

SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

To be held in Council Chambers
Corner King & Barrack Streets, Merredin
Tuesday, 24 June 2025
Commencing 4.00pm

Notice of Meeting



Dear President and Councillors,

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the Shire of Merredin will be held on Tuesday, 24 June 2025 in the Council Chambers, corner of King and Barrack Streets, Merredin. The format of the day will be:

2:00pm Briefing Session

4:00pm Council Meeting

CRAIG WATTS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
20 June 2025

DISCLAIMER

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER BEFORE PROCEEDING:

Statements or decisions made at this meeting should not be relied or acted on by an applicant or any other person until they have received written notification from the Shire. Notice of all approvals, including planning and building approvals, will be given to applicants in writing. The Shire of Merredin expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damages suffered by a person who relies or acts on statements or decisions made at a Council or Committee meeting before receiving written notification from the Shire.

The advice and information contained herein is given by and to Council without liability or responsibility for its accuracy. Before placing any reliance on this advice or information, a written inquiry should be made to Council giving entire reasons for seeking the advice or information and how it is proposed to be used.

Common Acronyms Used in this Document	
CBP	Corporate Business Plan
CEACA	Central East Accommodation & Care Alliance Inc
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
CWVC	Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre
EO	Executive Officer
EMCS	Executive Manager Corporate Services
EMDS	Executive Manager Development Services
EMES	Executive Manager Engineering Services
EMS&C	Executive Manager Strategy & Community
GECZ	Great Eastern Country Zone
GO	Governance Officer
LGIS	Local Government Insurance Services
LPS	Local Planning Scheme
MCO	Media and Communications Officer
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Manager of Projects
MRCLC	Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre
SRP	Strategic Resource Plan
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
WEROC	Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils



June Ordinary Council Meeting

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Shire of Merredin
Ordinary Council Meeting
4:00pm Tuesday, 24 June 2025



1. Official Opening

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2. Record of Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr D Crook	President
Cr R Manning	Deputy President
Cr B Anderson	
Cr H Billing	
Cr M McKenzie	
Cr L O'Neill	
Cr P Van Der Merwe	

Staff:

C Watts	CEO
L Boehme	EMCS
B Wall	EMIS
C Brindley-Mullen	EMS&C
P Zenni	EMDS
M Wyatt	EO
R Cahill	TO

Members of the Public:

Apologies:

Approved Leave of Absence:

3. Public Question Time

Members of the public may submit questions up to 2pm on the day of the meeting by emailing ea@merredin.wa.gov.au.

4. Disclosure of Interest

5. Applications of Leave of Absence

6. Petitions and Presentations

Nil

7. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 27 May 2025
Attachment 7.1A

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 27 May 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

8. Announcements by the Person Presiding without Discussion

9. Matters for which the Meeting may be Closed to the Public

- 19.1 Endorsement of Lease Agreements between the Shire of Merredin and the Merredin Community Resource Centre Inc for use of premises on Lot 200 Barrack Street Merredin
- 19.2 Disposal of Land
- 19.3 Rateable Property Assessments A3325, A6070, A1625 and A9307 – Write off of Rates and Service Charges

10. Receipt of Minutes of Meetings

- 10.1 Minutes of the Wheatbelt North Regional Road Group Kellerberrin Sub-Group Meeting held 7 March 2025.
Attachment 10.1A
- 10.2 Minutes of the Central East Accommodation & Care Alliance Inc Management Committee Meeting held 19 May 2025.
Attachment 10.2A
- 10.3 Minutes of the Kellerberrin Sub Regional Road Group Meeting held 11 June 2025.
Attachment 10.3A
- 10.4 Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting held 13 June 2025.
Attachment 10.4A

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council

1. **RECEIVE the minutes of the Wheatbelt North Regional Road Group Kellerberrin Sub-Group Meeting held 7 March 2025;**
2. **RECEIVE the minutes of the Central East Accommodation & Care Alliance Inc Management Committee Meeting held 19 May 2025;**
3. **RECEIVE the minutes of the Kellerberrin Sub Regional Road Group Meeting held 11 June 2025; and**
4. **RECEIVE the minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting held 13 June 2025.**

11. Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council Consideration

12. Officer's Reports – Development Services

12.1 Application for Development Approval – Lot 12 Abattoir Road, Merredin, Distribution-level Battery Energy Storage System (DBESS)

<div>Development Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	Paul Bashall – Planwest (WA) Pty Ltd
Legislation:	Planning and Development Act 2005 Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6
File Reference:	A9221
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.1A - Development Approval Application, and Supporting Documentation

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider approving the advertising of an application for Development Approval (DA) lodged by Urbis Ltd on behalf of ACEnergy Pty Ltd for a distribution-level battery energy storage system (DBESS) on a portion of Lot 12 Abattoir Road, Merredin.

Background

Proponents can elect to have their DA considered by a Development Assessment Panel (DAP) or the local government when the development has a value between \$2 million and \$10 million. In this case the approximate cost of the proposed development is stated as \$9 million, and the applicant has elected to have their DA determined by the local government.

The current proposal is located on the north side of the southern portion of Lot 12, Abattoir Road in Merredin, which is about 3 kilometres southwest of Merredin Town Centre.

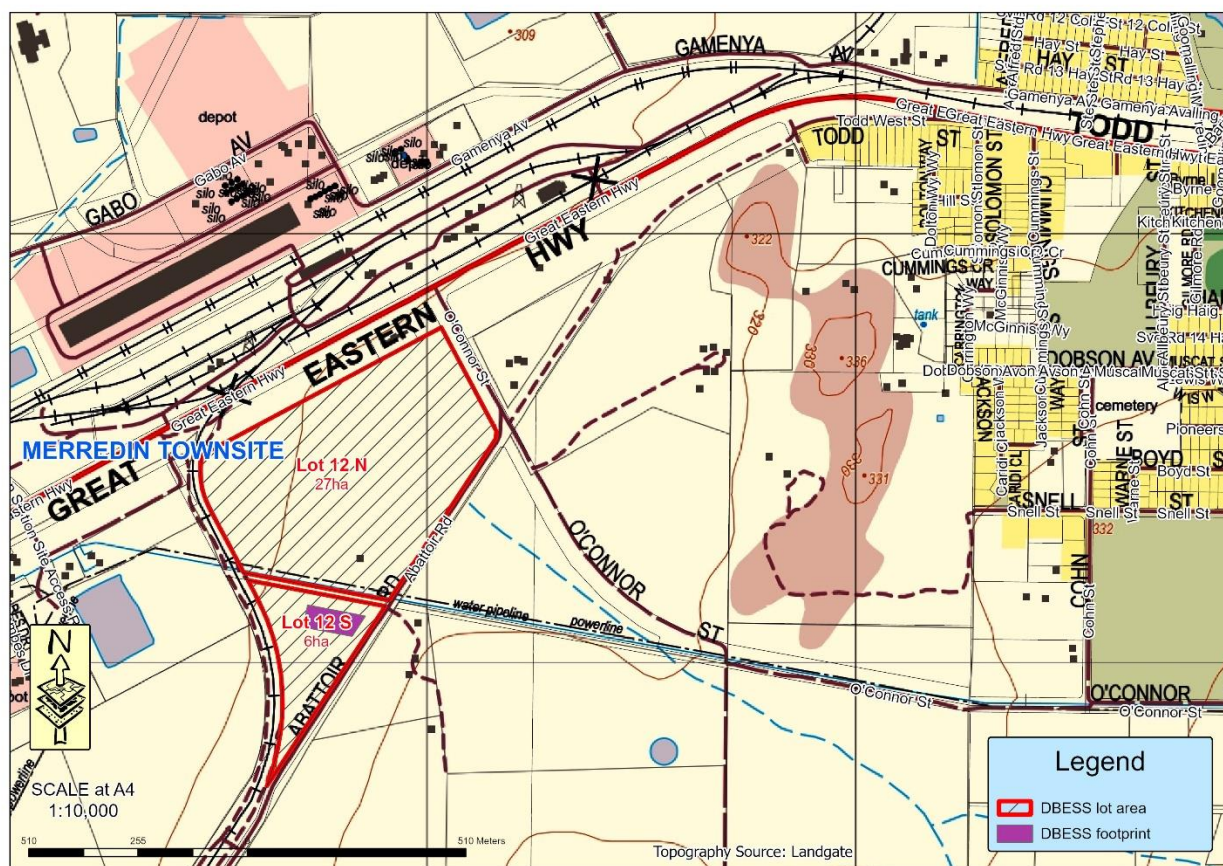
Figure 1 provides a location plan of the site in relation to Merredin townsite.

ACEnergy has an extensive history for the delivery and provision of modern and efficient renewable energy projects, and intends to develop a modern renewable energy storage facility. The DBESS comprises a set of large batteries designed to take up the excess power generated from local sources, including rooftop solar, in Merredin. This aims to even out the supply to the grid by absorbing the excess power generated at peak periods.

The subject site is an agricultural property, does not contain any areas of remnant vegetation and is currently used for cropping and sheep grazing purposes. The only visible development

are several sheds located on the northern part of the property approximately 100 metres from any of the proposed development.

FIGURE 1 – LOCATION PLAN



Source: Planwest, Landgate

The DBESS project will be connected to Western Power's transmission network to the Merredin Terminal.

The DBESS planning report submitted by Urbis states that the facility will cover approximately 0.65ha of land and will comprise of the following supporting infrastructure:

- The installation of a new driveway from Abattoir Road leading to a gated entry;
- Security fencing and landscaping around the DBESS;
- Sufficient landscaping to screen the development from surrounding development;
- Electrical components of the DBESS, including approximately eight (8) battery containers; two medium voltage power stations (MVPS) and high voltage switchgear; and
- Ancillary electrical transmission lines to connect the DBESS to the existing powerlines to the north.

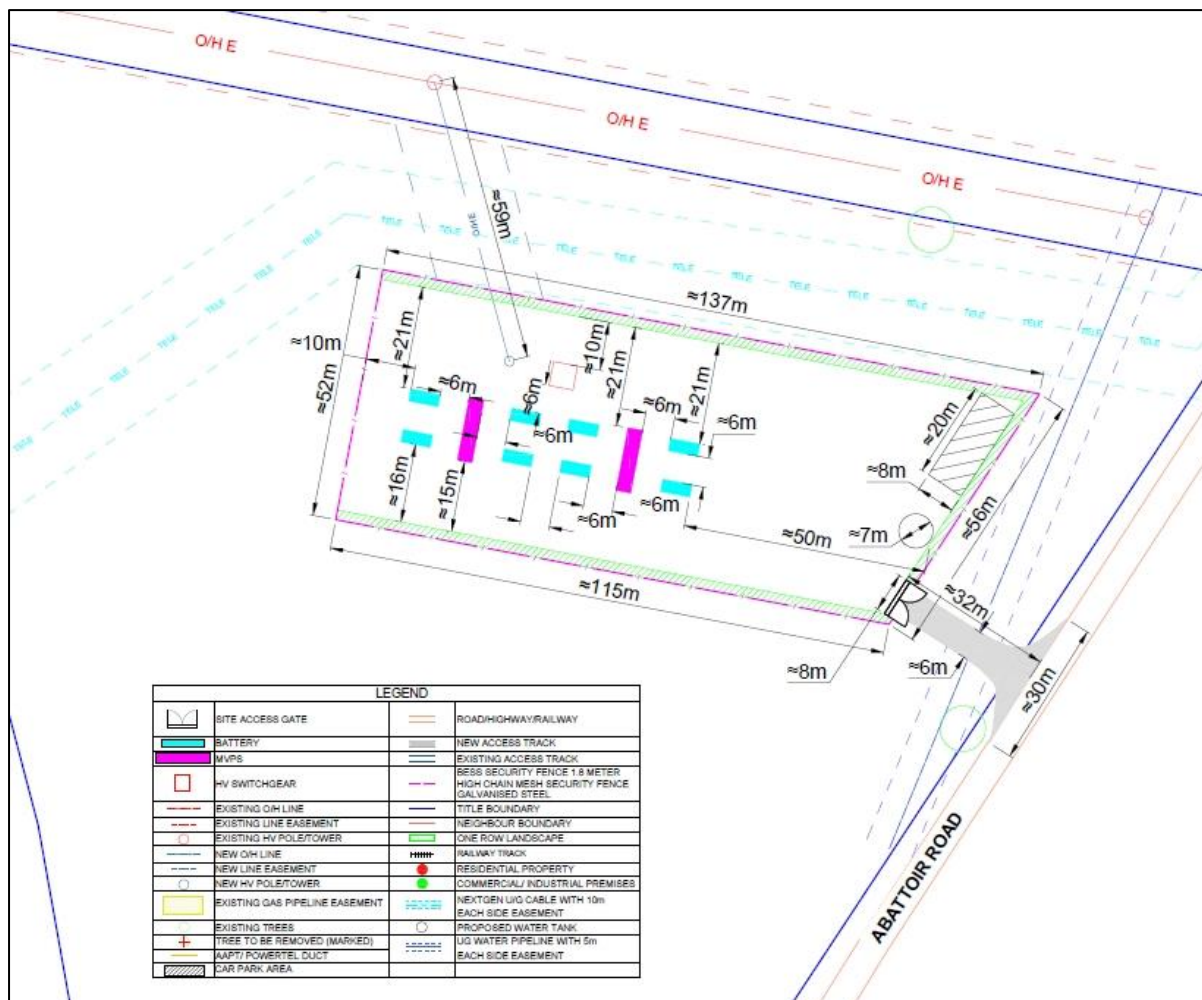
The proposed DBESS will be a utility-scale lithium iron phosphate (LFP) solution designed for grid-scale applications. This containerised system, resembling a standard 20-foot shipping container, ensures efficient transport and installation. The DBESS will be manufactured offsite to then be delivered to the subject site as a pre-assembled unit, facilitating streamlined installation and commissioning.

The system features modular battery units with liquid cooling technology to optimise thermal management and enhance performance. The proposal will be equipped with a

comprehensive fire detection and suppression system, including thermal sensors, gas detection, and automated suppression mechanisms to mitigate any fire risks.

Figure 2 shows the site plan provided by the applicant showing the 8 batteries (in blue), 2 power stations (in pink) and the access to Abattoir Road.

FIGURE 2 – SITE PLAN EXTRACT FROM DA REPORT



Source: Urbis, Planwest

The DA is accompanied by several documents and specialist reports including:

- Certificate of Title
- Development plans and elevations
- Traffic impact statement (TIS)
- Environmental noise assessment
- Bushfire risk assessment
- Landscape plan
- Stormwater report
- A DBESS fire safety document

Traffic

The TIS was carried out by Level 5 Design, (transport planning and traffic management consultants) concluding that there would be minimal traffic to and from the facility once

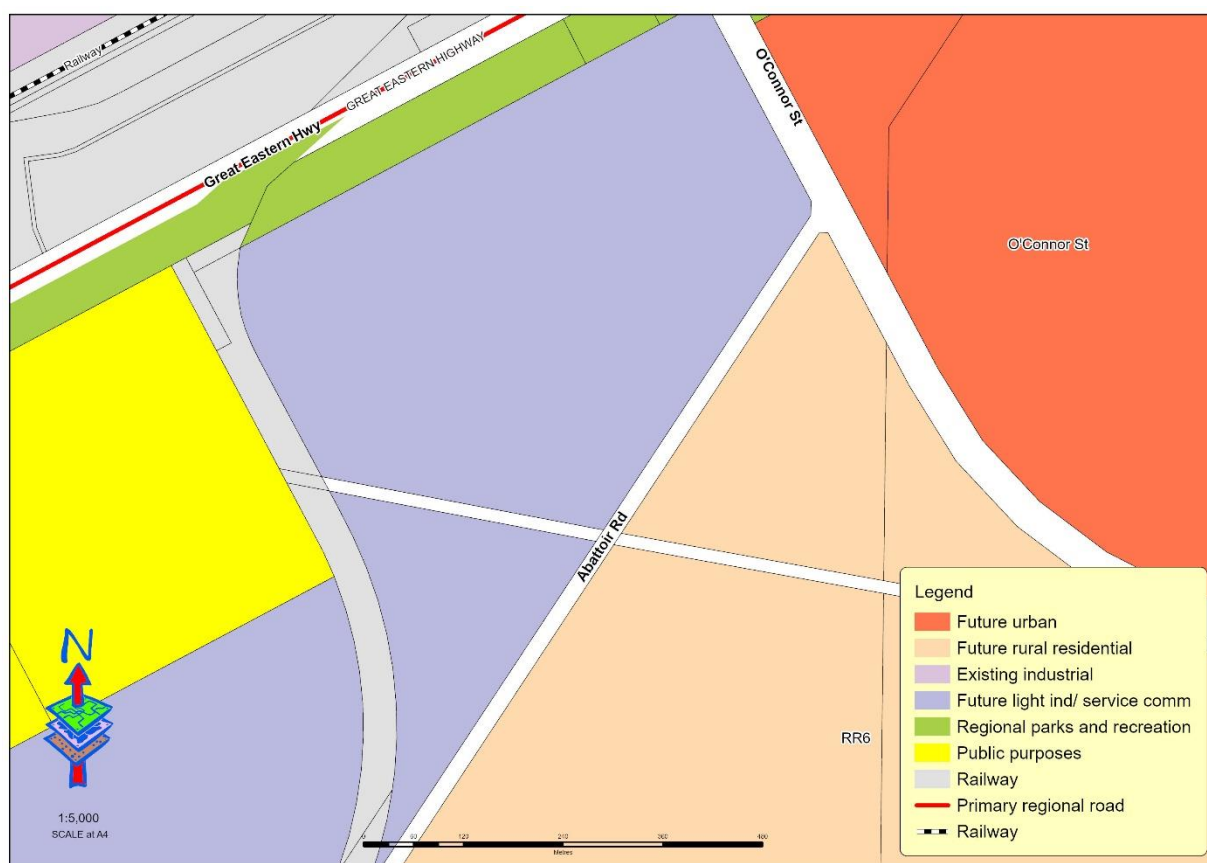
construction was completed. On completion, the facility would largely be monitored by staff in Merredin and mostly completed remotely. Whilst the level of vehicular traffic during the construction phase is limited to 5 heavy vehicle movements per day over a 3 week period, as the road is not sealed, the Shire will require the preparation of a road site survey report and require that any damage to the road associated with the construction phase is rectified by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Shire.

Environmental

The noise emanating from the facility was seen as having a potential impact on nearby sensitive uses in the future. The draft local planning strategy (the draft strategy) has designated this area for 'Future light industry/service commercial' uses. The proposed development is not considered inconsistent with this designation.

The draft strategy has been advertised and was presented to the Council for final adoption at its May 2025 Ordinary Meeting. Figure 3 provides an extract from the draft strategy.

FIGURE 3 – EXTRACT FROM DRAFT LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY



Source: Planwest, Landgate

The land on the east side of Abattoir Road (Lot 11) is designated in the draft strategy, and zoned in the local planning scheme, for Rural Residential. For this reason, it was recommended that a noise assessment be completed to ensure there would be minimal impact on any future sensitive uses in the Rural Residential area.

An environmental noise assessment was carried out by Acoustics Consultants Australia. The assessment produced 4 scenarios of daytime and nighttime impacts, with and without noise barriers.

In Western Australia, noise levels for residential areas are regulated under the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997*. These regulations set assigned noise levels based on the

The daytime scenarios with and without barriers (Scenarios 1 and 1A) were modelled with less than 36dB impact on adjacent properties. Nighttime impacts were slightly higher with Scenario 2A (nighttime with barriers) modelling less than 40dB to the east (location of future sensitive uses).

Proposed Distribution BESS
AC Energy Pty Ltd
Abattoir Rd, Merredin

Predicted Environmental Noise Emissions

SCENARIO 2A

J:\01 PERIOD2 MODELLING\JOBS SOUNDPLAN\10.00875 BESS Merredin\BESS Merredin ENA V1\12

Project No: 10.00875
 Consultant: MdM
 Date: 17/04/2025

SCENARIO 2A: Daytime with 2.8m Noise Barriers
 -Active sound sources:
 -MIVRS x 2 units (Configuration 3, running 100% fan)
 -BESS x 8 units (Running 80% with sound cover)
 -Ground (alpha = 0.5)
 -Meteorological conditions:
 T = 30deg / RH = 50%
 Noise contours @ 1.5 above the ground

Signs and symbols

— Wall
 * Point source

Levels in dB(A)

≤ 18
 18 - 20
 20 - 22
 22 - 24
 24 - 26
 26 - 28
 28 - 30
 30 - 32
 32 - 34
 34 - 36
 36 - 38
 38 - 40
 ≥ 40

1 : 4000

0 20 40 80 120 160 200

Legend

DBESS lot area

FIGURE 4 – EXTRACT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE ASSESSMENT (Scenario 2A)

Source: Planwest, Acoustics Consultants Australia

The noise assessment report provides detailed noise level types and impacts, however as a general rule, the noise regulations state that for residential areas, typical daytime noise limits are:

- 7am – 7pm: Generally, 45-50dB at the property boundary.
- 7pm – 10pm: Slightly lower limits, around 40-45dB.
- 10pm – 7am: Stricter limits, usually 35-40dB.

Modelling indicates that the use of 2.8m barriers around the DBESS and MVPS units will provide significant benefit in reducing the noise impact on the areas being protected by the barriers and are recommended to be retained.

Notwithstanding the above assessment, it is noted that both sides of Abattoir Road (Lots 11 and 12) are owned by the same entity.

Bushfire Management

The subject land is not within the Bushfire Prone mapping, however, due to the nature of the proposed development, a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) assessment has been completed by Western Environmental.

The report states that the proposed BESS is sited appropriately to ensure that the radiant heat exposure of renewable energy assets during a bushfire is reduced so that it does not exceed 10 kW/m² at a flame temperature of 1090 K. This siting of renewable energy assets is also designed to reduce the potential for a fire originating from this infrastructure to spread to the surrounding vegetation, igniting a bushfire. This method is considered best practice in Western Australia.

The facility has the ability to meet the requirements of each of these documents and is recommended for approval on the condition that a BMP is prepared which includes an assessment of the facility against the applicable guidelines to ensure a design is created which reduces the risk to facility operators, responding firefighters and the surrounding community.

Landscape

A landscape plan has been prepared by Ground Control Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd to address the potential visual impact of the proposed development.

Perimeter planting of the site will be carried out along all boundary fences except the west side. There are no public places to the west that could be visually impacted by the proposal. This planting will reduce the impact of the infrastructure and the barriers.

Stormwater

Premise Pty Ltd has prepared a Stormwater Drainage Strategy for the land surrounding the development site.

The drainage calculations contained in the report show that the drainage system is robust. Therefore, Premise believes that this drainage strategy will adequately manage flood risk while keeping pre-development flows to their natural flow paths.

Premise recommends that upon topsoil stripping, the Contractor provides a finished surface level for the DBESS Infrastructure Pad that is 150mm above the existing surface level.

	Comment
	<p>The proposed development is consistent with the Shire's vision of becoming a renewable energy hub in the region. The proposal will more efficiently capture excess energy that is already collected by existing infrastructure (including rooftop solar systems). This system may be one of the first of its kind in Western Australia, however it is anticipated that there may be many more variations of this concept.</p> <p>The location of the proposed development is consistent with the future strategy for the town.</p>

Strategic Considerations

The existing Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the Strategy) currently designates this area as 'Light industry/mixed business'. As mentioned, the draft strategy has a similar designation. The proposed development is consistent with both the existing and proposed strategies.

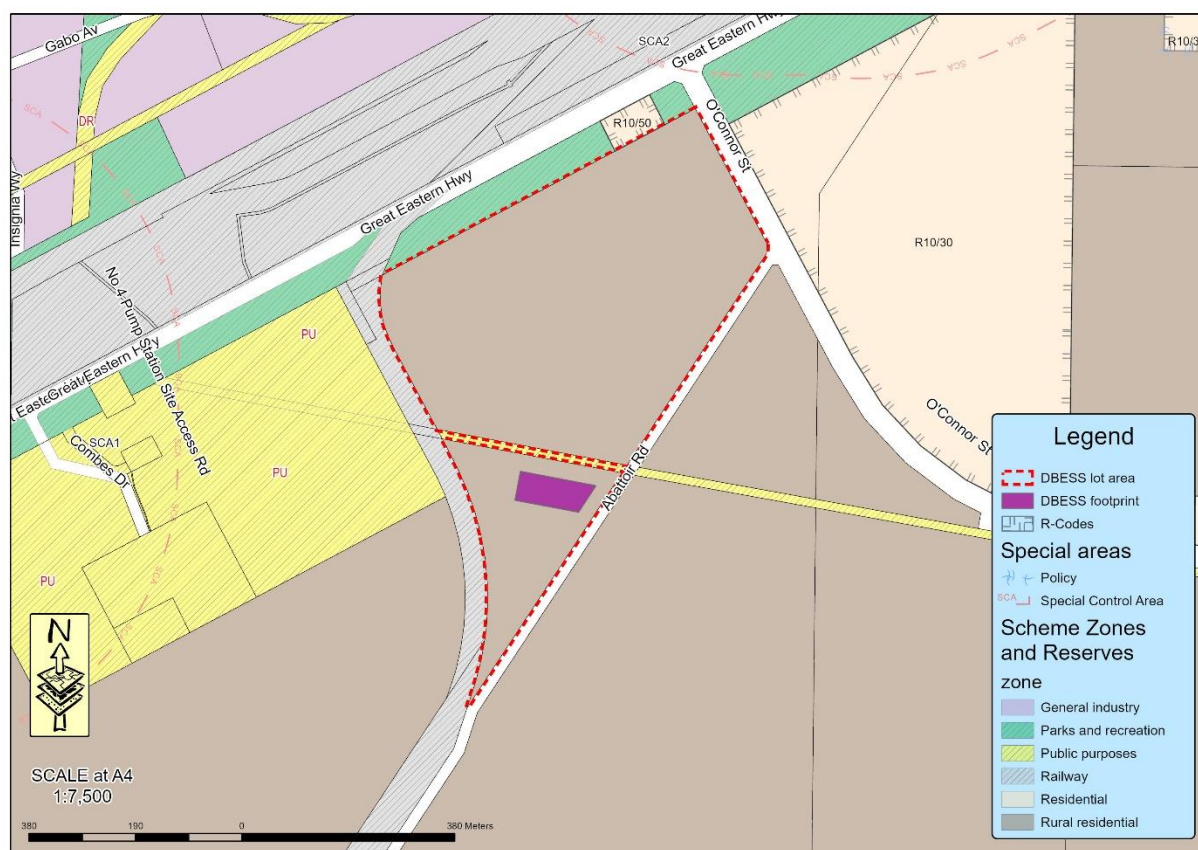
Storm Water Management

A condition of development requires that storm water management be addressed via the drainage strategy that is acceptable to the Shire's engineers. This ensures that any drainage from the site will be managed on the site and will not impact any neighbouring properties or public infrastructure like roadways, road reserves and other reserves.

Statutory Considerations

Figure 5 includes an extract from the Local Planning Scheme No 6 (the Scheme) showing the subject land zoned 'Rural residential'.

FIGURE 5 – EXTRACT FROM LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME No 6



Source: Planwest, Landgate

The proposed development is considered to be covered by the 'uses not listed' provision of the Scheme in clause 3.4.2. This clause provides the local government with the discretion to determine whether the use is acceptable within the zone. In this case it is recommended that part b) is used whereby the local government may *'determine that the use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval'*.

Following a Scheme review, the Shire has formally resolved to support the Omnibus amendment to the Scheme. However, there are no changes to the Scheme that impact the current proposal.

Advertising

The Deemed provisions of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*, require that the DA be advertised for 14 days (clause 64 (7) (a)), after which any submissions are assessed prior to the local government making a determination on the proposed development.

Building Requirements

The granting of a DA does not exempt the applicant from complying with any building or health requirements. This issue is added as an advice note.

Conditions of Approval

The Resolution proposes that this Item need not return to the Council if no adverse comments are received during the advertising period. The Resolution authorises the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to determine the DA with conditions and advice notes. This process better streamlines the approval timeline.

Commonly a DA remains valid for 2 years, during which time the proposed development must be substantially commenced. However, the applicant has requested a longer period in which the remains valid. A period of 4 years is recommended.

Policy Implications

The proposed development is consistent with State Planning Policies and Local Planning Policies. There are no local implications as the proposal is consistent with the existing and draft local planning strategy.

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

The proposed development will not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding area. The Shire will advertise the application for public comment and liaise with adjacent landowners and relevant government agencies. Bushfire considerations will be addressed via the preparation and implementation of a dedicated Bushfire Management Plan. Accordingly, the risks associated with this proposal are considered Low (3) based on the likelihood of Rare (1) and consequence of Moderate (3) of adverse events associated with the proposed development taking place.

Financial Implications

Development Application fees have been paid.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council;

1. Under the provisions of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*, RESOLVES to determine that the proposed development is a 'use not listed' in accordance with clause 3.4.2 of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6, and thereby advertise the Development Approval application for a period of 14 days in accordance clause 64 (7) (a) of the Deemed Provisions;
2. DETERMINES that neighbours and agencies will be advised of the advertising period and the opportunity to make a submission. These agencies are to include;
 - Department of Environment Regulation;
 - Department of Parks and Wildlife;
 - Western Power;
 - Department of Fire and Emergency Services; and
3. AUTHORISES the Chief Executive Officer, where there are no adverse comments received during the advertising period, to grant Development Approval for the proposed distribution-level Battery Energy Storage System (DBESS) development on a portion of Lot 12 Abattoir Road, Merredin, as outlined in Attachment 12.1A, subject to the following conditions and advice notes.

Conditions

1. *If the development, the subject of this approval, is not substantially commenced within a period of 4 years from the date of the approval, the approval will lapse and be of no further effect. For the purposes of this condition, the term "substantially*

commenced” has the meaning given to it in the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 as amended from time to time.

- 2. The removal of all construction infrastructure once the facility has been completed to the satisfaction of the local government.*
- 3. The BESS facility incorporating acoustic barriers as outlined in the Acoustics Consultants recommendation for Scenario 2A.*
- 4. The BESS facility complying with the Landscape Concept Plan as presented by Ground Control Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd, and a strategy for the on-going maintenance and management of the landscaping, to the satisfaction of the local government.*
- 5. The preparation and compliance with a Stormwater Drainage Plan to contain all drainage on site to the satisfaction of the local government.*
- 6. The preparation and implementation of a Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) to the satisfaction of the local government.*
- 7. The preparation of a road site survey report (for Abattoir Road) to be submitted to the Shire of Merredin prior to the construction phase, any damage to the road associated with the construction phase of the project is to be rectified by the applicant to the satisfaction of the local government.*
- 8. Any new crossover to Abattoir Road shall be located and constructed to the satisfaction of the local government.*

Advice Notes

- 1. If an applicant or owner is aggrieved by this determination, there is a right of review by the State Administrative Tribunal in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2005 Part 14. An application must be made within 28 days of the determination.*
- 2. The applicant is advised that granting of development approval does not constitute a building permit and that an application for relevant building permits must be submitted to the Shire of Merredin and be approved before any work requiring a building permit can commence on site.*

12.2 Authorisation to Execute the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus Amendment) and Use of Shire of Merredin Common Seal

Development Services



Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	Paul Bashall – Planwest (WA) Pty Ltd
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> <i>Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015</i>
File Reference:	CM/19/93
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.2A - Local Planning Scheme 6 Amendment 8 - Omnibus Amendment

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider that it authorises the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to sign the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus), and to affix the Shire of Merredin Common Seal to Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus).

Background

At the May Ordinary Council Meeting held on 27 May 2025, Council resolved as follows (CMRef: 83607):

That Council

- 1. ADOPTS the Officer Recommendations for each submission received following the advertising of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy) in accordance with the Schedule of Submissions;*
- 2. ENDORSES the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy) as advertised without modification;*
- 3. REQUESTS the WA Planning Commission's final approval for the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy);*
- 4. ADOPTS the Officer Recommendations for each submission received following the advertising of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus) in accordance with the Schedule of Submissions;*

5. *SUPPORTS the proposed amendment to the local planning scheme with proposed modifications to address issues raised in the submissions; and*
6. *REQUESTS the WA Planning Commission's recommendation for the Minister for Planning's final approval for the Omnibus Amendment.*

For the Local Planning Scheme No 6 Omnibus Amendment No 8 (Omnibus) to be submitted to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC), the amendment document must be signed on behalf of the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) by the Shire President and CEO and the Shire Common Seal attached to the amendment document.

Comment

Council resolved to finalise the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus) during its Ordinary Council Meeting held on 27 May 2025. The resolution was worded as per requirements of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*. The amendment documentation incorporates the provision of a municipal seal which needs to be affixed to the document and requires the signature of the Shire President and CEO.

The Shire of Merredin Policy 3.13 – Use of Common Seal requires the formal resolution of Council for the Common Seal to be affixed to the amendment documentation.

As such the matter is being brought back before Council for its consideration for Council to authorise the Shire President and CEO to sign the amendment documentation on behalf of Council and to attach the Shire of Merredin Common Seal to the amendment documentation.

Policy Implications

Compliance with Shire of Merredin Policy 3.13 – Use of Common Seal.

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2 Decision Making 4.2.3 The Council is well informed in their decision-making, supported by a skilled administration team who are committed to providing timely, strategic information and advice.
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control

5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Nil, the Shire has already resolved to finalise the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus), following a lengthy process of consultation in accordance with legislative requirements, this is simply a procedural matter to align with the Shire's Policy on the use of the Common Seal.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council **AUTHORISES** the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to sign and apply the Shire of Merredin Common Seal to the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus).

12.3 Adoption of the Shire of Merredin Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2025-2030

<div>Development Services</div> <div></div>	
Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	Disability Services Act 1993
File Reference:	CM/16/1
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.3A - Draft DAIP 2025-2030, Public Submissions and Consultation Group Findings, DAIP 2020-2025

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the adoption of the Shire of Merredin Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2025-2030.

Background

Under provisions of the *Disability Services Act 1993* local governments are required to review the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) every five years.

Comment

At the November Ordinary Council Meeting held 26 November 2024, Council initiated the process of reviewing its DAIP, when it resolved as follows (CMRef 83484);

That Council:

1. *ENDORSES the commencement of the process of review of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan as shown in Attachment 12.1B;*
2. *GIVES public notice of the commencement of the review, seeking public submissions; and*
3. *NOTES that a further report on the outcomes of the public consultation process together with a Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2025-2030), will be submitted for Council consideration at a future ordinary council meeting.*

Community Consultation

The *Disability Services Regulations (2004)* set out minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIP. Local governments must call for submissions (either

general or specific) by notice in newspapers circulating in the Local Government area and on any website maintained by, or on behalf of, the Local Government. Other mechanisms may also be used.

In undertaking a review of the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) DAIP the following consultation methods were used:

- On 13 December 2024, the community was informed through the local newspaper and Shire website, that the Shire was developing a DAIP to address access barriers for people with disability and their families. The community was invited to provide input into the review of the current initiatives and the development of a new plan. Submissions via Survey Monkey were sought with 14 submissions being received by the Shire.
- On 3 February 2025, a stakeholder group meeting was held at the Shire Library including people with a disability, their carer's, service providers, and local government representatives. The stakeholder group provided input into the review and suggested initiatives for inclusion into a new plan.

The DAIP review process also included:

- Examination of the 2020 – 2025 DAIP and subsequent review of annual reports to determine what has been achieved and identifying any outstanding works.
- Examination of other Shire documents and strategies.
- Investigation of contemporary trends and good practice in access and inclusion.
- Consultation with the public.
- Consultation with staff.
- Consultation with the Department of Communities.

Statutory Considerations

The adoption of the 2025 - 2030 DAIP by Council will provide a framework through which the Shire can create an accessible and inclusive community. The development and periodic review of the DAIP ensures that it remains relevant to the needs of the community and ensures that people with a disability can access information and services provided by the Shire and that these services facilitate increased independence, opportunities and inclusion for people with disabilities in the community.

The review of the DAIP focuses on 7 key DAIP outcomes which are mandated by the *Disability Services Act 1993* and subsidiary legislation, these being:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.
3. People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

7. People with a disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Addressing the above outcomes as part of the Shire's 2025 - 2030 DAIP not only benefits people with disability but also seniors in the community that may be experiencing mobility, hearing and visual difficulties, as well the general community from increased social and economic participation of people with disabilities and seniors.

Findings of the Consultation Process

The DAIP review and associated consultation found that most of the initial objectives in the DAIP had been achieved and that a new plan was required to address ongoing access barriers, ensuring currency and relevance. The new plan should also reflect the legislative and regulatory changes, accommodate contemporary values and practices, whilst striving for inclusion and access beyond the minimum compliance of standards.

Many of the areas identified in the consultation process are ongoing and are constantly reviewed and updated. Existing Shire buildings are for all practical purposes compliant for access and inclusion and the review role is becoming one of "care and maintenance" as construction resources are finite. Focus needs to change from purely considering disability and access requirements associated with Shire facilities and infrastructure to include as far as practicable the implementation of these considerations by State Government agencies as well as the private sector.

The review process specifically identified the need for:

1. Provision of additional footpaths and ensuring better access to and by existing footpaths.
2. Improving access to existing shops in Merredin.
3. Better access for persons with a disability at railway line level crossings.
4. Improving existing ACROD bay parking facilities.
5. Better pedestrian access through islands and parking area road crossings.
6. More work and volunteering opportunities for persons with a disability.

The implementation of the 2025 - 2030 DAIP will prioritise the above identified areas which will also form part of the Shire's annual reporting requirements. It should be noted that the 2025 – 2030 DAIP incorporates the same strategies as those forming part of the 2015 – 2020 DAIP and the 2020 – 2025 DAIP, as these are all still deemed to be relevant, and at the same time allow for sufficient flexibility for the Shire to implement DAIP related considerations based on prioritisation of need, within budget related limitations.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Compliance with *Disability Services Act 1993*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme: 6 Transport and Networks
Service Area Objective: 6.1 Roads and Footpaths

6.1.1 The Shires's road system, footpaths and cycle trails are well maintained and safe

Priorities and Strategies for Change: Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme: 4 Communication and Leadership

Priorities: Nil

Objectives: 4.3 Advocacy
4.3.1 The Shire continues to advocate for infrastructure and services which meet the need of its business and residential community

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Finalisation of the 2025-2030 DAIP follows proper consideration with respect to the needs of the community and associated priorities identified as part of the public consultation process. DAIP related priorities will be implemented over the life of the DAIP with appropriate budgetary allocation of funds and associated annual reporting requirements. Accordingly, the risks associated with this proposal are considered Low (3) based on the likelihood of Rare (1) and consequence of Moderate (3) of adverse events associated with the proposed 2025-2030 DAIP being adopted by the Shire.

Financial Implications

Financial implications will be considered as part of the preparation of the 2025/26 financial budget and will focus on the provision of outcomes identified in the consultation process. Most expenditure will be associated with improvements to existing footpaths and the provision of additional dual use footpaths.

Existing and new staff will also be provided with additional training on how to properly interact and provide support and services for people with disability.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority




Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council:

1. **ADOPTS** the Shire of Merredin 2025-2030 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan;
2. **ADVERTISES** the adoption of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan in the Phoenix newspaper;
3. **INCLUDES** a copy of the adopted Disability Access and Inclusion Plan on the Shire of Merredin website; and
4. **PROVIDES** a copy of the adopted Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to the Department of Communities - Disability Services Commissioner.

12.4 WAPC Subdivision Application No 201718 - Proposed Amalgamation of Lots 12, 32 and 38 Mitchell Street Merredin

<div>Development Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6
File Reference:	A9255
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.4A – WAPC Referral Documentation

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider advising the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) that it has no objection to the proposed amalgamation of Lots 12, 32 and 38 Mitchell Street, Merredin.

Background

An application for subdivision (amalgamation) of land located on Lots 12, 32 and 38 Mitchell Street, Merredin, has been lodged with the WAPC for approval. The WAPC is seeking comments from Council prior to issuing a determination on the application.

Comment

The land in question comprises of three lots – Lots 12, 32 and 38 Mitchell Street, Merredin. All three Lots are zoned 'Town Centre' under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No. 6 (the Scheme).

Lot 38 Mitchell Street has been developed and incorporates an existing office building, storage and carparking facilities.

Lots 12 and 32 Mitchell Street have not been developed and are currently vacant.

Scanlan Surveys (Land Surveyor) have lodged an application with the WAPC on behalf of the owner of all three Lots in question, for the amalgamation of the three Lots into one single Lot.

The resulting Lot will contain the existing structures, will maintain correct setbacks to the new Lot boundary and will have proper access to a sealed road.

Moreover, the amalgamation of the three Lots into one Lot will remove the existing property boundaries which currently separate the three Lots and thus inhibit further development of the property.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

Compliance with the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5 Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	5 Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Subdivisional (amalgamation) processes are statute-based requirements subject to approval of the WAPC with comments from various stakeholders including the relevant local government authority. Risks associated with the Shire not opposing the proposed subdivision (amalgamation) are considered Low (3) based on the likelihood of Rare (1) and consequence of Moderate (3) of adverse events associated with the proposed subdivision taking place.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation


That Council ADVISES the Western Australian Planning Commission that it has no objection to the proposed subdivision application (WAPC No 201718) resulting in the amalgamation of Lots 12, 32 and 38 Mitchell Street, Merredin as outlined in Attachment 12.4A

13. Officer's Reports – Engineering Services

Nil

14. Officer's Reports – Corporate and Community Services

14.1 Statement of Financial Activity – May 2025

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As Above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.1A – Statement of Financial Activity Attachment 14.1B – Detailed Statements Attachment 14.1C – Capital Works Progress Attachment 14.1D – Investment Report

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to receive the Statements of Financial Activity and Investment Report for the month of May 2025, and be advised of associated financial matters.

Background

The Statement of Financial Activity, Detailed Statements, Capital Works Progress and Investment Report are attached for Council's information.

Comment

Statement of Financial Activity

Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* requires the Shire to prepare a monthly statement of financial activity for consideration by Council within 2 months after the end of the month of the report. These reports are included at Attachments 14.1A to D inclusive.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Authorisation of expenditure - the Local Government Act 1995 Part 6 Division 4 s6.8 (1) requires the local government not to incur expenditure from its Municipal Fund for an additional purpose except where the expenditure:

(b) Is authorised in advance by resolution*

“Additional purpose” means a purpose for which no expenditure estimate is included in the local government’s annual budget.

*requires an absolute majority of Council.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2.2 The Shire is progressive while exercising responsible stewardship of its built, natural and financial resources
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	4.2 Decision Making

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Compliance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and to also give Council some direction regarding its management of finance over an extended period of time.

Risk Implications

The Statement of Financial Activity is presented monthly and provides a retrospective picture of the activities at the Shire. Contained within the report is information pertaining to the financial cost and delivery of strategic initiatives and key projects.

To mitigate the risk of budget over-runs or non-delivery of projects, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has implemented internal control measures such as regular Council and management reporting and a quarterly process to monitor financial performance against budget estimates.

Materiality reporting thresholds have been established at 10% or \$10,000 whichever is greater, for operating and capital, to alert management prior to there being irreversible impacts.

It should also be noted that there is an inherent level of risk of misrepresentation of the financials through either human error or potential fraud.

The establishment of control measures through a series of efficient systems, policies and procedures, which fall under the responsibility of the CEO as laid out in the *Local Government (Financial Management Regulations) 1996* regulation 5, seek to mitigate the possibility of this occurring.

These controls are set in place to provide daily, weekly, and monthly checks to ensure that the integrity of the data provided is reasonably assured.

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as the Shire would be contravening the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* if this Item was not presented to Council. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

The adoption of the Statements of Financial Activity is retrospective. Accordingly, the financial implications associated with adopting this are nil.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority




Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council RECEIVE the Statements of Financial Activity and Investment Report for the period ending 31 May 2025 in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.

14.2 List of Accounts Paid – May 2025

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.2A - Payments Listing May 2025

Purpose of Report

☐

Executive Decision

☒

Legislative Requirement

For Council to receive the schedule of accounts paid for the month of May 2025.

Background

The attached list of accounts paid during the month of May 2025, under Delegated Authority, is provided for Council's information and endorsement.

Comment

Nil

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:

4. Communication and Leadership

Service Area Objective: 4.2.2 The Shire is progressive while exercising responsible stewardship of its built, natural and financial resources

Priorities and Strategies for Change: Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme: 4. Communication and Leadership

Priorities: Nil

Objectives: 4.2 Decision Making

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Compliance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and to also give Council some direction regarding its management of finance over an extended period of time.

Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as the Shire would be contravening the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* if this Item was not presented to Council. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

All liabilities settled have been in accordance with the Annual Budget provisions.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority




Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council RECEIVE the schedule of accounts paid during May 2025 as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totaling \$829,878.64 from the Merredin Shire Council Municipal bank account and \$1,000 from the Merredin Shire Council Trust bank account.

14.3 Annual Information Statement Review

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1992</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.3A – Information Statement 2025/26

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to note the update to the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) Information Statement for 2025/26.

Background

It is a compliance requirement of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (FOI Act)* that the Shire publish an up-to-date Information Statement every 12 months. The Shire last published an update in July 2024.

Comment

The Shire's Information Statement has recently been reviewed and updated and is attached at Attachment 14.3A for Council's information.

Key changes included:

- updated organisational structure
- updated number of Councillors from eight to seven
- updated title of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (previously Audit Committee)

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Freedom of Information Act 1992 - Part 5 - Publication of information about agencies

s.96 Information statement, each agency to publish annually

(1) An agency (other than a Minister or an exempt agency) has to cause an up-to-date information statement about the agency to be published in a manner approved by the Minister administering this Act —

(a) within 12 months after the commencement of this Act; and

(b) at subsequent intervals of not more than 12 months.

s.97 Information statement and internal manual, each agency to make available etc.

(1) An agency (other than a Minister or an exempt agency) has to cause copies of —

(a) its most up-to-date information statement; and

(b) each of its internal manuals,

to be made available for inspection and purchase by members of the public but may delete any exempt matter from those copies.

(2) An agency has to provide a copy of its information statement to the Commissioner as soon as is practicable after the statement is published under section 96.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme: 4. Communication and Leadership

Service Area Objective: Nil

Priorities and Strategies
for Change: Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme: 4. Communication and Leadership

Priorities: Nil

Objectives: Nil

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item, as this document is to be reviewed by the Shire every 12 months, as per the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council

1. **NOTE** the review of the Shire of Merredin Information Statement 2025/26, as presented in Attachment 14.3A, in accordance with Part 5 of the Freedom of Information Act 1992; and
2. **NOTE** the Shire of Merredin Information Statement 2025/26 will be publicised on the Shire of Merredin website and forwarded to the Commissioner by the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Part 5 of the Freedom of Information Act 1992.

14.4 2025/26 Differential General Rates and Minimum Payments Submissions

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995, Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider any submissions received in response to providing local public notice and advertising the proposed differential rating model intended for the 2025/26 financial year.

Background

Section 6.2 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) requires each local government to prepare and adopt a budget for the Municipal Fund to 30 June the following year. A required component of the setting of the budget is the consideration of rate revenue for the year to meet the estimate of the budget deficiency.

Council resolved at the May Ordinary Council Meeting, held 27 May 2025, to adopt the differential rates for advertising for the 2025/26 financial year. (CMRef 83614)

That Council;

- 1. ADOPT for draft budget purposes, Option five as stated in the Item, as the differential rate in the dollar and minimum payments for Unimproved Value rated properties for the Shire of Merredin, subject to finalisation of the draft 2025/26 Annual Budget and the establishment of the funding shortfall required from imposition of rates on Gross Rental Value rated properties;*
- 2. ADVERTISE its intention to levy differential rates on Unimproved Value properties for the 2025/26 Budget, and advise the public of the availability of the Shire of Merredin's 2025/26 Differential Rating Objects and Reasons (updated to suit the*

option selected by Council), in accordance with section 6.36 of the Local Government Act 1995; and

3. *NOTES any public submissions received in response to Item 2 above, will be presented to Council for consideration prior to adoption of the 2025/26 Rates.*

The proposed differential rates were set as per Option Five:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,190.00	0.011940
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,190.00	0.023880
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.023870
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,190.00	0.023150
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,190.00	0.021315

Comment

A notice seeking submissions to the proposed differential rates for 2025/26 was advertised on 30 May 2025. The closing date for submissions was 20 June 2025. No submissions were received during the advertising period.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Section 6.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995* allows for local governments to differentially rate properties.

Section 6.33 (3) of the *Local Government Act 1995* outlines “*In imposing a differential general rate a local government is not to, without the approval of the Minister, impose a differential general rate which is more than twice the lowest differential general rate imposed by it.*”

As the highest UV sub-category rate is not more than twice the lowest, Ministerial approval is not required.

Section 6.35 of the *Local Government Act 1995*:

6.35. Minimum payment

(1) *Subject to this section, a local government may impose on any rateable land in its district a minimum payment which is greater than the general rate which would otherwise be payable on that land.*

(2) *A minimum payment is to be a general minimum but, subject to subsection (3), a lesser minimum may be imposed in respect of any portion of the district.*

(3) *In applying subsection (2) the local government is to ensure the general minimum is imposed on not less than —*

(a) *50% of the total number of separately rated properties in the district; or*

(b) *50% of the number of properties in each category referred to in subsection (6), on which a minimum payment is imposed.*

(4) A minimum payment is not to be imposed on more than the prescribed percentage of –

- (a) the number of separately rated properties in the district; or
- (b) the number of properties in each category referred to in subsection (6), unless the general minimum does not exceed the prescribed amount.

(5) If a local government imposes a differential general rate on any land on the basis that the land is vacant land it may, with the approval of the Minister, impose a minimum payment in a manner that does not comply with subsections (2), (3) and (4) for that land.

(6) For the purposes of this section a minimum payment is to be applied separately, in accordance with the principles set forth in subsections (2), (3) and (4) in respect of each of the following categories –

- (a) to land rated on gross rental value; and
- (b) to land rated on unimproved value; and
- (c) to each differential rating category where a differential general rate is imposed.

[Section 6.35 amended by No. 49 of 2004 s. 61.]

Section 53 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* sets the Prescribed amount in Relation to Minimums.

53. Amount prescribed for minimum payment (Act s. 6.35(4))

The amount prescribed for the purposes of section 6.35(4) is \$200.

Strategic Implications	
Ø Strategic Community Plan	
Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2.3 The Council is well informed in their decision-making, supported by a skilled administration team who are committed to providing timely, strategic information and advice
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil
Ø Corporate Business Plan	
Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	Nil
Sustainability Implications	
Ø Strategic Resource Plan	
Nil	
Risk Implications	

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as the Shire would be contravening the *Local Government Act 1995* if this Item was not presented to Council. The risk rating is considered to be Moderate (6), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Adopting a differential model will result in required rates revenue for the 2025/26 financial year.

Voting Requirements

☐

Simple Majority


☒

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council **NOTES** that no submissions were received regarding the proposed **2025/26 Differential General Rates and Minimum Payments**.

14.5 Annual Community Funding

<div>Community Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Codi Brindley-Mullen, EMS&C
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government 1995, S5.42 and S6.12(1)(c)</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.5A – Evaluation Table (CONFIDENTIAL)

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the annual community funding applications to be considered and incorporated into the 2025/26 Annual Budget.

Background

Council adopted Policy 3.19 - Community Funding at its April Ordinary Council Meeting, held 18 April 2023, (CMRef 83143) which coordinates Council's response to community requests for financial support. It also ensures that Shire of Merredin (Shire) funding resources are allocated in a way that is transparent, compliant and equitable and that funded projects further the aims and objectives of the Shire and represent responsible use of public monies.

The aims of the Shire's Community Funding Program are:

1. To encourage the development of services, facilities and events that meet identified community needs;
2. To promote active participation of residents in community initiatives and the development of skills, knowledge and opportunities;
3. To provide assistance to the community to develop initiatives and services that support the Shire's objectives;
4. Link to the community vision and strategic goals listed in the Strategic Community Plan; and
5. To enhance the image of the Shire within the community.

Comment

Annual Grant

The Annual Grant is open once per year and is the Shire's largest funding opportunity for community groups to apply for. The grant may consist of cash, in-kind contributions and/or waivers to organisations.

Administration Staff called for applications aimed at Council's Annual Grants Program for 2025/26. The Grant is for projects seeking cash funding, in-kind contributions or fee waivers up to the value of \$10,000 (ex GST).

It was recommended to open another round of 2025/26 Annual Community Funding. The grant opened again on 30 May 2025 and closed on 13 June 2025.

The following application was received and is captured on the below evaluation table.

Organisation	Project	Project Cost	Amount Requested \$	Recommended Support
St Marys	Playground upgrade Oval shade structure	\$40,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Policy Implications				

Policy – 3.19 Community Funding.

Statutory Implications				
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As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Strategic Implications				
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Ø Strategic Community Plan				
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Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2 Decision Making 4.2.2 The Shire is progressive while exercising responsible stewardship of its built, natural and financial resources
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan				
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Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	4.2 Decision Making

Sustainability Implications				
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Ø Strategic Resource Plan				
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Nil

Risk Implications				
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If this allocation is not made into the allocated budget, it would mean that the Administration will receive these requests throughout the year. The risk rating is considered to be Moderate

(6), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (4) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Comprising of a provision of \$10,000 cash to be included in the 2025/26 Budget.

Voting Requirements

☐

Simple Majority

☒

Absolute Majority


Officer's Recommendation

That Council **PROVIDE** financial support to the following community project, being cash, for the following amount and under the following conditions:

1. St Marys;
 - a. Provide support of \$10,000;
 - b. Acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all media Material;
 - c. Provides to Council a report upon completion of the program; and
2. **ENDORSE** an allocation of \$10,000 in the draft 2025/26 Annual Budget.

15. Officer's Reports – Administration

15.1 Status Report – June 2025

<div>Administration</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	Meg Wyatt, EO
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 15.1A – Status Report – June 2025

Purpose of Report

☐

Executive Decision

☒

Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the updated Status Report for June 2025.

Background

The Status Report is a register of Council Resolutions that are allocated to the Shire of Merredin's (the Shire) Executive Staff for actioning. When the Executive Staff have progressed or completed any action in relation to the Council Resolution, comments are provided until the process is completed or superseded by a further Council Resolution.

Comment

In the interest of increased transparency and communication with the community and Council, the Status Report is provided for information.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Nil

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme: 4. Communication and Leadership

Service Area Objective: 4.4 Communications
4.4.1 The Shire is continuously working to maintain efficient communication, providing open, transparent and factual information, through a variety of channels

Priorities and Strategies for Change: Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme: 4. Communication and Leadership

Priorities: Nil

Objectives: 4.4 Communications
4.4.1 The Shire is continuously working to maintain efficient communication, providing open, transparent and factual information, through a variety of channels

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

There is a reputational risk associated with this Item, as it may be perceived that the Shire is not acting upon or implementing the decisions of Council. The risk rating is considered to be Low (1), which is determined by a likelihood of Rare (1) and a consequence of Insignificant (1). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council RECEIVES the Status Report on Council Resolutions for June 2025.

15.2 Confirmation of Presiding Members for Council Committees

<div>Administration</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	As above
Legislation:	Nil
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider appointing presiding members on committees.

Background

After the 2023 election, at the Ordinary Council Meeting held 24 October 2023 Elected Members were appointed to various committees. The below appointments were made:

- Shire of Merredin Audit Committee: Cr McKenzie (Chair), Cr Manning, Cr Crook, Cr Anderson, and Cr Simmonds (CMRef 83262);
- Eric Hind Scholarship Committee: Cr Billing (CMRef 83263); and
- Shire of Merredin Local Emergency Management Committee: Cr Van Der Merwe (CMRef 83264).

It was then discovered that further appointments needed to be made. At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 27 February 2024 the below appointment was made (CMRef 83344):

- Bush Fire Advisory Committee: Cr Van Der Merwe.

Comment

In relation to Council Committees, the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024* requires all local governments to appoint a presiding member under the new Section 5.12 for all existing committees prior to 1 July 2025. This relates to Committees formed by Council and does not affect Councillors where they have been nominated to represent the Shire on external committees. A Councillor may be appointed as the Deputy Presiding Member of a Committee, however this is not compulsory.

Amendment provisions relating to the establishment of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees, including the appointment of an independent chair will come into effect six (6) months after the “amendment day”. The “amendment day” date for legislative provisions relating to the independent chair of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee is not expected to come into effect until after the October 2025 Local Government Elections.

As these committees will remain in place until the October 2025 Local Government Elections, for ease of transition it is recommended that the currently endorsed Councillors be appointed as the presiding member for those committees. For the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees, it is recommended that the current Chairperson be appointed as the presiding member, with a deputy to be nominated by Council if desired.

Policy Implications

Policy 1.9 Election of Committees and Representatives is applicable.

Statutory Implications

Section 5.12 of the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024* requires all Local Governments to appoint presiding members for each committee of Council by absolute majority.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2.3 The Council is well informed in their decision-making, supported by a skilled administration team who are committed to providing timely, strategic information and advice.
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	Nil
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	Nil

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

There is a reputational and compliance risk associated with this Item because if presiding members of Council committees are not appointed, the Shire will be in breach of the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024*. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer’s Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements

☐

Simple Majority

☒

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council APPOINTS the presiding members to the following committees as listed:

- **Shire of Merredin Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee: Presiding Member Cr McKenzie;**
- **Eric Hind Scholarship Committee: Presiding Member Cr Billing;**
- **Shire of Merredin Local Emergency Management Committee: Presiding Member Cr Van Der Merwe; and**
- **Bush Fire Advisory Committee: Presiding Member Cr Van Der Merwe.**

15.3 2025 Regional Leaders Summit

Administration



Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	Meg Wyatt, EO
Legislation:	Nil
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the attendance of Cr Renee Manning as a delegate at the Regional Leaders Summit being held Tuesday, 5 August 2025 to Wednesday, 6 August 2025 in Newcastle, New South Wales (NSW).

Background

The 2025 Regional Leaders Summit will be held at Newcastle City Hall, Newcastle, NSW on Tuesday, 5 August to Wednesday, 6 August 2025.

The Summit is a workshop-orientated event for rural and regional leaders wanting to learn more about leading communities through significant large-scale renewable energy planning and development.

The Regional Leaders Summit is an opportunity to gather with peers from across Australia, equip attendees with knowledge, skills and new connections to better navigate, negotiate and land the best outcomes for their community.

Over two days, 70 rural and regional leaders working in or alongside local government, regional development and communities will gather in Newcastle NSW. They'll share stories, lessons and experiences to help create and maximise opportunities and limit risks.

Presentation, workshop and discussion topics are likely to include:

- Understanding renewable energy project development processes
- Identifying local government levers of influence
- Anticipating and managing impacts of development
- Housing and workforce accommodation
- Benefit sharing, options and frameworks
- Training and workforce opportunities

- First Nations agreements, engagement and benefit sharing
- Renewables and biodiversity
- Engaging your community

The current policy requires a report to be submitted to Council for Elected Members to undertake interstate travel on behalf of the Shire. The policy also recommends a limit of two Elected Members travel to each requested conference, unless resolved by Council.

Comment

Cr Renee Manning has expressed an interest in attending the Summit, which will be held in NSW from 5 August to 6 August 2025.

There is a budget allocated for Elected Member training and expenses (Members – Training and Development; 2040104), and travel (Members – Travel and Accommodation; 2040109) which will meet the costs associated with sending Cr Manning to the Summit.

Should Council wish to send additional attendees, the associated costs could be met within the available budget, depending on the number of extra representatives that may be supported.

In terms of the value, the Summit will provide benefit to those attending to enable our region to better participate in and benefit from the shift to renewable energy, and potentially negotiate a better community benefit for residents.

Policy Implications

Under the current Policy (1.20 – Councillor Training and Professional Development Policy), should Elected Members wish to attend an interstate conference, an Elected Member is required to submit a request to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and a Council report will be prepared to consider the request. This policy also details payments for flights, accommodation and incidentals.

Additionally, unless resolved by Council, a maximum of two Councillor delegates can attend any interstate event.

Statutory Implications

Nil

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.3.2 - The Shire continues to advocate for infrastructure and services which meet the need of its business and residential community
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
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Priorities: Nil

Objectives: Nil

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

There is a reputational risk associated with this Item because if representatives do not attend, the Shire may miss important information and opportunities to draw the maximum the benefit to the community, while supporting renewable energy projects within the District. The attendance supports maintaining a positive reputation of Council within the community and with stakeholders. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

All costs associated with flights, conference attendance, accommodation and incidentals can be met within existing and draft budget allocations. It is expected that this will be in the order of \$3,500.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council:

1. **APPROVE** the attendance of Cr Renee Manning at the 2025 Regional Leaders Summit; and
2. **APPROVE** the Chief Executive Officer or other member of the Executive to attend if appropriate.

16. Motions of which Previous Notice has been given

Nil

17. Questions by Members of which Due Notice has been given

Nil

18. Urgent Business Approved by the Person Presiding or by Decision

Nil

19. Matters Behind Closed Doors

19.1 Endorsement of Lease Agreements between the Shire of Merredin and the Merredin Community Resource Centre Inc for use of premises on Lot 200 Barrack Street Merredin

19.2 Disposal of Land

19.3 Rateable Property Assessments A3325, A6070, A1625 and A9307 – Write off of Rates and Service Charges

20. Closure

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