



# Unscheduled Council Meeting Agenda

**Tuesday 31 March 2026 at 6:00 pm**  
Council Chambers (and by video conferencing)  
East Gippsland Shire Council Corporate Centre  
273 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875



## Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land and pays deep respect to all First Nations peoples and communities with enduring cultural connections to East Gippsland, who have cared for and nurtured Country for tens of thousands of years.

We honour and celebrate the rich diversity, living cultures, and ongoing contributions of all First Nations peoples who live, work, visit, and play across East Gippsland.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations communities who, together, continue to shape and contribute to the region we know as East Gippsland. The place where we, as Local Government, deliver services and support to our community.

## Council information

East Gippsland Shire Council live streams, records and publishes its meetings via webcasting ([youtube.com/c/EastGippyTV](https://youtube.com/c/EastGippyTV)) to enhance the accessibility of its meetings to the broader East Gippsland community.

These recordings are also archived and available for viewing by the public or used for publicity or information purposes. At the appropriate times during the meeting, any members of the gallery who are addressing the council will have their image, comments or submissions recorded.

No other person has the right to record Council meetings unless approval has been granted by the Chair.

In line with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councillors are able to attend Council meetings electronically or in person and the meetings will be open to the public via livestreaming.

Members of the public are invited to view the Council Meeting livestreamed by following the link on Council's website or Facebook page.

## Councillors

Cr Jodie Ashworth (Mayor)  
Cr Tom Crook (Deputy Mayor)  
Cr Arthur Allen  
Cr Sonia Buckley  
Cr Barry Davis  
Cr Joanne Eastman  
Cr Bernie Farquhar  
Cr Ian Trevaskis  
Cr John White

## Executive Leadership Team

Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer  
Stuart McConnell General Manager Assets and Environment  
Sarah Johnston General Manager Business Excellence  
Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community

## Purpose of Council meetings

- (1) Council holds scheduled meetings and, when required, unscheduled meetings to conduct the business of Council.
- (2) Council is committed to transparency in decision making and, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council and Delegated Committee meetings are open to the public and the community are able to attend.
- (3) Meetings will only be closed to members of the public, in accordance with section 66 of the Act, if:
  - (a) there are clear reasons for particular matters to remain confidential; or
  - (b) a meeting is required to be closed for security reasons; or
  - (c) it is necessary to enable the meeting to proceed in an ordinary manner.
- (4) A meeting closed to the public for the reasons outlined in sub-rule 3(b) or 3(c) will continue to be livestreamed. In the event a livestream is not available:
  - (a) the meeting may be adjourned; or
  - (b) a recording of the proceedings may be available on the Council website.

## Governance Rules

A copy of East Gippsland Shire Council's governance rules can be found at <https://www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/council/council-policies>

## Councillors Pledge

As Councillors of East Gippsland Shire Council, we solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that we will consider each item on this agenda in the best interests of the whole municipal community.

## Vision

To foster inclusive, connected, communities and places where all East Gippslanders prosper, and endeavour not to leave anyone behind.

## Our Strategic Themes

Our Community Vision In 2040, our people, place, environment and economy will be inclusive, connected, sustainable and resilient for the growth and wellbeing of our unique and diverse communities.

- Our Communities: Will include, encourage, respect, and value everyone.
- Our Place: Will be accessible, safe, connected, and healthy.
- Our Environment: Will be managed and preserved for all generations.
- Our Economy: Will be sustainable, innovative, and supportive of existing and emerging industries.

# Index

<b>1 Procedural</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1.1 Recognition of Traditional Custodians .....	6
1.2 Purpose of Meeting.....	6
1.3 Apologies .....	6
1.4 Declaration of Conflict of Interest.....	6
1.5 Next Meeting.....	6
<b>2 Officer Reports</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.1 Assets and Environment.....	6
2.1.1 CON2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction Works .....	6
<b>3 Close of Meeting</b> .....	<b>13</b>

# 1 Procedural

## 1.1 Recognition of Traditional Custodians

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land and pays deep respect to all First Nations peoples and communities with enduring cultural connections to East Gippsland, who have cared for and nurtured Country for tens of thousands of years.

We honour and celebrate the rich diversity, living cultures, and ongoing contributions of all First Nations peoples who live, work, visit, and play across East Gippsland.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations communities who, together, continue to shape and contribute to the region we know as East Gippsland. The place where we, as Local Government, deliver services and support to our community.

## 1.2 Purpose of Meeting

In accordance with Rule 4.3(3) of Council's Governance Rules, Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor Cr Jodie Ashworth and Councillors, has called an unscheduled Council meeting to consider an item relating to Council business.

Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer, as required under Rule 4.3(6) of Council's Governance Rules, has given notice on the Council website of the unscheduled Council Meeting on Tuesday 31 March at 6.00 pm.

## 1.3 Apologies

## 1.4 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

## 1.5 Next Meeting

The next Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 21 April 2026 at the Corporate Centre, 273 Main Street Bairnsdale commencing at 6.00 pm.

## 2 Officer Reports

### 2.1 Assets and Environment

#### 2.1.1 CON2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction Works

Authorised by General Manager Assets and Environment

---

#### Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachment 1 (CON2026 1789 Contract Award Summary)**, **2 (CON2026 1789 Tender Evaluation Process)** and **3 (CON2026 1789 Probity Report)** are confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item would unreasonably expose tenderers to disadvantage by disclosing commercially sensitive pricing and evaluation information.

#### Purpose

This report recommends that Council award Contract CON2026 1789 – Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction Works, subject to approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). This approval relates to environmental vegetation offset management and the impact of removing native vegetation from the proposed runway works site.

#### Key Points

The Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction works identifies the upgrade of Runway 04/22 as a key project to enhance Bairnsdale Airport's (airport) capabilities and expand its operations by accommodating larger more diverse aircraft. This is driven by several objectives (and potential growth opportunities), including:

- Strengthening regional emergency response infrastructure and capabilities.
- Enabling larger aircraft operations and removing reliance on conditional pavement concessions.
- Improving compliance with aviation safety and regulatory standards.
- Supporting economic development through increased aviation activity, visitation and potential private sector investment.

The airport is one of three airports owned by Council within the East Gippsland Shire and is the busiest airport, with an estimated 3,000 aircraft movements per annum, which are serviced by two Code 1B sealed runways. (**Attachment 4 - Bairnsdale Runway Footprint**)

It is also considered the second busiest airport in regional Victoria for Air Ambulance Victoria (AAV) patient transfers and was the key hub for aerial firefighting and the military emergency response during the Black Summer bushfire event which burnt 56% of the Local Government Area.

This project will strengthen and lengthen the runway to ensure the airport has the capacity to support a wider range of aircraft both emergency and commercial into the future, particularly as AAV have indicated moving to larger aircraft which will be landing to now support the new AAV facility that has recently been completed at the airport.

This enlarged runway will also assist in increasing the capacity of the airport by allowing larger aircraft to land ensuring more resources will be available to assist local communities in a timelier manner during any future emergency events.

Given the value of this contract the tender evaluation was subject to probity examination due to the value of the contract. **(Attachment 3 - Probity Report – provided to Councillors under separate cover).**

## **Recommendation**

### ***That Council:***

- 1. accepts the tender submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ for CON2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension & Lighting Construction works for the Contract amount specified in the CON2026 1789 Contract Award Summary provided at Confidential Attachment 1;**
- 2. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to approve variations to CON2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension & Lighting Construction works up to the contingency amount specified in the CON2026 1789 Contract Award Summary provided at Confidential Attachment 1, subject to the conditions specified in that summary;**
- 3. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to include conditions in the contract to make the awarding:**
  - a. subject to final approval being received from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. This approval relates to environmental vegetation offset management and the impact of removing native vegetation from the proposed runway works site; and**
  - b. subject to the successful contractor confirming that the project can be completed within the funding timelines once the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water approval is obtained under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;**
- 4. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and include conditions necessary to address project risks;**
- 5. authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to finalise the terms and to execute the necessary contract documents;**
- 6. notes that the successful tenderer and contract amount will be published on Council's website following execution of the contract documents and after unsuccessful tenderers have been formally notified; and**
- 7. resolves that the Confidential Attachments to this report and all discussions relating to them remain confidential.**

## **Strategic Alignment**

Review renewal and maintenance programs to ensure our infrastructure, including public amenities remains safe, reliable, and efficient.

This report has been prepared and aligned with the following theme in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

*Theme 3: Making the most of what we've got*

Outcome – Our assets are well maintained, utilised and meet community needs.

## **Collaborative Procurement**

Pursuant to section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* this report has not been prepared in collaboration with other agencies given the bespoke nature of the contract.

## **Consultation/Community Engagement/Impacts**

Extensive consultation was undertaken during the development of the Bairnsdale Airport Master Plan 2020 (the Master Plan). This consultation identified the runway length, width and pavement strength limitations that constrain current operations. The proposed runway extension directly responds to these findings and gives effect to the Master Plan recommendations, ensuring the airport can continue to meet essential emergency and aviation needs.

Stakeholder engagement in relation to Bairnsdale Airport was undertaken between August and October 2019 using a range of methods, including public drop-in sessions held at the Bairnsdale Airport Terminal. These sessions provided community members and airport users with the opportunity to ask consultants questions, view planning information and provide direct feedback.

Phone calls, emails and one on one discussions were conducted with a broad group of stakeholders including, tenants and user groups, commercial aviation representatives, emergency service agencies such as Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and AAV, Council officers and management.

Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement is being undertaken in alignment with the principles of Council's engagement policy.

A 'YourSay' page is live and provides the opportunity for community members to view information and project updates regarding progress of the design and procurement process. The 'YourSay' page will be supported by notifications through Council's existing communications channels, including social media posts and Shire Noticeboard advertisements.

Further engagement will take place as required throughout the construction process. Use of the 'YourSay' page will be further supported using Council's existing communications channels, and community channels once awarding of the contract is completed.

Letters of support have been received from key emergency and health stakeholders, including DEECA, Toll Aviation, Gippsland Lakes Complete Health and Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, as well as the local Aero Club. Support has also been provided by both Federal and State local members.

## Opportunities and Risks

The airport improvements will contribute to the social and emotional security for East Gippsland and benefits include:

- Enhanced community recovery and future disaster resilience.
- Larger emergency aircraft will enhance response and comfort to community members during an event.
- Larger AAV aircraft will access the airport and place peace of mind to patients requiring medical transfers to larger hospitals in Melbourne.
- Supporting economic development through increased aviation activity, visitation and potential private sector investment.

While Regular Public Transport (RPT) services are a potential future outcome, the primary upgrade focus is to improve infrastructure and preparedness to support medical retrievals, emergency response, and safeguard the airport's role in regional aviation.

The risks of this proposal have been considered and as per the Procurement Policy, tenderers were requested to develop a method that minimises risks identified in relation to property access, traffic management, vibration, dust, and other key issues associated with the works.

Other risks identified are:

- Complying with Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) surveys which are critical safety assessments that define 3D airspace around airports, ensuring critical areas remain free from obstacles for safe aircraft take-off, landing, and manoeuvring to identify and address current runway limitations. An annual survey is conducted each year to mitigate this risk.
- Pavement failure due to incorrect pavement design – an independent design review was undertaken so that the pavement design did not rely on one subconsultant only.
- Project delay impacts from the DCCEEW approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This approval relates to environmental vegetation offset management and the impact of removing native vegetation from the proposed runway works site. Council is responding in a timely manner to service any DCCEEW requests for information pertaining to any environmental concerns.

## Climate Change

This report considers potential climate change risks and impacts relevant to the Officer recommendation and aligns with the applicable climate change functions, categories, and legislative obligations, as detailed below:

### *Legislation*

*Local Government Act 2020* (including ss. 8-9)

### *Category*

Emergency Management: Consideration is given to climate change in all elements of the Planning, Preparation, Response, Recovery (PPRR) process.

## Conflicts of Interest

Officers preparing this report have no conflict of interest to declare.

## **Attachments**

1. CONFIDENTIAL - CON 2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction works - Contract Award Summary [**2.1.1.1** - 2 pages]
2. CONFIDENTIAL - CON 2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction works - TEP Report - FINAL [**2.1.1.2** - 17 pages]
3. CONFIDENTIAL - Probity Review Report [**2.1.1.3** - 2 pages]
4. Bairnsdale Runway footprint [**2.1.1.4** - 1 page]



### 3 Close of Meeting