfire management, the Project will incorporate fire fuel and vegetation management including maintaining general vegetation groundcover (excluding perimeter landscaping) at below 100 mm in height during the declared Fire Danger Period, and the above mentioned 10 metre wide vegetation and combustible material free (at all times) firebreak.

The Managers of the Project will instigate groundcover vegetation management not dissimilar from what has historically been occurring on the current broadacre, dryland, cropping and grazing agricultural land. Land management on the Site aims to maintain a medium of vegetation, consisting of agricultural plant species, native plant species and some Tolerable Weed species across the site, the biomass of which is maintained below a specific tolerance, and which helps maintain soil stability and soil structure whilst utilising excess rainwater. The presence of this vegetation will help to resist undesirable weed infestations and will minimise the risk of bare surface soil exposure. The long term aim is to establish and maintain a healthy, self-sustaining, low maintenance, noxious/invasive weed free groundcover that does not create a fuel hazard. Vegetation across the Site will be managed with adaptive management strategies including a suite of integrated weed management strategies suitable to the Project and the Site. Strategies are likely to include herbicide applications, mechanical slashing and/or grazing by sheep.

As part of the construction process, the Site will be cleared and levelled with minimal disruption to topsoil, perimeter access tracks and access tracks between banks of panels will be constructed, and then the solar panels erected. Whilst solar array foundations are still being designed and finalised, it is anticipated that all mounting kits for the solar panels will be installed by pneumatic hammer only and will not include any concrete foundations. The depth of these foundations is anticipated to be a maximum of 1.5 metres.

The Project does not incorporate any groundwater bore installation or groundwater use. Construction of the Project is aimed to minimise any negative impacts on surface water movement and whilst some earthworks on the Site may be undertaken to enhance surface drainage, the overall aim is to allow surface water movement to follow existing and/or natural drainage pathways. In relation to impacts to subsurface water assets, the proposed construction and management activities for the Project will not differ substantially from the current broadacre, dryland, cropping and grazing agricultural land use. It is therefore not anticipated that the Project will exacerbate any negative impacts to groundwater by comparison with current land uses. Any construction or maintenance works associated with the Project will not be more invasive than current district activities such as foundations for sheds, road or track construction, shallow surface drainage works and the excavation and maintenance of farm dams.

The geology of the Site consists of Quaternary Alluvium yielding soils described as Red-Brown Earths which are typically duplex soils consisting of shallow loam surface soils overlying clay dominant subsoil layers extending to depth (3 metres). Upper strata consist of the Shepparton Formation which extends to depths of 40 to 60 metres and is

generally clay dominant but can contain meandering sporadic strips of more sand dominant material (shoestrings sands). Below this is the Calivil Formation which consists of various strata of clays and sands which in turn overlies coarser gravels of the Loddon Deep Lead which in turn overlies bedrock at a depth of approximately 130 metres.

The Site is in the Mid Loddon Groundwater Management Area which can have smaller volumes of variable quality groundwater extracted from shoestrings sands in the Shepparton Formation, small volumes of better quality groundwater extracted from the Calivil Formation sands and in a zone in the middle of the Loddon Valley where the Loddon Deep Lead occurs, higher volumes of better quality groundwater can be extracted. Hydrogeological investigations in the Loddon Valley indicate that the shallow aquifers (20 to 60m) in the Shepparton Formation are generally poorly connected with the deeper aquifers of the Calivil and Deep Lead aquifers. The Loddon Valley Deep Lead aquifer occurs at considerable depth (80 to 130 m). Groundwater extraction and monitoring bores in the district surrounding the Site typically range in depth from 20 metres to 60 metres with some deeper bores to 130 metres; there is one documented groundwater monitoring bore on the Site which extends to a depth of 40 metres.

Smaller volumes of groundwater are extracted for stock and domestic uses, this is typically extracted from the Shepparton Formation at depths between 20 and 60 metres. In addition, in this district occasionally bores yield sufficient water to facilitate irrigation, often from the Calivil and/or Deep Lead aquifers. In the vicinity of the Site, these aquifers are mostly confined and typically occur at depths greater than 20 metres below the natural surface. Significant recharge of these aquifers mostly occurs from sheet flooding across the Loddon Valley in wet years although some recharge from more elevated land on the Great Dividing Range to the south. The Site does not consist of any known groundwater recharge or discharge areas and it is not likely that significant recharge of local aquifers occurs on the Site.

Whilst not likely, there is the possibility that shallow (< 5 metres) shoestring sands occur on or in the vicinity of the Site and while not likely, any such sands have the potential to contain low volume but viable reserves of adequate quality groundwater, and theoretically, this groundwater could be extracted for beneficial use. However, we are not aware of any such systems on or in the vicinity of the Site. If in the unlikely event that this was the case, because the Project construction and management practices will not alter significantly from the existing land uses, and the proposed Project construction and maintenance design features are not likely to adversely impact groundwater or surface water, if these resources were present, they are not likely to be adversely impacted.

A considerable depth of low permeability, clay dominant, strata is likely to occur in the upper five metres of land constituting the Site. In addition, the Project does not propose to alter the soil profile at any depth greater than 1.5 metres. These facts, combined with the deep (20+ metres) semi-confined aquifers in the district, indicate that there is a very low risk of adverse impacts to aquifers from the Project. The Project does not intend to use chemicals or substances which have the potential to leach down through the clay dominant strata of the Shepparton Formation and potentially into groundwater aquifers. As detailed above, land management on the Site will not be that dissimilar to current and district land uses which are not known to contaminate groundwater. It is therefore not likely that any construction or ongoing management of the Project would have the potential to contaminate groundwater.

Based on the information contained herein, and based on our considerable experience with district geology, geomorphology, land use, hydrogeological conditions and groundwater resource utilisation, it can be concluded that the proposed Project is unlikely to adversely impact aquifers and/or groundwater utilisation on or adjoining the Site, or in the district.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me at any stage.

Regards,

Cliff Dillan

Agricultural Scientist, Environmental Scientist & Hydrogeologist

Cadeema

Soil Water & Environmental Consultants

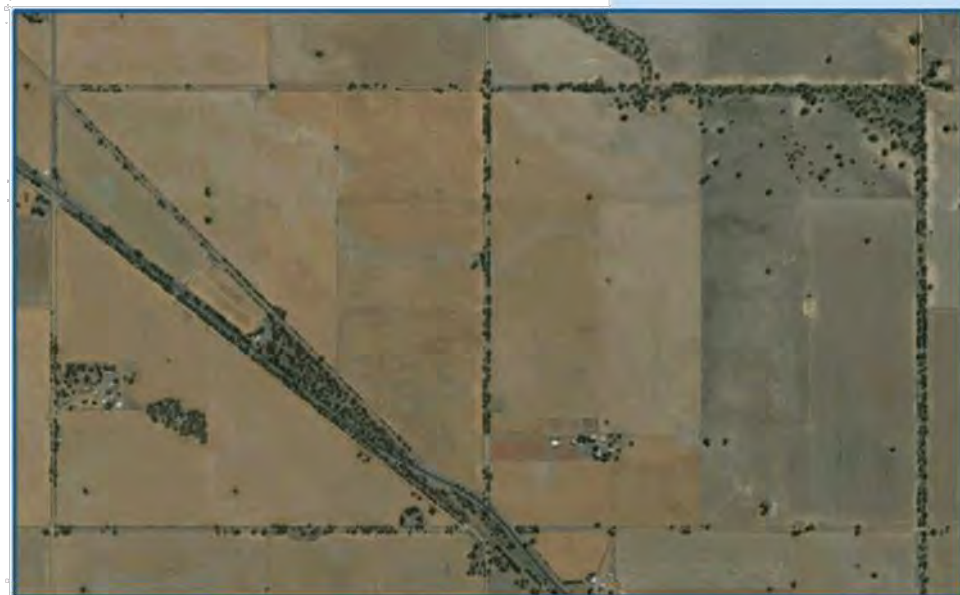
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APPENDIX 3: Weed Management Plan

Weed Management Plan

Derby Solar Farm - ACEnergy



Cadeema

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Prepared For:	ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Prepared By:	Cadeema – Agricultural, Soil, Water & Environmental Consultants, Shepparton, Victoria
Project Name:	Derby Solar Farm – Weed Management Plan
File Reference:	Weed Management Plan Report
Job Reference:	C-201
Project Duration:	Oct 2019

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Date	Issue	Author	Reviewed/Approved
1.0	19 Oct 2019	Draft 1	Cliff Dillon	Andrew Morcom
2.0	20 Oct 2019	Draft 2	Cliff Dillon	Andrew Morcom
3.0	23 Oct 2019	Final	Cliff Dillon	Andrew Morcom

CONSULTANT INFORMATION



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- A Victorian-based consultancy
- Specialise in soil & water management
- Fields of environmental, agricultural and geotechnical
- Undertake site investigations, pre-development assessments, trouble-shooting, on-going monitoring, development planning and implementation management

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Solar Farm

Derby Solar Project Pty. Ltd. (the **Managers**), part of the AEC Energy group, propose to implement the Derby Solar Project which consists of a 100 MW Solar Farm covering approximately 270 hectares (ha) (the **Project**) on land located approximately 27 km northwest of Bendigo in central Victoria. The land located adjacent to the Calder Highway at Derby between Marong and Bridgewater consists of two (2) separate rural dryland properties located at 26 Derby-Serpentine Road and 2830 Calder Highway, Derby. The 270 ha proposed for the Project will be referred to herein as the **Site**. Further details of the Project are provided elsewhere.

1.2 Background

The Project will operate on the Site under a 30 year lease agreement. The Project is designed to co-exist with the existing landscape and with existing land uses, which are primarily dryland agricultural grazing and cropping, aiming to ensure a continuation of existing rural land uses on adjoining land and properties. The Project includes establishment of three (3) rows of landscaping, of at least 2 metres in height, along all boundaries in accordance with the proposed Landscaping Plan which will be endorsed by Council prior to Project implementation. Landscaping species will be non-invasive, indigenous species which are compatible with local Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs). The Project will include solar arrays with a separation distance of 6 metres, primary passageways typically 8 metres wide, a 10 metre perimeter firebreak (including a 4 metre wide perimeter road) and a 30 metre setback from all property boundaries. The Site will be surrounded by a secure, regularly maintained, steel and wire, 1.8 metre high security fence.

In relation to Bushfire Management, the Project will incorporate fire-fuel and vegetation management, including maintaining general vegetation groundcover (excluding perimeter landscaping) at below 100 mm in height during the declared Fire Danger Period, and the above mentioned 10 metre wide vegetation and combustible material free (at all times) firebreak. The Site will have the ability to be grazed by sheep if and when required.

1.3 The Weed Management Plan (WMP)

This document comprises a Weed Management Plan for the construction and ongoing operation of the Project. The aim of the WMP is to ensure ongoing appropriate weed control and management during construction and operation of the Project to ensure weed control on site and to minimise the risk of offsite impacts. Implementation and operation of the Project has the potential to introduce or transfer weeds into or across the Site and/or exacerbate existing weed problems. The WMP will ensure regulatory obligations in relation to weeds are adhered to, will minimise the risk of spreading existing weeds and will minimise the risk of introducing new weed species to the Site. The aim of the WMP is to identify measures to control and/or eradicate problem weeds and to provide a framework for the ongoing maintenance management of vegetation on site in relation to weeds, including monitoring, evaluation and review procedures. The WMP provides the Managers, contractors and site personnel with

constructive and objective guides to manage weeds on the Site thereby ensuring weeds do not become a problem on site or on adjoining land.

2 WEED MANAGEMENT

2.1 Weeds

Whilst a general definition of a weed is a plant growing in an inappropriate place, for the purpose of this WMP the term weed covers Declared Noxious Weeds, Weeds of National Significance (WONS), Environmental Weeds and Agricultural Weeds.

Declared Noxious Weeds in Victoria are plants that have been proclaimed under the *Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act 1934*. These are typically weeds which can cause serious environmental damage and negative economic impacts. They can also present risks to human health. The Act defines four categories of noxious weeds:

- State Prohibited Weeds
- Regionally Prohibited Weeds
- Regionally Controlled Weeds
- Restricted Weeds

Weeds under this category are listed on the Agriculture Victoria website (<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au>).

Weeds of National Significance (WONS) have been nominated and agreed on by Australian governments and often include new and emerging weeds. Weeds under this category are listed on the Government Department of Environment and Energy website (<http://www.environment.gov.au>).

Agricultural Weeds are plants that impact on the productivity or viability of crops, pasture or livestock.

Environmental Weeds are invasive plants that have an impact on other areas by competing for resources. They are often garden escapees.

The Site has been utilised for agricultural dryland cropping and grazing for an extended period. To enable successful and viable agricultural production, it is likely that weed control has been a significant aspect of historical management across the Site. However, while significant infestations of noxious weeds are not likely to be prevalent on the Site, it is likely that the site contains distinct weeds typical of agricultural land in the region. Of particular concern on agricultural land in this district is difficult to control weeds which have the potential to rapidly spread and/or colonise land and compete with beneficial agricultural crops and pastures. Some of these weeds include Amoleckia, Skeleton Weed, Patterson's Curse, Cape Tulip, Horehound, Onion Grass and Silver Leaf Nightshade.

Good weed management is about overall good land management which typically includes strategies which resist further invasion of weeds, reduces the ability of weeds to establish, reduces adverse impacts on site or to neighbouring properties and strategically addresses a reduction in weed density and distribution where practical. In relation to weeds, prevention is always better than cure, as it is far more cost effective to prevent weed problems than to control established weeds.

2.2 Construction

It will be important to ensure good weed seed hygiene during the construction phase of the Project. There will be a comprehensive weed eradication program implemented across the Site prior to construction which will predominantly be broad-acre herbicide application. In addition, inspection and control of any noxious, invasive or problem weeds will also be undertaken.

During the construction phase, diligent care will be taken to minimise the risk of importing and/or spreading weed seeds onto or across the Site. Management and construction contractors will implement personal, machinery and equipment hygiene responsibilities ensuring appropriate inspection and clean-down procedures are implemented where required. Used hygiene responsibilities are detailed on the Victorian Government Agriculture Victoria website (<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/>).

All laydown sites for excavated spoil, imported soil material, equipment and construction materials will be weed free or treated for weeds prior to use. The risk of new weed infestations or of spreading weeds will be minimised by limiting soil disturbance, ensuring importation of weed free soil, sand or gravel material if required, ensuring sediment control materials are weed free, confining vehicle and machinery movement to designated areas only where possible, ensuring regular cleaning of vehicles, machinery and equipment prior to access, promptly acknowledging the presence of any noxious weeds or weed seeds and by ensuring regular monitoring and implementation of appropriate actions if and where problem weeds are identified. If weed infested material (soil, mulch, gravel etc.) is identified, this should not be utilised on the Site.

2.3 Groundcover

Whilst the Site is predominantly flat with only subtle undulations and/or roadside drains to facilitate surface drainage, and is not in the vicinity of sensitive receiving waters, it is still considered prudent to maintain some vegetation groundcover to prevent soil structural decline, erosion and/or sediment transportation in surface water. Whilst it is acknowledged that managing the groundcover is important from a fuel load perspective in relation to bushfire risk, excessive areas denuded of any vegetative cover will be avoided.

As detailed earlier, prior to construction, weeds will be controlled with a comprehensive weed eradication program implemented across the Site, vegetation will then be slashed/mown, the site will be cleared and levelled with minimal disruption to topsoil, perimeter access tracks and access tracks between banks of panels will be constructed, and then the solar panels erected. Whilst solar array foundations are still being designed and finalised, it is anticipated that all mounting kits for the solar panels will be installed by pneumatic hammer only and will not include any concrete foundations. This will limit soil disturbance and minimise mixing of subsoil with topsoil layers helping ensure soil remains viable to support the proposed groundcover vegetation. In addition, this will also help ensure an existing seed bank of vegetation remains viable in topsoil after construction across the Site.

It is not proposed to sow or establish any specific plant species on the Site. After construction and with the absence of the historical practices of grazing and ploughing, passive natural revegetation will occur. Experience indicates that this vegetation is likely to consist of volunteer introduced agricultural grazing species (Annual Ryegrass, Sub-clover etc.), volunteer native grasses and/or groundcovers (Waltby

Grass, Roxy Heath Myrtle etc.) Tolerable Weeds (distinct weeds that don't present a problem) (Wild Date, Winter Grass etc.) and potentially also Undesirable Weeds (invasive or noxious problem weeds) (Pattersons Curse, Bathurst Bur etc.). Ongoing Site maintenance will aim to maintain a modicum of vegetation consisting of agricultural plant species, native plant species and some Tolerable Weed species across the site which, in relation to bushfire management, is maintained at or below 100 mm in height during the declared Fire Danger Period. The long term aim is to establish and maintain a healthy, self-sustaining, low maintenance, noxious/invasive weed free groundcover that does not create a fuel hazard.

2.4 Groundcover Management

The Project solar panel spacing will allow for access between panels with an All Terrain vehicle (ATV) or tractor providing for herbicide application or mechanical slashing of vegetation. The general groundcover vegetation across the Site will predominantly be managed with herbicide application with the options of mechanical slashing or strategic crash grazing (with sheep) only utilised if and when required. The frequency, duration and intensity of these practices will be adapted to suit and accommodate vegetation growth and the prevailing seasonal conditions at the time. These practices will be dictated predominantly by rainfall, but also by the species present, natural inherent soil variations, exposure to sunlight and general climatic conditions.

2.5 Agronomic Support

Management intend to engage the support of a suitably qualified and experienced local agronomist to regularly provide advice on weed control and vegetation management. There are a range of local agronomy services available in the district and providing agronomic products are purchased through the agronomy business, a lot of these services do not cost. To take advantage of local knowledge and to ensure regular and timely inspection/advice, it will be critical to ensure local technical agronomic input into weed and vegetation management for the Project. The agronomist will be able to provide critical information on weed control, vegetation management, herbicide products, herbicide use, plant growth stages and on the most practical and applicable methods of weed management. The agronomist will also be consulted on other weed and vegetation control options such as slashing and/or grazing to ensure an adaptive and responsive, integrated weed management program.

2.6 Herbicide Application

Management propose to utilise tractor and trailing spray unit with boom and/or pre mounted spray unit with boom to apply herbicides for the majority of weed, vegetation and groundcover management on the Site. Appropriately accredited, qualified and experienced spray contractors operate throughout the district and Management intend to utilise these services. Management will ensure that all use of herbicides/chemicals is conducted in accordance with the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemical Code Act 1994. Personnel applying herbicides will have a Chemical Users Permit (accredited Chem Cert or equivalent) and be appropriately trained and experienced. All appropriate Occupational Health and

Safety (OH&S) procedures will be adhered to in relation to herbicide use, herbicide storage and spray unit/vehicular use. Any herbicide applications will consider the risk of adverse environmental impact and measures will be implemented to minimise this risk, of particular importance, will be surface water contamination and/or run-off. In addition, any herbicide applications will take into consideration exposing bare soil and the potential for erosion and sediment movement off-site. Written records will be kept of all herbicide applications recording what chemical was applied, at what rates, targeting which weeds, and in what meteorological conditions.

2.7. Herbicides

With the correct agronomic advice and strategic herbicide application (as detailed above), it will be possible to maintain the desired mix of plant species across the site. At specific times of the year depending on plant species present and on plant growth stages, it will typically be possible to apply selective herbicides which will target particular weeds and/or non-desirable species. This strategy will enable an acceptable composition to be retained across the site consisting of the aforementioned agricultural plant species, native plant species and some Tolerable Weed species. This process will allow for the control of undesirable weed species including any invasive or noxious problem weeds. Groundcover and vegetation management can be strategically managed by using this strategy to target specific plant species which will help maintain the fire fuel load for bushfire management. If and when groundcover growth becomes excessive, the aforementioned options of mechanical slashing or strategic crash grazing (with sheep) may also be utilised.

2.8. Herbicide Resistance

In consultation with the above-mentioned professional agronomist, Management will minimise the risk of the development of herbicide resistance by ensuring weed and groundcover vegetation management practices limit resistance risk. Local agronomists and the Government Department Agriculture (Victoria) regularly receive and disseminate information in relation to herbicide resistance to help minimise resistance development.

2.9. Slashing

As detailed earlier, the Site has the ability to be mechanically slashed with tractor or ATV mounted or trailing equipment and/or self-propelled mowers/slashes. There is sufficient room between the solar panel supports to provide access for such vehicles providing they are not excessive in size. Mechanical slashing is only likely to be required when herbicide application options are exhausted and where this strategy is utilised to help control weeds and/or weed seed set. This option may also be utilised to reduce fuel loadings for bushfire risk management. The aforementioned professional agronomic support will be sought to determine compatibility with other weed and vegetation management strategies.

2.10 Grazing

Whilst weed and groundcover vegetation management will predominantly be by herbicides, the Site will have the ability to be grazed by sheep and 'crash' grazing and/or 'cell' grazing may be utilised as a vegetation control option if and when required. However, this will only occur when herbicides or mechanical clearing options are exhausted, is likely to be only short-term, is only likely when seasonal conditions result in excessive vegetation growth, and is only likely to occur once a year (typically in spring) in years of exceptional seasonal conditions which promote excessive vegetation growth. To facilitate grazing, either temporary or permanent internal fencing will allow for stock movement and rotational grazing, and a suitable temporary stock water supply will be provided. It is anticipated that portable yards and a portable loading ramp and/or existing facilities on the Leasees adjoining land can be utilised for stock handling. To implement grazing, Management will source and liaise with local landholders who graze sheep. Professional agronomic support will be sought to determine compatibility with other weed and vegetation management strategies. Where any grazing is to occur, soil moisture conditions will be taken into consideration to minimise the risk of 'clogging'. Any stock brought onto the Site will come off pastures that are free of problem, noxious or invasive weed species.

2.11 Decommission

The relevant weed management features of this WMP will be incorporated into the Project site rehabilitation / decommissioning plan for it and when the site is to revert back to agricultural use.

2.12 Significant Weeds

Occasionally weeds will be identified which are noxious, invasive and/or a problem weed. In these cases, targeted eradication will be promptly undertaken. Small and/or intense infestations will typically be eradicated with targeted herbicide applications from an appropriate handgun. Regular follow-up inspections and/or maintenance herbicide applications will then be undertaken. Some of these weeds are likely to include Aminokaia, Skeleton Weed, Patterson's Curse, Cape Tulp, Morehound, Onion Grass, and Silver Leaf Nightshade. There are a range of herbicide options for controlling these types of weeds, however, it is critical to target weeds at a particular growth stage when using herbicides. In addition, a range of integrated weed management practices and strategy are likely to be required to gain effective control and/or eradication (see hereunder).

2.13 Road side, boundary, fence line and tree line maintenance

The presence of the aforementioned Site fencing, landscaping and fire breaks will help minimise weed invasion from surrounding land. Weeds and vegetation in these boundary zones will be carefully monitored, managed and controlled. Regular weed control will occur in the landscaping zone in the initial 1 to 2 years to permit acceptable landscape vegetation establishment and growth. Once established, these landscaping zones will help to trap weed seeds from surrounding land and will help to shade out weeds in the zone. However, management will ensure these zones are regularly monitored

for weeds. On the Site, weed and vegetation colonisation around Project infrastructure, laneways and open spaces will also be carefully and regularly managed. To minimise fire risk, all vegetation will be eradicated from the aforementioned 10 metre wide firebreak zone, this is likely to be best maintained with regular herbicide applications. It is likely that agronomic advice will be to eradicate most vegetation from around such infrastructure to prevent weed spread or establishment.

2.14 Monitoring

It will be important to monitor the composition, growth stage and potential for further growth of groundcover across all of the Site continuously. Management will ensure employment or engagement of appropriately qualified and experienced personnel, contractors or staff to undertake this task and this will include input and advice from the aforementioned professional local agronomist. Whilst monitoring will be ongoing, documentation, consultation with the local agronomist and planning for weed management strategies will be undertaken on a monthly basis. This monitoring process will be important from a fire fuel load perspective, but will also be important to monitor the presence, species and density of any weeds and to then determine whether they are Tolerable Weeds or species which need controlling and/or eradicating. This monitoring should also consider the overall health of the groundcover vegetation and look for signs of adverse impacts such as erosion, waterlogging or salinity. Information from this regular monitoring should be documented and the results assessed in conjunction with the local agronomist.

2.15 Ongoing Maintenance

Weed and groundcover vegetation management is typically governed by annual growth patterns dictated by seasonal processes. Vegetation growth is typically predictable and plant stages of germination, emergence, flowering, seeds set and decidation are also predictable. This predictable seasonal process allows for appropriate planning to ensure management strategies are implemented in a timely manner. These cycles pre-empt a regular program of inspections with the local agronomist when the Site and problem areas on the Site can be inspected and any problem weed is identified. It is only once a problem weed has been identified, along with its growth stage and current climatic conditions, that a strategy for control and/or eradication can then be developed. Each particular weed species and the location and circumstances in which the weed occurs will dictate what the most appropriate management strategies are for that particular weed.

Summer - Several weeks after significant summer rainfall events, the Site should be inspected with the local agronomist to identify germination of summer weeds. Depending on the time of year, the weeds present and their growth stage, appropriate management strategies can then be developed.

Autumn - In the autumn period, after the traditional autumn break has occurred and/or days shorten and the weather becomes cooler, winter weeds typically germinate. At this time the Site should be inspected with the local agronomist to identify germinated winter weeds and this would typically occur in May. Autumn weed control can be an effective method of controlling annual winter weeds. Again, depending on the time of year, the weeds present and their growth stage, different management strategies will be developed for different circumstances.

Winter - Whilst mid-winter is not typically an optimum time for weed control, and inspection of the Site with the local agronomist should occur in early winter to identify germinated winter weeds which may need to be controlled in early growth stages. Another Site inspection with the local agronomist should occur in late winter to follow-up on the effectiveness of weed control strategies implemented earlier on in the year. Depending on current climatic conditions, soil moisture levels, the weeds present and their growth stage, various management strategies may be recommended by the agronomist.

Spring - An inspection of the Site with the local agronomist should occur in early spring to identify annual weeds approaching flowering and seed set. Depending on the weed species present, various weed management strategies can then be developed. These can be implemented whilst weeds are still actively growing before the onset of drying conditions in late spring/early summer. Spring is also a time of rapid growth of annual plant species and depending on seasonal conditions, biomass reduction strategies may need to be implemented.

It will be critical to liaise with the local agronomist continuously throughout the year as these professionals are familiar with current climatic and seasonal conditions, the weed species likely to be a problem in particular circumstances, and will have access to the latest knowledge and technology for integrated weed management. It is only after liaising with the local agronomist who will assess the area specific circumstances and conditions, and the species and growth stages of weeds present, that weed and situation specific management strategies can be developed.

Ongoing experience gained through weed and groundcover vegetation management will help inform future weed and vegetation management strategies. Experience will rapidly be gained with local conditions (soils, vegetation, climate, solar panel influences) and how these influence plant composition. This experience will also inform the viability of a range of weed control and vegetation management options and strategies. By ensuring an adaptive management strategy such as this, a suite of integrated weed management strategies suitable to the Project and the Site can be combined to ensure the long-term management of weeds and vegetation on the Site.

Ongoing weed and vegetation maintenance should be practical, viable and flexible. Management of the Project will help ensure this by engaging a range of professional personnel, contractors and staff who utilise strategies including:

- Understanding soil variation across the Site
- Understanding surface water characteristics of the Site
- Understanding and targeting specific plant species life cycles
- Regularly undertaking Site monitoring
- Minimising the risk of weed germination, establishment and reproduction
- Minimising the risk of weed infestation from off-site
- Maintaining a vegetation cover of desirable species
- Regularly seeking agronomic advice to implement a range of integrated weed and vegetation management strategies predominantly focusing on herbicide applications but also including other management options
- Regularly building up local Site knowledge and regularly improving weed and vegetation management strategies

As detailed earlier, the aim is to maintain a modicum of vegetation consisting of agricultural plant species, native plant species and some Tolerable Weed species across the site, the biomass of which is maintained below a specific tolerance, and which helps maintain soil stability and soil structure whilst utilising excess rainwater. The presence of this vegetation will help to resist weed infestations due to competition and/or minimisation of establishment sites (such as bare ground). The long term aim is to establish and maintain a healthy, self-sustaining, low maintenance, noxious/invasive weed free groundcover that does not create a fuel hazard.

3 CONCLUSIONS

Adopting and implementing this WMP will minimise the risk of establishment or spread of problem weeds and will help ensure the construction and operation of the Project complies with all regulatory authority requirements in relation to weeds. Ongoing Site monitoring and maintenance will aim to maintain a modicum of vegetation consisting of agricultural plant species, native plant species and some Tolerable Weed species across the site which, in relation to bushfire management, is maintained at or below 1000 mm in height during the declared Fire Danger Period. By implementing the strategies and tasks detailed in this WMP, Management will be able to establish and maintain a healthy, self-sustaining, low maintenance, noxious/invasive weed free groundcover that does not create a fuel hazard. The WMP will help ensure successful management and maintenance of appropriate groundcover that minimises management requirements and environmental risks, and minimises adverse impacts from weeds both on and adjoining the Site.

APPENDIX 4: Response from Chris Smith & Associates



24th October 2019
Our Ref: 19081

Alexandra Jefferies
Planning Department
Loddon Shire Council

Via e-mail: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au

Dear Alexandra,

Response to Objections Planning Application 5469

100MW Solar Energy Facility at Derby

In relation to the abovementioned planning application, it is our understanding that Loddon Shire has received three (3) separate objections to the proposed Solar Energy Facility, which we now seek to address.

In response to these objections, we ask that Council circulate the written correspondence for the consideration and benefit of the objectors. In reviewing the objections, we have summarised the objectors' concerns as follows:

- Agricultural value of the land
- Bushfire risk
- Visual impacts
- Impact on the water table – particularly the Loddon Deep Lead Aquifer
- Weed Management

The concerns are now addressed under the respective headings:

Agricultural Considerations

We note that there were some concerns over the claims in our application documentation that the site is not considered to be 'high-value' agricultural land. Whilst we acknowledge that all land holds an inherent agricultural value, this falls on a spectrum. The subject site is not within a recognised irrigation district and is not identified through planning policy as high-value agricultural land in the context of either Loddon Shire or Victoria, as per the below extract of the Loddon Planning Scheme (Clause 21.06):

Generally, the more productive soils of the Shire are located along the Loddon and Avoca riverine plains, between Lake Marmal and Boort and north to Leaghur, and south west of Pyramid Hill to Bridgewater.

Further, there are only limited locations within Victoria that are suitable to support Solar Energy Facilities, with the subject land being one such location. Whilst there will be a loss of agricultural land, this loss is not considered to be unacceptable when weighed against the competing policies that promote renewable energy facilities. Additionally, the subject site is further supported as being a suitable location through Clause 21.02-4 of the Loddon Planning Scheme:

The Shire of Loddon has high levels of solar exposure. It is also bisected by an electricity transmission line and a 66kV line. These factors mean that the Shire of Loddon is highly suitable for solar energy generation. This suitability has been supported by the development of a demonstration facility at Bridgewater.



Bushfire Impacts

Firstly, it is worth noting that the CFA have consented to the proposal subject to standard conditions, which are largely addressed below.

The facility has been designed in accordance with the CFA's guidelines for renewable energy facilities. The general provisions of these guidelines mandate clear internal passage for firefighting vehicles within the site, as well as provision of water supply, maintaining fire breaks and ensuring that vegetation is kept to a safe level.

As a result, the use of the site for a solar energy facility will have a reduced bushfire risk when compared to the existing conditions – due to the removal of the risk of grass fire. All vegetation on the site will be kept below 100mm at all times.

From a facility operation perspective, the site is subject to regular maintenance work ensuring vegetation is removed under the arrays and within the 10-metre-wide perimeter around the entire facility.

The Solar Energy Facility itself is considered to be a relatively low fire hazard area, nevertheless, in considering the two possible fire events that may occur we note the following:

1. **Fire occurs outside the facility:** The surrounding properties are typically farming properties where vegetation is continuously monitored and largely cleared. There is very limited undulation that would exacerbate fire risk. The bushfire risk in the area is therefore low. The site itself would contain inflammable equipment and would not contribute to the spread of the fire.
2. **Fire occurs within the facility:** The possibility of this scenario is extremely rare, given that all electrical equipment complies with Australian standards and will be installed by licensed electrical contractors. In the event of an electrical fault, such as cable fault, it would only occur in the major electrical equipment area where equipment is designed to be suitably insulated, whilst crushed rock will be laid around these areas of interest.

Visual impacts

The site has been designed with screening along all active interfaces. The site's visibility will be obscured by three (3) rows of indigenous plants that will prevent the visibility of the site from all abutting roads.

The arrays themselves are no more than 3.5-metres-in-height at the highest point and will be substantially shorter than much of the already established vegetation within the surrounding Derby area.

Impact on the water table – particularly the Loddon Deep Lead Aquifer

Professional hydrogeological advice was sought in response to concerns over the impact on the Loddon Deep Lead Aquifer and the potential impacts on groundwater, which is quoted verbatim below (bolded sentences added for emphasis):

The Project does not incorporate any groundwater bore installation or groundwater use. Construction of the Project is aimed to minimise any negative impacts on surface water movement and whilst some earthworks on the Site may be undertaken to enhance surface

Chris Smith

drainage, the overall aim is to allow surface water movement to follow existing and/or natural drainage pathways.

In relation to impacts to subsurface water assets, the proposed construction and management activities for the Project will not differ substantially from the current broadacre, dryland, cropping and grazing agricultural land use. It is therefore not anticipated that the Project will exacerbate any negative impacts to groundwater by comparison with current land uses. Any construction or maintenance works associated with the Project will not be more invasive than current district activities such as foundations for sheds, road or track construction, shallow surface drainage works and the excavation and maintenance of farm dams.

The full extract from Cadeema Pty. Ltd. is attached with this correspondence to provide clarity and greater context.

Weed Management

To provide a detailed overview of the proposed weed management practices, please see the attached Weed Management Plan (WMP) prepared by Cadeema on behalf of ACEnergy.

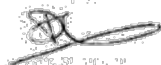
This WMP outlines the management practices of the facility – both during construction and once the site is operational.

It is in the ACEnergy's best interests, as the site operator, to ensure that the site remains clear of weeds – as unmanaged weeds will potentially impact upon the operation of the site, as well as present a potential bushfire risk to the site and the surrounding area as noted in the above section of bushfire risk.

To this end, a seasonal maintenance plan has been prepared to ensure ongoing vigilance and ensure that outbreaks can be prevented.

If you require any further information in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Yours sincerely,



Duncan Lowfs

Town Planner

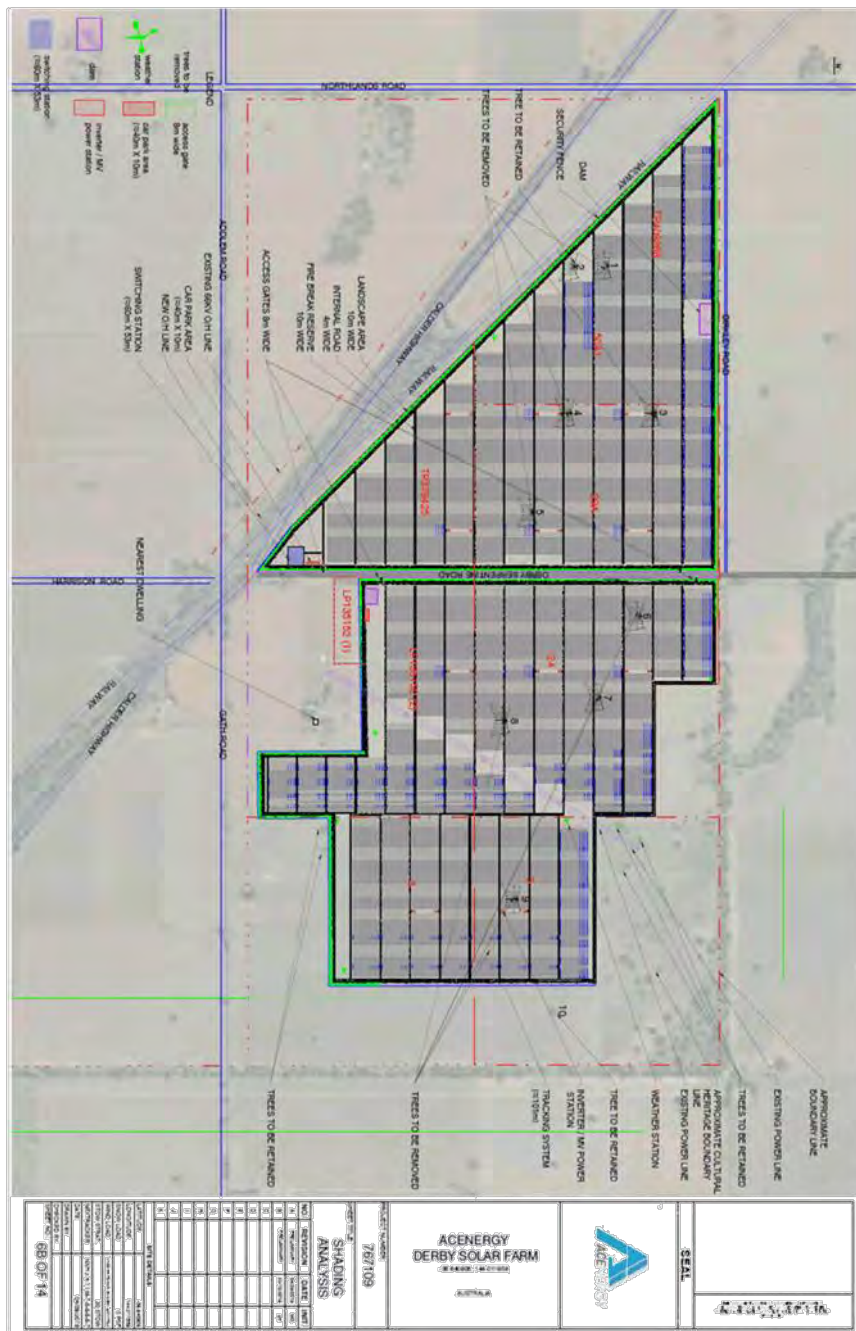
duncan.lowfs@csnwith.com.au

Direct: (03) 5820 7728

eric_26 listed

Doc No. 16081_L_Cou_Response To RF_090819

APPENDIX 5: Development Plan



9.2 DELIVERY OF FUNDED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES POLICY

File Number: 12/07/001
Author: Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing
Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Attachments: 1. Delivery of Funded Community Care Services Policy

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Delivery of Funded Community Care Services Policy.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The revised Delivery of Funded Community Care Services Policy was provided to the November 2019 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

The Home and Community Care Services Policy was first adopted in July 2012 and was due for review in 2018. A number of changes have been made to the original policy in relation to the introduction of mandatory accreditation. At the time the previous policy was adopted, Council was required to work under the Commonwealth Home Care Standards.

A new set of Standards has been developed for services delivering the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and Home and Community Care for Program Younger People (HACCPYP). The Aged Care Quality Standards came into effect on 1 July 2019 and incorporate both programs.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The following amendments have been made to the previous policy:

- The policy title and scope has been amended to reflect Council's role as a funded provider of the service.
- Reference to the delivery of assessment has been removed from the policy. The previous policy contained assessment, as at that time that policy was adopted there was no separation between the provision of assessment and other community care services. There is now a clear delineation of duties relating to assessment and service delivery, with structure being put in place that keeps the two functions separate (even when being delivered by the same provider). As this new policy relates to the provision of funded community care services, and assessment technically no longer sits within this activity it has been removed.
- The new Aged Care Quality Standards have been referenced.

The Senior Citizens section remains unchanged except for the addition requiring the clubs maintain incorporation and operate within the parameters of the association rules.

COST/BENEFITS

The continuation of this policy, in its amended form ensures that the funded community care services delivered by Council are delivered in accordance with the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

RISK ANALYSIS

Council is required to undergo accreditation based on the Aged Care Quality Standards; alignment with this policy will minimise the risk associated with failing to meet accreditation standards.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

This policy was reviewed by the Community Care team and moved through the various stages of internal review in accordance with the Strategic Document Policy and Procedure Framework.



DELIVERY OF FUNDED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES POLICY

DOCUMENT TYPE:	Council policy
DOCUMENT STATUS:	Draft
POLICY OWNER POSITION:	Manager Community Wellbeing
INTERNAL COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT:	Not applicable
APPROVED BY:	Council
DATE ADOPTED:	Click here to enter date of approval
VERSION NUMBER:	3
REVIEW DATE:	Click here to enter a date.
DATE RESCINDED:	Click here to enter a date.
RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES:	Commonwealth Aged Care Quality Standards Department of Health and Human services Active Service Model
RELATED LEGISLATION:	Commonwealth Aged Care Act 1997 Commonwealth Home & Community Care Act 1985 Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Health Records Act 2001 Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:	

Signed by Chief Executive Officer

FILE LOCATION: K:\EXECUTIVE/policies and procedures\Policies - adopted PDF and Word\POL Home and Community Care Services policy v2.docx

Policy documents are amended from time to time, therefore you should not rely on a printed copy being the current version. Please consult the policies on the Loddon Shire website (Council Policies) or Intranet (Organisational Policies) to ensure that the version you are using is up to date.

This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.



DELIVERY OF FUNDED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES POLICY

1 PURPOSE

This policy establishes a framework for delivery of community care services by Loddon Shire Council through the federal government funded Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and the state government funded Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACCPYP).

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to Council staff providing services and relevant community members applying for or receiving services.

This policy applies for the duration Council is in receipt of funding to deliver the CHSP and HACCPYP programs.

3 POLICY

Council has a commitment through CHSP and HACCPYP programs to provide basic maintenance and support services which are cost effective and meet the needs of individuals so they can remain in their own homes as long as possible. Services are defined as those essential to a person's continuing independence and are provided through:

- General home care
- Respite care
- Personal care
- Home and property maintenance
- Planned activity group
- Meals on wheels
- Senior citizens

In accordance with the Commonwealth Aged Care Act 1997 and Home and Community Care Act 1985, Council will:

- ensure that consumers' rights are protected and that they have sufficient information to understand their rights and make informed choices
- focus on provision of quality services and continual service improvement
- work positively and cooperatively with other local service providers to ensure well planned and coordinated responses for consumers
- actively work to identify and address potential risks, to ensure the safety of consumers, staff and the organisation
- support consumers to be more independent at home and in the community, thereby enhancing their quality of life and preventing inappropriate admission to long term residential care
- provide flexible, timely services that respond to the needs of the consumer
- charge fees for services based on the current Victorian HACCPYP Fees Policy fee schedule and the Commonwealth Client Contribution Framework (Chapter 5 of CHSP Program Manual)
- ensure that all Council staff have valid National Police Checks and, where applicable, Working with Children Checks before attending consumer's homes
- ensure consumers (and/or their representatives) have access to information about:
 - making complaints
 - advocacy processes



DELIVERY OF FUNDED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES POLICY

- their privacy and confidentiality, including the collection, use and disclosure of personal information
- Charter of Aged Care Rights
- ensure that complaints and consumer feedback are dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution
- ensure each consumer's (and/or their representative's) choice of advocate is respected and will, if required, assist consumers (and/or their representatives) to access an advocate
- manage human resources to ensure that adequate numbers of appropriately skilled and trained staff/volunteers are available for the appropriate delivery of care and services to consumers.

3.1 Accreditation

Council has an obligation to deliver the CHSP and HACCPYP programs in accordance with the Aged Care Quality Standards and program guidelines. Eight standards form the basis of the Quality Standards framework relevant to this policy.

3.1.1 Standard One: Consumer dignity and choice

The organisation:

- has a culture of inclusion and respect for consumers
- supports consumers to exercise choice and independence
- respects consumer's privacy.

3.1.2 Standard Two: Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers

The organisation undertakes initial and ongoing assessment and planning for care and services in partnership with the consumer. Assessment and planning has a focus on optimising health and well-being in accordance with the consumer's needs, goals and preferences.

3.1.3 Standard Three: Personal care and clinical care

The organisation delivers safe and effective personal care, clinical care, or both personal care and clinical care, in accordance with the consumer's needs, goals and preferences to optimise health and well-being.

3.1.4 Standard Four: Service and supports for daily living

The organisation provides safe and effective services and supports for daily living that optimise the consumer's independence, health, well-being and quality of life.

3.1.5 Standard Five: Organisations service environment

The organisation provides a safe and comfortable service environment that promotes the consumer's independence, function and enjoyment.

3.1.6 Standard Six: Feedback and complaints

The organisation regularly seeks input and feedback from consumers, carers, the workforce and others and uses the input and feedback to inform continuous improvements for individual consumers and the whole organisation.

3.1.7 Standard Seven: Human resources

The organisation has a workforce that is sufficient, and is skilled and qualified to provide safe, respectful and quality care and services.



DELIVERY OF FUNDED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES POLICY

3.1.8 Standard Eight: Organisational governance

The organisation's governing body is accountable for the delivery of safe and quality care and services.

3.2 Senior citizens

In recognition of the benefits that senior citizens clubs bring to the community, Council provides consistency in the financial and operational management of the senior citizens centres. There are six clubs within the Loddon Shire: Boort, East Loddon, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn and Tarnagulla.

Senior citizens clubs play a vital role in the lives of many older and often isolated people, and provide the opportunity to meet socially, enjoying meals and activities.

3.2.1 Council responsibilities

So long as Council continues to receive CHSP funding in support of Senior Citizens activities, Council's commitment to the senior citizens clubs will include the payment and purchasing of:

- chemicals associated with meeting Food Safety Act requirements
- utilities – gas, water and electricity
- staff wage costs associated with cleaning or provision of meals
- hire costs for Tarnagulla hall
- building and contents insurance
- cash reimbursements as determined annually by the Community Care Coordinator for social activities where clubs are using bus transport
- booking of clubrooms and hire fees for use by external community groups.

3.2.2 Senior citizen clubs' responsibilities

Senior citizens clubs' commitment will include:

- payment of operational costs not identified in section 3.2.1, for example telephone and facsimile costs
- prompt notification to Council's Building Maintenance Officer of impending maintenance requirements, or proposed modification/maintenance to buildings
- providing details of clubroom hire to allow hire charges to be levied to the user
- maintain incorporation and operate within the parameters required by the accompanying Incorporated Association's (Club) rules.

4 HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act. Loddon Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.

5 REVIEW

The Manager Community Wellbeing will review this policy for any necessary amendments no later than 3 years after adoption of this current version.

9.3	ADDITION TO FACILITIES ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A HALLS AND RECREATION RESERVE ALLOCATION
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File Number: 16/04/010
Author: Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing
Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Add Kingower Church to the list of eligible facilities to receive an allocation through Council's Hall and Recreation Reserve Allocation program (commencing with a 2019/20 allocation)
2. allocate a criteria rating of 2C: Hall (Main facility in a low populated area OR secondary facility)
3. provide this allocation to the community Committee of Management for the facility
4. provide this allocation only while:
 - a) there is a functioning Incorporated Committee of Management in place
 - b) the facility remains available for wider community use.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The use of the St Mary's Church facility in Kingower as a community meeting place was discussed by Council at the November 2019 Forum.

BACKGROUND

Section 3.3 of Council's Community Support Policy: Public halls and recreation reserves, provides for an annual funding allocation to support public halls, indoor stadiums and active reserves within the Shire.

Allocations are provided to assist committees of management with the costs associated with ongoing operating and maintenance costs, such as utility, administrative and insurance costs.

The allocations are based on a range of categories, with the value of the allocations determined by Council annually within the budget process; notionally increasing by CPI each year. The value of the 2019/20 allocations for each hall category are:

Category	Facility	
2A	Hall (Major facility in a highly populated area)	\$ 2,473.87
2B	Hall (Main facility in a medium populated area)	\$ 1,049.52
2C	Hall (Main facility in a low populated area OR secondary facility)	\$ 509.77
2D	Sports Stadium (Indoor)	\$ 2,473.87
9	Non Council Responsibility (private land etc)	No allocation

The following table provides a list of the current halls identified as eligible to receive an annual allocation and the assigned category level.

Facility	Category
Boort Memorial Hall	2A
Inglewood Public Hall	2A
Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall	2A
Wedderburn Public Hall	2A
Newbridge Public Hall	2A
Calivil Hall	2B
Dingee Memorial Hall	2B
Eddington Public Hall	2B
Korong Vale Public Hall	2B
Laanecoorie Public Hall	2B
Mitiamo Public Hall – Historical Society	2B
Bridgewater Public Hall	2B
Serpentine Public Hall	2B
Tarnagulla Public Hall	2B
Arnold Public Hall & Library Reserve	2C
Boort James Boyle Hall	2C
Campbell's Forest Public Hall	2C
Derby Public Hall	2C
Durham Ox Hall	2C
East Loddon Community Centre	2C
Fenton's Creek Hall	2C
Jarklin Public Hall	2C
Powlett Hall & Recreation Reserve	2C
Pyramid Hill C.E.R.T Hall	2C
Boort RSL Hall	2C
Rheola Hall	2C
Woodstock Public Hall & Recreation Reserve	2C
Yando Public Hall & Recreation Reserve	2C
Yarrowalla Community Centre	2C
East Loddon Scout Hall	2C

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

There is currently no hall or meeting place in Kingower receiving an annual Hall and Recreation Reserve allocation.

While Council does not provide funds from the Hall and Recreation Reserve Allocation for privately owned facilities, the situation in Kingower is unique, where a privately owned facility has been

provided to the community for community use and is managed by a community Committee of Management.

In this situation, and based on the category criteria, it is reasonable to suggest that the Kingower Church be added as a category 2C facility. It is suggested though that this provision only applies whilst there is a community Committee of Management arrangement in place and the facility remains available for the wider community use.

It is further suggested that there is an incorporated Committee of Management in place in order to be eligible to receive the allocation. Incorporation will provide Council with assurance that the Committee of Management will operate as a not for profit organisation and that members of the committee will be provided with the protections afforded through the Associations Incorporation Act 2015.

COST/BENEFITS

The 2019/20 value of the 2C annual allocation is \$509.77. It is expected that the annual allocation will increase by CPI each year.

This annual contribution to assist with maintenance and operating costs of the Kingower Church will assist in the provision of a community meeting place in for Kingower residents.

RISK ANALYSIS

With a number of variables in this situation, the risk is that at some point in the future the required criteria are no longer in place. This can be mitigated through an annual check by Council officers prior to the distribution of the annual allocation.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

There has been no consultation in relation to the development of this report.

9.4 2019/20 EVENT SPONSORSHIP SCHEME APPLICATION NOT MEETING ELIBILITY CRITERIA

File Number: 16/02/026
Author: Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing
Authoriser: Allan Bawden, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council does not provide sponsorship to the Boort Tourism Development for the Boort Christmas Festival.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

Some Councillors may have involvement in the subject matter of the report by virtue of the volunteer commitment of family members to the Boort Tourism Development.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

There has been no previous Council discussion about the application being dealt with in this report. Council reviewed the components of the Event Sponsorship Scheme at the March 2019 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

Council operates an Events Sponsorship Scheme, allowing community groups to apply for funding to support the promotion of an upcoming event being held within the municipality that will attract a significant number of visiting competitors/participants, officials and families.

The scheme is detailed in the Community Support Policy Section 3.5 and provides two sponsorship categories:

- Major event: for events of regional or state significance e.g. state sporting events and/or major festivals that attract a significant number of visitors from outside the region
- Minor event: for events of local and sub-regional significant e.g. annual sporting tournament or local community festivals that attract a moderate number of visitors from other communities.

The levels of sponsorship for each category are determined by Council in its annual budget cycle, and are currently \$400 for minor events and \$1000 for major events.

The policy provides for closing dates for applications to be applied, and that late applications will be ineligible. The current closing date for applications is 30 days prior to the event.

The requirement for applications to be received at least 30 days prior to the event to be considered for funding is noted on Council's website and in four locations on the Event Sponsorship application form, including a checkbox where the applicant indicates that the application is being forwarded at least 30 days prior to the event date.

As part of the review of Council's Community Support Policy, Council considered the conditions of the Event Sponsorship Scheme at the March 2019 Council Forum. It was noted in the discussion paper provided that one of the issues was that a number of applications were received inside the 30 day request period, which impacted the use of the funds being used to promote the event in the

timeline then presented and the ability for Council to administer and provide the funds in a timely manner prior to the event being conducted.

Council was asked to consider whether to retain the 30 day request period. The minutes of the March 2019 Council Forum indicate that Councillor's position at that time was to retain the provision for applications to be received at least 30 days prior to the event, with this to be enforced by Council officers.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Council received an application from Boort Tourism Development on 20 November 2019, for the Boort Christmas Festival to be held on 13 December 2019. As this application did not meet the required closing date, being received at least 30 days prior to the event, the application was denied and a letter advising this, dated 21 November 2019, was forwarded to Boort Tourism Development.

Further to the application being received late, it was also incomplete; with all sections requiring information to allow assessment of the application being either incomplete or not completed, incomplete bank account information provided, and the application was unsigned and undated.

In accordance with Council's policy position which provides the administration parameters for Council officers, the application received from Boort Tourism Development did not meet the required criteria and was therefore assessed as ineligible for funding. This position is reflected in the recommendation to this report.

COST/BENEFITS

The levels of sponsorship for each category are determined by Council in its annual budget cycle, and are currently \$400 for minor events and \$1000 for major events. Council's current budget makes provision for a \$25,000 annual cost to Council in support of the Event Sponsorship Scheme.

RISK ANALYSIS

Adherence to the parameters provided through Council Policies ensures that a level of consistency, equity and probity is applied. There is a significant risk one or all of these would be compromised if Council officers operated in outside of Council's policy position.

Removal or reduction of the 30 day submission period would compromise:

- Council's ability to administer the sponsorship payment using the routine processes available, meaning that additional resources would be used to undertake individualised payment runs to allow the funds to be provided prior to the event being conducted
- the funded organisation's ability to implement a requirement of the scheme, to acknowledge Council's sponsorship in all printed programs, media and promotional material.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

As part of the review of Council's Community Support Policy, Council considered the conditions of the Event Sponsorship Scheme at the March 2019 Council Forum.

Council officers responsible for administering the Event Sponsorship Scheme provided information in support of this report.

10 INFORMATION REPORTS

Nil

11 COMPLIANCE REPORTS

Nil

12 GENERAL BUSINESS

13 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989:

13.1 Review of confidential actions

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 89(2) - (h) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with Any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

Closing of Meeting to the Public

RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be closed to the public.

NEXT MEETING

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on 28 January 2020 at Serpentine commencing at at 3pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at [enter time](#).

Confirmed this.....day of..... 2019