

# Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting

to be held at the Council Chamber, 32 Civic Drive, Greensborough  
on Tuesday 13 May 2025 commencing at 7:00 PM.

## Attachments

**Carl Cowie**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Thursday 8 May 2025

Distribution: Public

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Nillumbik Shire Council

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Attachments

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- Attachment 1. Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 8 April 2025

# Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting

held at the Council Chamber, 32 Civic Drive, Greensborough on Tuesday 8 April 2025 commencing at 7:00 PM.

## Minutes

**Carl Cowie**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Friday 11 April March 2025

Distribution: Public

Civic Drive, Greensborough  
PO Box 476, Greensborough 3088  
Telephone 9433 3111  
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**COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2025**

**Attachment 1. Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 8 April 2025**

**Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting Minutes**

**8 April 2025**

**Nillumbik Shire Council**

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**Nillumbik Shire Council**

**Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2025. The meeting commenced at 7:01 PM.**

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**Councillors present:**

Cr John Dumaresq	Wingrove Ward <b>(Mayor)</b>
Cr Grant Brooker	Blue Lake Ward <b>(Chairperson Consultation Matters)</b>
Cr Kelly Joy	Edendale Ward
Cr Peter Perkins	Ellis Ward <b>(Chairperson Planning Matters)</b>
Cr Kate McKay	Swipers Gully Ward

**Officers in attendance:**

Carl Cowie	Chief Executive Officer
Melika Sukunda	Acting Chief Operating Officer
Bлага Naumoski	Director Governance, Communications and Community Safety
Frank Vassilacos	Director Planning, Environment and Strategy
Jeremy Livingston	Director Culture and Performance
Daniel Tarquinio	Manager Information Technology
Renae Ahern	Manager Planning and Environmental Health
Katia Croce	Manager Governance and Property
Sarah Shehata	Acting Coordinator Strategic Planning

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**1. Welcome by the Chair**

**2. Acknowledgement of Country**

Acknowledgement of Country was read by the Chairperson Consultation Matters Cr Grant Brooker.

**3. Apologies/Leave of Absence**

Cr Naomi Joiner and Cr Kim Cope had requested a leave of absence for this Planning and Consultation Committee meeting.

**Committee Resolution**

**MOVED:** Cr Peter Perkins  
**SECONDED:** Cr John Dumaresq

**That** the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) grant Cr Naomi Joiner's and Cr Kim Cope's leave of absence.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. Declarations of conflict of interest**

Nil

**COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2025**

**Attachment 1. Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 8 April 2025**

**Planning and Consultation Committee Minutes**

**8 April 2025**

**5. Confirmation of Minutes**

**COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 11 March 2025**

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Confirmation of the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11 March 2025.

**Committee Resolution**

**MOVED: Cr Kate McKay**

**SECONDED: Cr Kelly Joy**

**That** the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) confirms the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11 March 2025 (**Attachment 1**).

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

6. Officers' reports

PCC.002/25 Proposed sale of Council land at 311A Yan Yean Road, Plenty

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Item: Consultation Matter

Distribution: Public

Manager: Blaga Naumoski, Director Governance, Communications and Community Safety

Author: Natalie Campion, Coordinator Property

**Summary**

At its Council Meeting on 25 February 2025, Council endorsed to commence the statutory procedures in accordance with section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), to give public notice and undertake a community engagement process in regard to the proposed sale of the land known as 311A Yan Yean Road, Plenty, being the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 11371 Folio 358 and shown as Reserve 1 on Plan of Subdivision PS416599M on the plan in **Attachment 1 (Reserve)**, subject to terms outlined in this Report.

In accordance with the Act, Council also resolved to consider any submissions received on the proposed sale of the Reserve at a Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting following the conclusion of the community engagement period and prior to making any final decision on whether to proceed with the sale of the Reserve.

Community consultation occurred on the proposal to sell the Reserve between Friday 28 February to Friday 28 March 2025.

This report is to consider any submission received in respect of the proposed sale of the Reserve.

Council received no written submissions on the proposal to sell the Reserve known as 311A Yan Yean Road, Plenty.

**Committee Resolution**

**MOVED:** Cr Peter Perkins

**SECONDED:** Cr Kate McKay

**That** the Committee (acting under delegation from Council):

1. In accordance with section 114 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), notes that no written submissions were received in response to Council's public notice and community engagement process in regard to the proposed sale of the land known as 311A Yan Yean Road, Plenty, being the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 11371 Folio 358 and shown as Reserve 1 on Plan of Subdivision PS416599M on the plan in **Attachment 1 (Reserve)**.

The Reserve is proposed to be sold by private treaty to the adjoining landowner of 311 Yan Yean Road, Plenty (**Adjoining Owner**) for the current market value of \$10,000 plus GST.

The proposed sale of the Reserve will be conditional on:

COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2025

Attachment 1. Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 8 April 2025

Planning and Consultation Committee Minutes

8 April 2025

**6. Consultation Matters**

**PCC.002/25 Proposed sale of Council land at 311A Yan Yean Road, Plenty**

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- a) Council removing the reserve status from the land under section 24A of the *Subdivision Act 1988*;
  - b) the Adjoining Owner:
    - i) consolidating the Reserve with the balance of the land at 311 Yan Yean Road, Plenty; and
    - ii) constructing a new fence on the boundary of the Reserve and the adjoining road reserve, within 6 months after the Settlement Date; and
  - c) the Adjoining Owner paying all of Council's costs incurred in connection with the removal of the reserve status of the Reserve and the sale of land.
2. Requests a further report be presented to Council on 27 May 2025 to make a final decision on whether to proceed with the sale of the Reserve.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



**COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2025**

**Attachment 1. Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 8 April 2025**

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**8 April 2025**

**7. Supplementary and urgent business**

Nil

**8. Confidential reports**

Nil

**9. Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 7.06pm.

Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Cr \_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson Consultation Matters

**COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2025**  
**Attachment 1. Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 8 April 2025**

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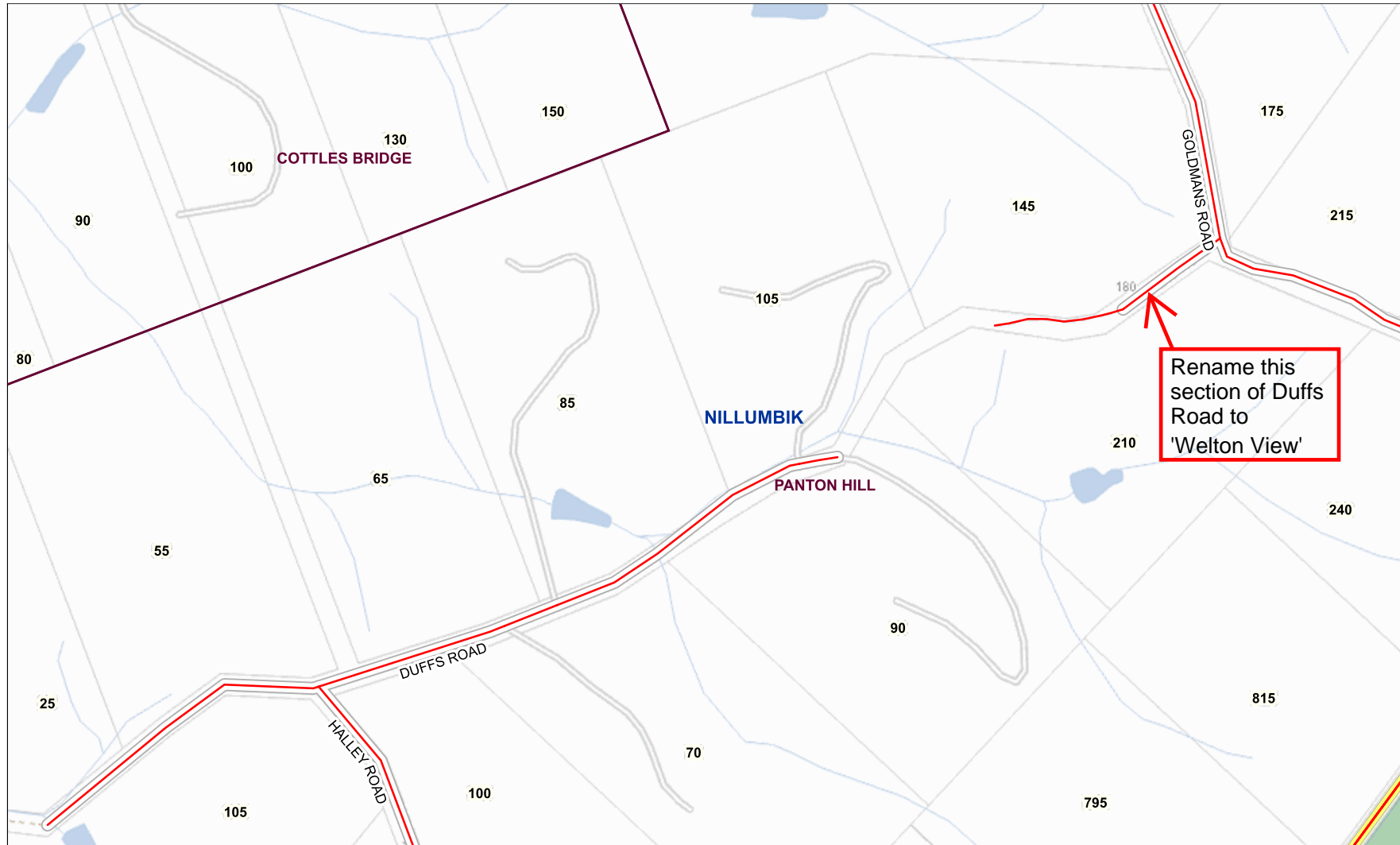
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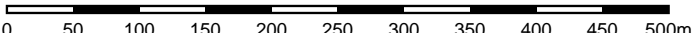


**PCC.003/25 Proposal to rename a section of Duffs Road, Panton Hill to Welton View**  
**Attachment 1. Plan of Duffs Road**

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Co-ordinates of Plot Corners NW 344569,5834968 SW 344586,5834169 MGA Zone 55	Data Source: Vicmap Property  Scale of Metres (1:5,000) MGA Zone 55 Melways- 264 B4 (ed.42) Vicroads- 428 F10 (ed.8) Created 02:43 PM on Jan 20, 2025	Co-ordinates of Plot Corners NE 345893,5834996 SE 345910,5834197 MGA Zone 55
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WARNING: No warranty is given as to the accuracy or completeness of this map. Dimensions are approximate. For property dimensions, undertake a Title search.

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## Proposal to rename a section of Duffs Road, Panton Hill to Welton View

ID	Q1. Are you supportive of renaming a section of Duffs Road, Panton Hill to		Q2. Provide any further comments on your response.	Q3. Please explain why you believe the name does not comply with any of the general principles in the Naming Rules for Places Victoria 2022
	Yes	No		
1035	1			
1036	1			
1037	1			
1038	1		It's a good idea to avoid confusion and I'm happy to see that a road will be named after a significant woman in the area.	
1046	1		it is a good idea	
1047	1		Fantastic for the Family rich history in the naming and also for emergency services	
1048	1			
1049		1		instead naming the road 'Woi-wurrung' reflects the true history
1051	1		Lots of cars enter as GPS has confusion	
1053	1			
1159	1			
1160	1			
1163	1			
1164	1			
1171	1			
1172	1		will stop traffic getting lost at the wrong end of Duffs Rd	

Attachment 3. Submissions – Renaming Duffs Road

ID	Q1. Are you supportive of renaming a section of Duffs Road, Panton Hill to		Q2. Provide any further comments on your response.	Q3. Please explain why you believe the name does not comply with any of the general principles in the Naming Rules for Places Victoria 2022
	Yes	No		
1207	1		I'm happy to being here, when you can get the local road as they you have to expand the changeover from Duffs Road Panton Hill to Welton View under proposed as well.	
1241	1			
1270	1			
1271	1		the weltons spent many decades on this property and were a crucial part of the community - this would be a welcomed and deserving tribute.	
1272	1			
1273	1		Think it is a great honour for the Welton family	
1274	1			
1275	1			
1276	1			
1277	1			
1278	1			



Attachment 3. Submissions – Renaming Duffs Road

ID	Q1. Are you supportive of renaming a section of Duffs Road, Panton Hill to		Q2. Provide any further comments on your response.	Q3. Please explain why you believe the name does not comply with any of the general principles in the Naming Rules for Places Victoria 2022
	Yes	No		
1279	1		<p>My name is [REDACTED], I am the Grandson of [REDACTED] Welton who have lived on Duffs Road Panton hill since 1954. Their property was my childhood home, in the early 1990's [REDACTED] had 5 grandchildren almost permanently in their care.</p> <p>The tired old fibre-cement house that stands there today was build by [REDACTED], by hand, 71 years ago using recycled materials from demolition sites and timber from trees off the property.</p> <p>For [REDACTED] 6 children, 11 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren their home in Panton Hill is place of loving memories that will remain with us all for the rest of our lives. It will always be our home.</p> <p>I want to thank Nillumbik council for considering the renaming of Duffs Rd to Welton Views in my grandmothers honour. This is a kind and fitting gesture that will have a lasting impact on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] legacy.</p>	

Attachment 3. Submissions – Renaming Duffs Road

ID	Q1. Are you supportive of renaming a section of Duffs Road, Panton Hill to		Q2. Provide any further comments on your response.	Q3. Please explain why you believe the name does not comply with any of the general principles in the Naming Rules for Places Victoria 2022
	Yes	No		
1280	1			
1282	1			
1283	1			
1285	1		Having two ends of "Duffs Road" that don't meet in the middle has always been a problem, and in the age of GPS software has only become more of one. The two parts of "Duffs Road" should absolutely have two different names to avoid confusion for visitors and delivery drivers or crews of emergency vehicles. Re-naming the Goldmans Road end after Mrs [REDACTED] Welton is a wonderful proposal as she lived on that section of "Duffs Road" and was a lovely part of the local Panton Hill (and wider) community over many decades.	
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>		

Nillumbik Shire Council – Public submissions to the Draft Budget 2025-2026	
Submitter and Key Points	Officer Response
<p>1. [REDACTED]</p> <p>I am very disappointed no money is earmarked for removal of the Diamond Creek level crossing. Our town comes to a standstill with the ever increasing number of often near empty trains bringing traffic to a halt. So much money goes into sports and playgrounds yet this infrastructure issue is repeatedly ignored by all.</p>	<p>While recognising that there would be significant positive outcomes to level crossing removal across the Shire, particularly within Diamond Creek, the decision to remove the crossing and the project itself fall outside the control of Council. This responsibility is with the State Government’s Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA). Whilst the LXRA have identified 110 crossings to be removed across Melbourne, unfortunately Diamond Creek does not feature as a priority.</p> <p>Council will continue explore opportunities to improve traffic flow around the Shire and advocate for these where they fall outside of Council’s authority.</p> <p>In the draft 2025/2026 budget, Council is proposing to spend \$15.67 million across capital works on community infrastructure, including \$4.81 million on roads, traffic management, drainage, footpaths and trails to maintain and improve our community’s ability to travel around the Shire, and will continue to advocate for greater public transport availability and access across our suburbs.</p>
<p>2. [REDACTED]</p> <p>Looks to be on track</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>
<p>3. [REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is estimated that you will have a budget surplus of \$4.9 million . Why then are you planning to borrow another \$2.1 million which will have an interest cost ??</li> <li>• The new medical hospital that was to be built. I understand that this was approved yet there has been no physical activity. When might we expect this facility to be finished?</li> <li>• The second was the BMX facility that should have been completed by now just off allendale rd . When will this project start and be completed?</li> <li>• And finally what is the hold up with the toilet facilities in Alister park being opened?</li> </ul>	<p>The surplus quoted in the Income Statement is prepared in compliance with Australian Accounting Standards. The accounting surplus includes capital grants and capital contributions, while the corresponding expenditure is recognised in the Statement of Capital Works. The budgeted borrowings have been proposed to fund capital works projects.</p> <p>The Eltham Area Community Hospital is a State Government project on State Government owned land. Council was not involved in the decision made to situate the hospital at this location. Any questions or concern about the hospital should be directed to the Victorian Health Building Authority at <a href="mailto:communityhospitals@health.vic.gov.au">communityhospitals@health.vic.gov.au</a>.</p> <p>At the time of writing this report, Diamond Creek BMX project has to be re-located. Following extensive investigations into both Cultural Heritage Management and flood assessments, the original site was found to be unfeasible and a new site has had to be found. Planning and development investigations are underway on determining the suitability a new site within close proximity to the original site. Once a suitable site is confirmed, Council will then be briefed on the new location and new project timelines before being asked to approve a public consultation process. Until such time that the new location for the project is approved, new start and completion timeframes cannot be provided. It is expected that new project timelines will be able to be provided as part of the public consultation process.</p> <p>The opening of the Alistair Knox Park Changing Places and amenities facility has been delayed largely due to contaminated soils on site and significant delays encountered for service connections. The new facility is scheduled to be operational at the beginning of May.</p>
<p>4. [REDACTED]</p> <p>Good morning, I’d like to see Dingley Dell Road , North Warrandyte sealed as part of the unsealed roads policy. It sits at number three on the list of roads identified as needing attention. The condition of the road has continued to deteriorate, the culvert drains are no longer fit for purpose and the run off in heavy rain makes the road almost impossible to drive on and causes damage to properties. The grading schedule is not frequent enough to maintain the road and the response times after a rain event often run into weeks. Furthermore those unfamiliar to the road (tradies and delivery drivers ) often end up in the drains and need to be towed out. Council cars have also gotten stuck in the drains and have required a tow. In the event of a speedy evacuation for a fire event, it is highly likely a car will come off the road which will result in a death or serious injury. Several votes have been held for a special charge scheme, but fail owing to the large cost on the residents. It is no longer a road just used by residents it has become a thoroughfare and as such needs an urgent upgrade.</p>	<p>All unsealed roads in the Shire have been assessed against Council’s Unsealed Roads Improvement Prioritisation Policy (June 2024). The Unsealed Roads Priority List (December 2024) shows the results of the assessment and is available on Council’s website.</p> <p>Dingley Dell Road received a score of 26 and is the third project on the list. The road received a relatively high score against many criteria, including criteria associated with traffic volume, through traffic use, road standard and community safety.</p> <p>Youngs Road is the first project on the list and has been budgeted for road sealing in 2024/2025. Cassells Road, which is the second project on the list, has been included in the draft budget for road sealing in 2025/2026. Dingley Dell Road may be considered for funding in 2026/2027 or thereafter, dependent on the availability of funding and competing funding demands.</p>

<p>5. [REDACTED]</p> <p>I recommend consulting with the Victorian Government to reallocate the \$2 million intended for the “Edendale / Eltham Dog Park Trail Connection ” to a more critical infrastructure project: a safe formal pedestrian rail crossing between Coolabah Reserve and the Eltham North Adventure Playground.</p>	<p>Council officers are in current dialogue with the Department of Transport and Planning to discuss the feasibility of the proposed pedestrian railway crossing at Coolabah Reserve, including funding opportunities to deliver on this project.</p>
<p>6. [REDACTED]</p> <p>May I ask why is it necessary to increase the council rates notice every year given that Nillumbik residents are paying the second highest rates charge in Victoria. What is the council doing to gain additional revenue and halt additional spending so that the Nillumbik residents in future are paying council rates closer to the mid table in terms of average council rates.</p>	<p>Council levies rates and charges under the Local Government Act 1989 in order to fund, deliver, and maintain essential community infrastructure and services. The increase to rates is in compliance with the rate-capping framework established by the Victorian State Government and is reflective of the continued provision of services, which have been maintained at existing levels, and capital works program delivery. Council continues to pursue grant opportunities and review available revenue streams.</p>
<p>7. [REDACTED]</p> <p><u>Assumption of Zero Growth</u></p> <p>The budget is based on a primary assumption of zero growth in NSC service capacity, and the 3.00% increase in rates is caused by cost increases (inflation) alone. There appears to be no or minimal allowance for any housing/rateable property growth which would affect forecast revenues and expenditure through increased demand for services. This shortcoming gives an inaccurate and potentially misleading view of the budget projections and should be addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does NSC plan to provide services and infrastructure to meet either current growth in dwellings, or the State government housing target of 6,500 new dwellings by 2051, and why is this not reflected in the budget and discussed in the assumptions?</li> <li>• Why aren't risks to Council's future financial health caused by growth uncertainties explored in the budget?</li> </ul> <p><u>Level of Detail on Expenditure</u></p> <p>There is insufficient detail in the Section 2, Service Area expenditure/revenue/net cost tables to ascertain where the funds are to be directed, especially for large expenditure items.</p> <p>In particular, we note the budget introduction refers to 'budget allocations to multiple climate and biodiversity initiatives'. We also note an increase in expenditure of some \$1.2 million or 16.8% in Parks and Reserves Maintenance. However, this large service area includes parks, sportsgrounds, conservation reserves, street trees and roadsides, and it is impossible to see where additional funding is planned. Similarly, there is no detail under the Service Area for Environment and Conservation, with a \$0.2 million or 16.5% funding increase.</p> <p>We request further detailed information be made openly available by NSC.</p> <p><u>Expenditure for Environment, Biodiversity and the Green Wedge</u></p> <p>While there appears to be an increase in expenditure for Parks and Reserves Maintenance and Environment and Conversation, there is no specific mention of the critical actions or expenditure relating to the Green Wedge Management Plan 2019, the Biodiversity Strategy 2024 or the Urban Tree Canopy Strategy 2024-2040. Specific mention and budget allocations to these strategies are necessary.</p> <p><u>Service Performance Outcome Indicators</u></p> <p>There are no service performance outcome measures relating to environment, biodiversity and climate action, despite monitoring and outcome performance being integral to commitments in these various strategies. Appropriate service performance outcome indicators are requested for these items.</p> <p><u>Capital Replacements and Renewals</u></p> <p>Allocation of funds to capital replacements and renewals is below desired levels of funding over the forecast 10-year period. Council could potentially fund some of this shortfall through its operating surpluses and increasing cash reserves to maintain infrastructure and facilities to their required service levels.</p> <p>We ask: Does our community want Council to have cash in the bank or roads with fewer potholes and facilities that are safe? We certainly do.</p>	<p>Currently, the budget is modelled on an increase of 130 properties per year, which is below the Government led housing targets, however it is reflective of historical and anticipated growth under non-accelerated circumstances.</p> <p>For this budget cycle a conservative approach has been taken, waiting for further understanding on the implications of these targets, as at a very high level, the additional (new) rates income will offset (or at least partly offset) any additional expenditure/ investment into infrastructure.</p> <p>The Budget document is a statutory document prepared in line with the Local Government Model Budget and is prepared in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements and better practice. Risks and uncertainties are explored within the modelling processes undertaken annually.</p> <p>Service performance indicators are developed and set by Local Government Victoria. There are no indicators currently directly linked to environment, biodiversity or climate action outcomes planned for the 2025/2026 reporting period. All full listing of indicators can be found on the “Know Your Council” website, <a href="http://www.vic.gov.au/know-your-council">www.vic.gov.au/know-your-council</a></p> <p>The surplus quoted in the Income Statement is prepared in compliance with Australian Accounting Standards. The accounting surplus includes capital grants and capital contributions, while the corresponding expenditure is recognised in the Statement of Capital Works rather than in the Income Statement.</p> <p>Each year Council considers the capital works program and prioritisation of projects within the constrained financial environment. Council has made strategic and informed decisions surrounding the allocation of capital works programming for the next financial year, which includes considerations of the underlying renewal requirements of local community infrastructure.</p>

8. [REDACTED]

I have three major questions regarding the draft 2025-2026 budget which appears to have slashed funding to support for our large and ageing community and for children and families.

In summary, my three questions are as follows:

- Q 1. What is the justification for the huge reduction (93%) in Age and family services? (p45)
- Q 2. How will State and Federal Government grants (p41) for these services be spent?
- Q 3. What became of Council's Strategic Objective for Community and Connection in 2024-2025?

Q 1. Re 4.1.10 p 45 -Other expenses "Expenses are forecast to decrease by 14.53% (\$1.06 million) mainly as a result of reductions in aged and family services related expenditure "

**What is the justification** for this decrease in Aged and family services?

2024-2025 \$444,000

2025-2026 \$ 33,000

Q 2. 4.14 Grants p41

**Commonwealth Government**

Operating grants

**Aged Care**

2024-2025 \$133,000

20245-2026 \$137,000

**Family and Children**

2024-2025 \$237,000

2025-2026 \$264,000

**Non-recurrent**

2024-2025 \$307,000

**State Government**

2024-2025. \$473,000

2025-2026 \$300,000

**Non recurrent**

2024-2025 \$390,000

Total Grants Received in 2024-2025 for Aged and family services.

Aged \$133,000 plus Family and Children \$1,100,000 = \$1,233,000

Council budget 2024-2025 was \$444,000.

**What happened to the remaining \$777,000 in State and Commonwealth Grants?**

2025-2026 Grants

Aged \$137,000 plus Family and Children \$264,000 (State) plus \$300,000 (Comm)= \$701,000

BUT Council draft Budget 2025-2026 has combined Aged and family services \$33,000

What is happening to the remaining \$688,000 grant money allocated for this purpose?

ALSO (See **Other Services**) funded by large recurrent grants e.g. Maternal and Child Health \$831,000 (2024-2025); 205-2026 \$661,000 (2025-2026) are not accounted for. How will these funds be spent?

Q 3. What was the outcome of Council's 2024-2025 budget objective to support Nillumbik's ageing community? If achieved, how was the money spent? **Stated Strategic objective: Community and Connection Community health and wellbeing, support for Nillumbik's ageing community (\$1.86 million)** .

Aged and Family Services expenditure within Council's budget is spread across wages, contracts and materials, and other expenditure. The 2025/2026 budget document compares the 2024/2025 forecast versus the 2025/2026 budget allocation. The decrease in the Other Expenditure component of the Aged and Family Services budget, which is the figure referred to, is due to the year-end forecast including unspent grants from prior year that were brought forward into 2024/2025 financial year.

Nillumbik promotes and supports our ageing community with a focus on the overall health, wellbeing and independence of individuals, families and community groups through services, programs, lifelong learning opportunities, infrastructure and initiatives.



<p><a href="https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Council/News-and-publications/Latest-news/Budget-focuses-on-liveability-in-Green-Wedge-Shire">https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Council/News-and-publications/Latest-news/Budget-focuses-on-liveability-in-Green-Wedge-Shire</a> “</p> <p>The above budget-related questions relate to large sums of money which may affect the lives of many community members who are entitled to answers. More clarity is needed about how funding is allocated and more budget details to improve ratepayers’ understanding and participation.</p> <p>██████████        ████████████████████</p>	
<p>9. ██████████</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft budget 2025-26.</p> <p><u>Major initiatives:</u> I am delighted to see the inclusion of the six major initiatives within the Sustainable and Resilient Theme. All of these are important pieces of work which will contribute to our commitment to addressing climate change and protect and enhance biodiversity, as outlined in the Climate Action Plan and the Biodiversity Strategy.</p> <p>Developing the specific outcomes and indicators to demonstrate real progress towards our climate change and biodiversity goals will be a critical next step to ensure these initiatives bring about meaningful changes.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u> I note that the FTE across all Units is predicted to be stable across the next ten years, if this remains the case it is difficult to see how the 22 new actions described in the Biodiversity Strategy Year 1 2024-25 implementation plan, can be achieved. Whilst some redirection may be possible, in general, new initiatives will require new resources, particularly in light of the fact that capacity to continue current and ongoing actions already seems stretched.</p> <p>Many of the new actions in the current (2024-25) biodiversity strategy implementation plan have not yet commenced or achieved their intended outcomes, so no doubt will roll over into the 2025-26, and subsequent budget years. Without increasing resources to undertake these actions it is likely that they will be little more than aspirational intentions. Understanding that there is no new money (other than some potential grants) I suggest that Council adopt a policy of reviewing all vacancies arising in all Units and allocate FTE to priorities arising from the Council plan and other key Strategies such as the Climate Action plan and the Biodiversity Strategy ; to include allocation to a different Unit.</p> <p>Whilst it may be challenging to predict where specific opportunities will arise at this point of budget development, this may be one of the few ways that resources can be made available to resource the stated intentions. This approach, although longer term, would also avoid the need to offer expensive redundancies and avoid the anxiety, disruption and waste that accompanies restructure.</p> <p><u>External Grants</u> I would also like to suggest Council exercise extreme caution when accepting external funding that requires a “matched” Council spend. Whilst such opportunities may seem attractive, and be difficult to refuse, they are often infrastructure related and therefore expensive, escalate as they are implemented and do not necessarily reflect community wide priorities. A further, and very significant downside is that they take scarce resources from other priority spends.</p> <p><u>New Builds</u> In respect of construction, Council should not commit to any new building construction in this current term. Construction costs for new builds are extremely high and usually “blow out”, creating the same impact as stated above, ie resources have to be diverted from other priorities to complete a build, as once it is started it is a complete waste of the money if it cannot be finished. I would rather see Council maintain and possibly undertake small expansions or upgrades to the buildings it already has.</p> <p><u>Service Performance Outcome Indicators</u> Recognising that “Council is required by legislation to identify major initiatives and service performance outcome indicators in the Budget and report against them in the Annual Report to support transparency and accountability.” Pg 12, it is difficult to understand the rationale for the selection of service performance outcome indicators that have been chosen. For none of the four themes areas do they provide a measure of the full range of identified responsibilities in that theme, and some of the choices are quite perplexing For example: • Community and Connection: despite a wide range of services being listed here, service performance data is only required for MCH and library usage • Place and space: again, with the wide range of service areas only three areas have identified service performance outcome indicators and in the case of leisure facilities and services it only relates to use of aquatic facilities, not even</p>	<p>Council has dedicated Environment team who support the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy. Council continues to explore grant opportunities in order to facilitate temporary additional EFTs, although this is not something we can anticipate or budget for. Council does review all vacancies arising to ensure resources are allocated appropriately.</p> <p>Council reviews each grant opportunity on the basis of service and/or infrastructure needs and priorities. All opportunities, both fully funded and those requiring co-contributions are assessed against parameters such as existing asset condition, required service levels, user demand, industry standards, available funding and the existing capital works program or service provision. Co-contribution grants are considered where the opportunity provides significant value to both Council and the community and is financially sustainable.</p> <p>Likewise, new builds are only ever considered when either an existing facility can no longer provide the required level of service for which it was intended or there is no facility providing a service in that area which the community require. Prior to any new build being considered, an existing facility would first be fully assessed to determine whether the desired outcome in terms of service levels and safety can be achieved through an expansion or upgrade of that facility.</p> <p>Service performance indicators are developed and set by Local Government Victoria as part of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF). The indicators in the Budget are those audited by the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office, and are not the full suite of performance indicators, as there are others from the LGPRF and the Council Plan that are reported in the annual report each year. There are currently no indicators directly linked to environment, biodiversity or climate action outcomes planned for the 2025/2026 reporting period. All full listing of indicators can be found on the “Know Your Council” website, <a href="https://www.knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au">Know Your Council   vic.gov.au</a>.</p>

<p>the full range of the leisure services, this seems strange. • Sustainable and resilient – the only data required relates to waste collection, important yes, but not comprehensive. • Responsible and accountable – reporting on the three indicators chosen for this theme do not provide the community with a coherent sense of a responsible and accountable Council . At the very minimum an indicator relating to complaints management and outcomes should be included. Having such a limited range of service performance outcome indicators, with no clear rationale for the selections, does not support transparency and accountability, rather it does the opposite. This approach causes the reader to question why those particular services and indicators have been selected, and wonder how accountability is to be demonstrated for the others. Do the choices only reflect easily reported or required targets? Understanding too that performance indicators for the major initiatives are yet to be determined, so this comment does not apply to the indicators for these.</p>	
<p><b>10. [REDACTED]</b>        Nillumbik Draft Budget 2025–26 Comments        [REDACTED] Ecologist and Conservation Teacher</p> <p>It's very difficult to understand how much funding biodiversity and reserve management actually receive. Presumably, conservation matters are deliberately lumped into broader categories.</p> <p>For example, under Nillumbik rates spending, "conservation management" is included within the category Environment, Parks &amp; Open Space. But open space is hardly conservation — in fact, it's often the direct opposite. Parks can also include playgrounds and dog parks, which are not conservation-focused either.</p> <p>So, from the \$14.89 out of every \$100 of rates attributed to this category, how much actually gets spent on genuine conservation, as opposed to parks and open space? I'd like to know.</p> <p>Under services, conservation seems to also be lumped into Parks and Reserves Maintenance. Straight away, the word "maintenance" doesn't imply conservation. It suggests cutting back branches from walking paths and managing weeds that the public complains about — which, frankly, is about all Nillumbik Council seems to do in some reserves. Again, why is a parks budget lumped together with reserves? They are very different matters!</p> <p>And would you believe it — sporting grounds are also considered part of Parks and Reserves Maintenance. Why? Sport is already under the leisure services category and receives a huge amount of funding!</p> <p>The way I read the draft budget from a conservation standpoint is: you could spend money upgrading already well-maintained sports grounds or maintaining public paths, and it would give the appearance of supporting conservation — simply because the money is coming out of the "reserves management" allocation. To me, this is highly unprofessional and not good enough.</p> <p>The environment is already suffering. As a sports fan and an ex-tennis coach, I can tell you there are already excellent tennis clubs and facilities throughout the shire. It was one of the first things that struck me when I arrived here 10 years ago. Spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on two Panton Hill tennis courts, and taking that money from a reserves budget, absolutely stinks in my opinion.</p> <p>However, I could be mistaken, and funding for reserve management may instead fall under Theme 2.3 – Environment and Conservation. From my reading, however, it appears that a significant portion of this funding is likely to be allocated to education programs, Edendale operations, and threatened species protection. These are all highly worthy initiatives.</p> <p>Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that biodiversity lives and persists within the Shire's reserves and across private land. These natural areas urgently need direct protection and active management if we are serious about safeguarding the Shire's biodiversity values for the future.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend more directly on biodiversity and conservation.</li> <li>Be upfront about what you're actually spending on conservation matters.</li> <li>Create a separate category called Reserve Management.</li> <li>Environment and conservation</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed budget allocation for conservation related expenditure for 2025/2026 is \$1.51 million.</p> <p>The Service definitions are reflective of the 2021-2025 Council Plan. This feedback will be considered as part of the development of the 2025-2029 Council Plan service definitions, and included in the next budget developed.</p>









































































































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