



LATE AGENDA

Council Meeting

Tuesday 17 March 2026

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Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr
GENERAL MANAGER

ED15/26. Site Inspection – Council Determination – 8.2013.211.8 FILE: 26/00033
– 4.55(2) Modification Application for Subdivision – 52
Golden Wattle Circuit, Wattle Ponds

Author: Governance Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise the attendance and responses to questions submitted by Councillors during a site inspection in relation to item DI&P5/26 – Council Determination – 8.2013.211.8 – 4.55(2) Modification application for Subdivision – 52 Golden Wattle Circuit, Wattle Ponds.

FOR INFORMATION


Under the provisions of the POL/1014 - Code of Meeting Practice, Councillors are entitled to submit questions regarding agenda items prior to a Council meeting. This process ensures that Councillors have the necessary information to make informed decisions during the meeting. In line with the principles of transparency and accountability, all information made available to Councillors to inform decision making is to be made available to the general public, with the exception of matters considered in accordance with section 10(a) of the *Local Government Act, 1993*.

Where the most suitable method to obtain information to make an informed decision relating to a development application is via a site inspection, the information provided to Councillors during the site inspection is also made available to the general public. Providing this information supports the integrity of the decision-making process and allows members of the community to access the same information as Councillors in advance of the meeting.

The information provided at the site inspection is noted for information in **Attachment 1**.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) 8.2013.211.8 - 4.55(2) Modification application for
Subdivision – 52 Golden Wattle Circuit, Wattle Ponds - Site
Inspection Report

 SINGLETON COUNCIL	<u>Section 4.55 (Modification) Inspection Report</u>
Officer: Mr R J Albertson	Date of Inspection: 12/03/2026 Time of Inspection: 11.30am
In attendance	Cr s Sue Moore, Sue George, Godfrey Adamthwaite, and Patrick Thompson Staff – Mel Curtis, Mike Duff, Marlie Caban, Ryan Albertson and Rebecca Bailey Applicant – Peter Smith

Application Details

Modification Application No: 8.2013.211.8

Proposed Development: Modification to subdivision of lots and Stages

Property Address: 52 Golden Wattle Circuit WATTLE PONDS NSW 2330

Councillor	Question/s raised	Response/s provided
Cr Moore	Where's the block of land start?	From the fence and around, Stage 2 is up the road, and the roads will connect with Stage 3. This was also indicated on site using the site plans lodged with the modification application.
Cr Moore	What does the modification relate to?	Stage 3 and 4 consolidating into Stage 3 and an additional 7 blocks in the existing footprint.
Cr Moore	There was one submission?	Yes, one submission was received raising concerns in regard to lot size density.
Cr Moore	Does lot density remain with an acceptable range?	Yes, they do remain within an acceptable range.
Cr Adamthwaite	Would be good to have a map with an overlay.	There are plans as part of the modification showing what has been approved and what is proposed. Plans were provided on site showing what is currently approved and what is proposed.
Cr Thompson	Is there going to be restrictions on fencing?	Question taken on notice by planning staff. Can now advise that condition 19 requires that a Restrictive Covenant pursuant to s88B of the <i>Conveyancing Act 1919</i> be created over those lots adjoining Long

		Gully Road where necessary to maintaining safe intersection sight distance.
Cr Thompson	Is this area known for any threatened habitat?	This was assessed at the DA stage, and the modification application provided an addendum to confirm that the modification does not result in a change to the impact on ecology. There is a condition in the consent regarding hollow bearing trees. All trees to be retained are tagged. Covenants and Restrictions carry with the land as does the APZ's. APZ's are set out with bollards and signage and forms of the sale contract.
Cr George	What is the fire rating on the blocks?	Varies from no rating to BAL29. This is an assessment undertaken at DA stage for dwellings and not part of the subdivision assessment. This modification was referred to the RFS.

**ED16/26. Responses to Questions on the Business Paper - 17
March 2026**
Author: Governance Officer

FILE: 26/00126

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide responses to questions submitted by Councillors in relation to items contained within the Business Paper for the 17 March 2026 Council Meeting.

FOR INFORMATION

Under the provisions of the POL/1014 - Code of Meeting Practice, Councillors are entitled to submit questions regarding agenda items prior to a Council meeting. This process ensures that Councillors have the necessary information to make informed decisions during the meeting.

In line with the principles of transparency and accountability, responses to these questions must also be made available to the general public. Providing this information supports the integrity of the decision-making process and allows members of the community to access the same information as Councillors in advance of the meeting.

The questions received from Councillors relate to specific items in the Business Paper, and the responses have been prepared by relevant staff to provide clear and accurate information. The information contained in this report and its attachment does not alter the original recommendations or outcomes of the Business Paper.

This report provides responses to questions submitted by Councillors in relation to items on the Business Paper for the 17 March 2026 Council Meeting. The responses are provided to ensure that both Councillors and members of the public have access to the same information prior to consideration of the relevant agenda items.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Business Paper Questions - Council Meeting - 17 March
2026

RESPONSES TO COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS
REGARDING BUSINESS PAPER 17 MARCH 2026



Councillor	Report Ref	Question/s raised	Response/s provided
Mayor Sue Moore	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	Can we ask our insurance if they can indemnify the structure until September	The existing dome cannot be structurally certified through to September without first undertaking significant structural intervention works. Without certification, the dome must stay decommissioned and is recommended for demolition to avoid risk to public safety. Insurance cannot cover the structure without certification.
Cr Yeomans	GM13/26 – Minutes – Singleton Legacy Fund Governance Panel	My understanding of the legacy funds is that interest earned is to be available for use, it seems the capital is in decline?	The infrastructure management fund (IMF) is governed by the Council adopted IMF Plan of Management. This Plan of Management recognises that infrastructure spending fluctuates and has no requirement to spend only the interest component. In the case of the pool cover, if the amount is required, it is better to spend existing funds than to borrow funds.
Cr Yeomans	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	re pool cover, Is the 6.69m budget allocation meant to accommodate compensation, design, planning & building?	\$6.5M is the estimated budget provision required to replace the existing dome with a new “Like for Like” enclosure built to current engineering standards and design improvements e.g. glued laminate timber portal frames instead of steel trusses to extend asset service life. This is only one of the proposed solutions staff are currently reviewing. A further report will come to the April meeting with recommended next steps. This budget does not cover the impact of reduced revenue, which is currently being analysed.
Cr Yeomans	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	What was the original estimates on the life of the pool dome & if it has not met its original life estimates, why?	The existing dome was built early 1980’s (construction completed 1983) and so is approximately 43 years old. The expected service life for galvanised steel structures of this type ranges between 25 to 50 years depending on specific operating and construction factors.

Councillor	Report Ref	Question/s raised	Response/s provided
Cr Yeomans	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	What is the connection between the pool roof needing replacing & the new energy installations?	There is no connection as such between the existing dome and the recent energy upgrades funded from the Community Energy Upgrades Fund (CEUF) program, which were for hot water plant for amenities, showers, taps etc converted from gas to electric. However, a new enclosure for the 25m pool may allow for roof mounted solar PV panels.
Cr Yeomans	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	The Unallocated Loans being repurposed for the pool cover, will they need to be used for their original purpose in the future?	No, the unallocated loans were for a project, which has subsequently attracted grant funding.
Cr Yeomans	GM10/26 – Minutes – Audit Risk and Improvement Committee – 18 February 2026	What is the scout system?	Scout is a recruitment management system used by Council
Cr Yeomans	ED11/26 – Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents for Public Exhibition	What are the new fees & charges can you provide a link or file that outlines them?	New fees can be identified in the Fees and Charges report, where the 'Increase %' column is blank. The Council Meeting Agenda Report includes a table which highlights the significant additions and increases to the Fees and Charges.
Cr George	ED11/26 – Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents for Public Exhibition - Fees & Charges Waste Disposal point 3 Pg 60	Should be <i>quantities</i> not qualities of paint	'Qualities of paint' is a typo in the Council Meeting Agenda Report only. The Fees and Charges report reflects the correct wording.
Cr George	DCCS15/26 Draft Debt recovery Policy Pg 70	Can we please check how words are broken up on a new line eg community, money	Noted
Cr George	DCCS15/26 Draft Debt recovery Policy	Delete <i>needs to be</i> and replace with <i>is</i>	Noted

Councillor	Report Ref	Question/s raised	Response/s provided
	Pg 70 3.1 3rd para		
Cr George	DCCS15/26 Draft Debt recovery Policy Pg 71 5.2.8	Add use between <i>or other</i>	Noted
Cr George	DCCS15/26 Draft Debt recovery Policy Pg 71 5.2.10	This does not allow for the use of other technology to inform the ratepayer.	The use of technology is included as a method of sending the reminder letter to the Debtor in 5.2.8. 5.2.10 refers to a failure to respond to the reminder letter.
Cr George	DCCS16/26 Hardship Policy 12 Review Date Pg 86	This policy has 2 years, the previous 4 years, many other policies have moved to 4 years is there a reason for reverting to 2 years?	Thank you, this will be changed to 4 years see proposed amended recommendation in response to Cr Watson's question on this policy below.
Cr George	Hardship Policy FOGO	In Council discussions on the introduction of FOGO the increased cost incurred by residents was discussed particularly as they apply to renters, are renter covered as sundry debtors? Do we need to include the information that was discussed re FOGO but could not be changed until this policy was revised?	The income derived from the implementation of FOGO is included on the rates notice and therefore, the property owner (rate payer) is responsible for the payment of this service. People who are renting a property are not responsible for this charge and are not held as sundry debtors. The recovery of the cost of FOGO is covered under the application of this policy to ratepayers.
Cr George	CC5/26 Mountain Bike Club Pg 94	How much would it cost Council to maintain the Pioneer Road area used by the Mountain Bike Club, given it is also a Singleton Council Fire Trail? Is it possible for the lease to include provision for a fee waiver if the costs incurred by the club in maintaining the ground are greater than the fee? Can Council pass	Council does not have a budget for maintaining fire trails throughout the LGA. There have been occasional instances where Council in conjunction with RFS have undertaken fire trail maintenance with this being funded via grants or through the RFS. The current policy does not allow for a rebate of the minimum fee and this would need to be made as a decision by Council. The fire trail that runs directly through the MTB licensed area is not used as part of their riding tracks

Councillor	Report Ref	Question/s raised	Response/s provided
		on its responsibilities regarding the Fire Trail to another group or is a cost still incurred by Council?	and is not noted for maintenance by the MTB within the Vegetation Management Plan which is annexed to the licence agreement. Responsibility for maintenance of this fire trail cannot be passed to the MTB Club.
Cr Watson	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	What is the shortest timeframe for heating of the outdoor 50m pool if funding is made available?	Staff are still assessing the concept of an outdoor heated 50m pool. However early estimate for timeframe is 6 - 9 months.
Cr Watson	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	What is the shortest timeframe for the dome roof demolition?	The shortest timeframe estimated by staff to demolish the existing dome is 10 weeks. If approved to proceed today, and subject to other construction factors, it is expected to be completed early June this year.
Cr Watson	GM14/26 – Gym & Swim 25m Pool Enclosure Next Steps	Could the 25m pool be operational this winter if the roof structure was removed?	Staff are still assessing the concept of an outdoor heated 25m pool. However early estimate for timeframe is 6 - 9 months. This is due to the heating requirements for an outdoor pool being more intensive than an indoor pool.
Cr Watson	DCCS20/26 – Minutes – Singleton Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee – 03/02/2026	In the minutes of the meeting the committee requested that council send a copy of DAs out for public feedback to the WLALC, does this request require a council motion or is this able to be actioned operationally?	This request does not require a Council Motion and has been actioned operationally.
Cr Watson	DCCS16/26 – Draft Hardship Policy	Can a motion be moved at the council meeting this week to include in the policy the provision to waive waste fees for households (owners and renters) who are experiencing hardship and require a weekly red bin due to large households (over 6 people) or 2 children in	This would require a motion to be moved that requested deferral of the item and provision of the details of the redraft request for the reworked draft policy so that it can be considered at a future meeting. This will allow the implications of this change to be transparent for Councillors and the community.

Councillor	Report Ref	Question/s raised	Response/s provided
		nappies, or would this require a deferral of the item for one month and a redraft?	

Excluded Items			
Cr George	Affordable Action Housing Plan 6 Implementation plan Pg 33	2 nd action has no time frame	Noted
Delivery Program & Operational Plan page numbers refer to the pages in the document not the excluded Agenda			
Cr George	5.2.1.16 Council election Pg 68/69	Does this have actions for each year or only 2028-29, in ED13/26 it has no actions until 2028-29?	This action is for 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 only. The draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan has been updated to reflect this.
Cr George	5.2.2.1 Long Term Financial Plan Pg 70	As part of the development and maturing of the LTFP and our financial position a Financial Improvement Project was implemented by Council in 2024 with an aim of saving \$2m in the 2024-25 financial	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the budget for 2025-26, additional cost pressures were in an early draft. During the development of the budget, prior to public exhibition, more than \$2m was taken out of the budget. However, the end of year results will be negatively impacted by the increase in depreciation. 2. During the preparation of the 2027 budget the following strategies have been implemented: A zero index has been retained over expenditure where possible, with the exception in expenditure that there is a known

		<p>year, was this savings achieved?</p> <p>What strategies have been implemented to control costs and increase revenue in the last financial year?</p> <p>How effective have these strategies been, given the increase in the deficit projected for this financial year?</p>	<p>increase for example, Award increases for salaries and wages and indicated increase in insurance costs.</p> <p>Rating income has been modelled on the rate cap of 4.2% as provided by IPART. With the exception of Legislative charges and Water and Sewer all fees and charges have been increased by the rate peg of 4.2%, Water has been increased by the CPI of 3.8% and Sewer by 4.8%.</p> <p>Legislative charges (revenue) will be increased by the maximum permissible by the relevant legislation.</p> <p>3. These strategies along with an extensive review of the budget, have produced more than \$2m in savings from the early draft budget. However, cost pressures continue to put negative pressure on Singleton and many other councils. Finance and Management will continue to strive for further budget improvements during the year.</p>
Cr George	Budget 2026/27 Income & Expenditure Pg 73	2 nd last line <i>Financial</i>	This has been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
		2 nd para 4 th line should this not be the 2025-2026 result	This should be 2025/2026 and has been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
	Budget 2026/27 Rate increase Pg 73	Last sentence states income statement for one year ending 30 June 2027, on page 74 it states 5 years	The income statement on page 74 is for five years ending 30 June 2030. This has been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

<p>Cr George</p>	<p>Cash Expenses Cover Ratio Pg 78</p>	<p>Given the deficit budget, should council not investigate investing more cash, so increasing income and making more effective use of the cash assets we have?</p>	<p>Council, through its investment policy, ensures compliance with the Ministerial Investment Order while maximising returns on its investments.</p> <p>Currently Council is allowed to invest up to 30% of its total funds into TCorp Growth Funds. This normally produces higher returns than pure chase investments (term deposits and floating rate notes). However, with the higher returns comes both higher risk and higher volatility. Council’s Investment Advisor has advised against going higher than 30%. In addition to the TCorp investment, Council maximises cash investment returns within the bounds of the Investment Policy. The current portfolio has produced around 3% above the return benchmark for the last two years, producing an additional \$2m in returns each year.</p> <p>The finance team is vigilant to maintain an investment portfolio that is linked to our cashflow to ensure that sufficient cash is available to pay our creditors, employees and other liabilities as they fall due, without the need to redeem investments early and then have the impact of break costs for these investments.</p>
<p>Cr George</p>	<p>Infrastructure Asset Renewal Pg 79</p>	<p>What measures are in place to improve this ratio, given the issue of depreciation and the roads assets?</p>	<p>This ratio is derived from the expenditure on the renewal of assets divided by the Depreciation expense.</p> <p>To increase this ratio the amount expended on asset renewal would need to increase to offset the increased depreciation roads assets.</p> <p>It is noted that over the past few years the capital program has been supported by the availability of grant funding for new assets which has lead to a favourable result for the building and infrastructure renewals ratios during this period.</p>

			<p>With the decrease in available grant funding, this ratio will alter over the next few years as asset renewal expenditure increases.</p> <p>The increase in the depreciation for the Road assets further dilutes this ratio.</p>
Cr George	Income & Expenditure Pg 80-83	<p>What measures have been put in place/are being considered to manage the difference between income and expenditure for a range of services, accepting that some will never be cost neutral?</p>	<p>There is a proposal for a full and comprehensive review of all fees and charges to ensure that Council is able to recover as much as possible to assist in the offsetting of the cost of these services. Within the bounds of the relevant legislation (if applicable).</p> <p>This will include investigating all income streams and searching for new revenue opportunities.</p> <p>As part of the Financial Improvement Plan selected service reviews are proposed to be conducted, and identified opportunities for managing the differences between income and expenditure will be communicated to Council for its consideration.</p>
Cr George	Capital Works Pg 86	<p>This figure is much more realistic than the \$40m last year and more attainable</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
		<p>A dollar value next to each project would assist in understanding the spend</p>	<p>Staff will consider this during the public exhibition period, edits will be made if possible within this time. This will also be considered when compiling the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2027/2028.</p>
Cr George	Waste Services Commercial urban (optional) Pg 103	<p>Last sentence missing organics</p>	<p>This has been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.</p>
Cr George	Waste Services 1st column last line Pg 119	<p>Discharge, no hyphen</p>	<p>This has been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.</p>

Cr George	Non residential Sewer with Pressure Sewer Pg 120	3 rd line <i>sewerage</i> 2 nd last line <i>maintenance</i>	These have been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
Excluded Items			
Cr George	Operational Plan update 1.1.2.1 Pg 343	If it is completed why does it state 50% progress?	This action has been completed and 100% progress is correct. This has been updated in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
Cr George	2.2.3.4 Programmed infrastructure inspections for condition Pg 354	Given the increase in depreciation for roads etc in the last review, are the depreciation figures updated following each inspection/review or are the changes left until the end of the cycle resulting in possible huge changes in depreciation?	Inspections are conducted to ascertain condition and inform maintenance intervention. Internal inspections do not contribute to valuation data that is used to calculate depreciation. Adjustments are incorporated in our financial practice; however, these are based on accounting practice not the physical inspections. The externally conducted, audited revaluation process and inspections conducted every five years is the key driver to identifying depreciation.
Cr George	5.1.2.2 Media coverage Pg 370	The figure given is not very large, is the value of required advertising eg Policy changes and public exhibition separate to this figure?	The figure is the spends for December 2025 and is the average monthly spend for all requirements including policy changes and public exhibition.