



Annual Business Plan and Budget 2025/26

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Playford acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional land of the Kaurna people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country.

The City of Playford would also like to pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



Recognition of Forebears

The City of Playford also acknowledges the people, our forebears, that have contributed to building and defending our great nation and way of life.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Recognition of Forebears	2
Welcome	4
Community Engagement and Submissions Process	5
Executive Summary	6
Our City	8
Playford at a Glance	9
Existing assets	10
Your Council	11
Strategic Planning Framework	12
Growth in focus	15
Budget Summary	18
Delivering for our Community	24
Existing Services (Operating Budget)	26
Existing Assets (Capital Budget)	35
Projects (Capital & Operating Budget)	39
New or Adjusted Services (Operating Budget)	54
Rising Costs (Operating Budget)	56
Funding Pathways	58

Rates	61
Measures and Targets	66
Playford Community Survey	68
Financial Indicators	69
ESCOSA Local Government Advice	72
Budgeted Financial Statements	74
Financial Summary	75
Statement of comprehensive income	76
Operating expense by category	78
Financial Statements	79
Uniform Presentation of Finances	80
Appendix I Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26	86
Appendix II Proposed Capital Works 2025/26 – Suburb Maps	94
Appendix III ESCOSA Advice	121

Welcome





Community Engagement and Submissions Process

The City of Playford recognises the role of community engagement and public consultation to support decision making and ensuring our community can participate in the decision-making process. The Draft Annual Business Plan (Draft Plan) and Budget 2025/26 provides an opportunity for Council to articulate its plans and priorities for the next 12 months.

The community is invited to provide feedback on the Draft Plan during a community engagement period. The community engagement period is undertaken in accordance with Sections 122 and 123 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), which states that Council must adopt a process or processes to ensure that members of the public are given a reasonable opportunity to be involved in the development and review of its strategic management plans. Specifically, the Act requires Council to make its Annual Business Plan and Budget available for public consultation for a period no less than 21 days.

In accordance with the above, and the City of Playford Community Engagement Policy (which states that any legislatively required consultation run for 28 days), the Draft 2025/26 Annual Business Plan and Budget, Long Term Financial Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plan will be released for a public consultation period from Wednesday 30 April to Tuesday 27 May 2025.

During this time, the following activities will be undertaken:

- Advertisements in local newspapers advising the community that the Draft Plans are available for consultation
- Draft Plans and Feedback Forms available at Customer Contact locations
- Draft Plans and online Feedback Forms available on Council's website
- Public Hearing at the 27 May 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting

Further information can be found via our online Engagement Hub at playford.engagementhub.com.au

Executive Summary

Each year Council communicates the services and projects it will deliver to the community through its Annual Business Plan and Budget, Long Term Financial Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plan.

This **Annual Business Plan and Budget 2025/26** has been developed in alignment with the themes outlined in Council's Strategic Plan. We will continue to deliver the things that make a difference to our resident's everyday lives and the services and programs they know and value. This includes services that contribute to a happy and healthy community and help keep our city looking nice and operating safely. We are also committed to focusing on maximising opportunities for external funding and finishing what we have started, whilst always meeting our legislative requirements and legal obligations.

As South Australia's fastest growing council, we expect, on average, 10 additional people each day to call Playford home until 2046. That's 10 more people each day who are out on our roads, using our parks and accessing our services.

We have a responsibility to balance the needs of existing residents while laying the foundations for future generations. This involves providing the parks, sporting facilities, stormwater infrastructure, footpaths, and services our growing community will need.

This year's Annual Business Plan (ABP) outlines that Council will continue to invest over \$125M in supporting the delivery of existing services. The City of Playford delivers 25 services to our community and further details can be found from page 26 onwards.

Council will also invest \$38.4M in renewing or replacing existing assets such as kerbs, footpaths, roads, playspaces and sporting facilities. See Appendix 1, Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26, for further details of these renewal projects.

Our project delivery is gathering pace with several initiatives continuing from prior years making significant progress. The upgrade of Kalara Reserve, Mark Oliphant Kiss & Drop and Argana Park car park and change facilities are anticipated to be complete by the end of 2025. Other continuing projects include the Stebonheath Road/Dalkeith Round Roundabout, Munno Para Sportsground Stage 1 and Dwight Reserve changerooms and car park.

In addition, Council will invest in new projects and services to support the needs of our growing and diverse community. New projects for 2025/26 include:

- Construction of Riverlea District Sportsground (North) Stage 1
- Kerb and footpath infrastructure for Stebonheath Road, Eyre
- Unsealed road capping for Bevan Road and Bentley Road
- Upgrade of the eastern end of Sheedy Road
- City Uplift Projects for two roundabouts The project section of the ABP has been redesigned to show projects in the Execution Phase first – these are the projects where the community will begin to see physical work on the ground or new amenities completed and ready for use.
- Construction of over 3km of New Footpaths
- Stormwater Minor Projects

- Open Space Minor Projects
- Sport and Recreation Minor Projects
- Traffic Management Minor Projects.

As part of the joint delivery of Council's growth area infrastructure obligations (Infrastructure Deeds), detailed design will continue for Frisby Road and Fradd Road, Angle Vale. Planning and design for the Curtis Road/Frisby Road intersection and the upgrades of Chivell Road, Harris Road and Bubner Road will also commence.

A service increase to the Community Support and Grant Program Framework will offer financial support to eligible local community organisations with a project that aims to increase social inclusion and participation and promote health and wellbeing outcomes for Playford residents.

An annual schedule of Community Development Events will also be developed to offer opportunities to gather, celebrate, and enjoy a vibrant lifestyle in Playford.

Like much of the community, local government also faces rising costs and inflationary pressures. Many of these cost pressures are outside Council's control, such as inflation, licence and contract fee increases, as well as legislated superannuation obligations. This means that the cost of providing the same services in 2025/26 will be higher than last year. We have worked diligently to reduce the impact of these cost and inflationary pressures by only factoring in inflationary pressures where necessary. This approach helps minimise the impact for our ratepayers.

This ABP outlines how we will fund the inflationary costs for our existing services and the costs associated with new projects and services. These additional costs to our budget have been partially offset with \$317k of Continuous Improvement savings from Council's existing budget.

Financial sustainability, in line with Council's Finance Strategy, has been a focus in the development of this plan, ensuring Council has the means to fund the services and projects it provides to the community now and into the future.

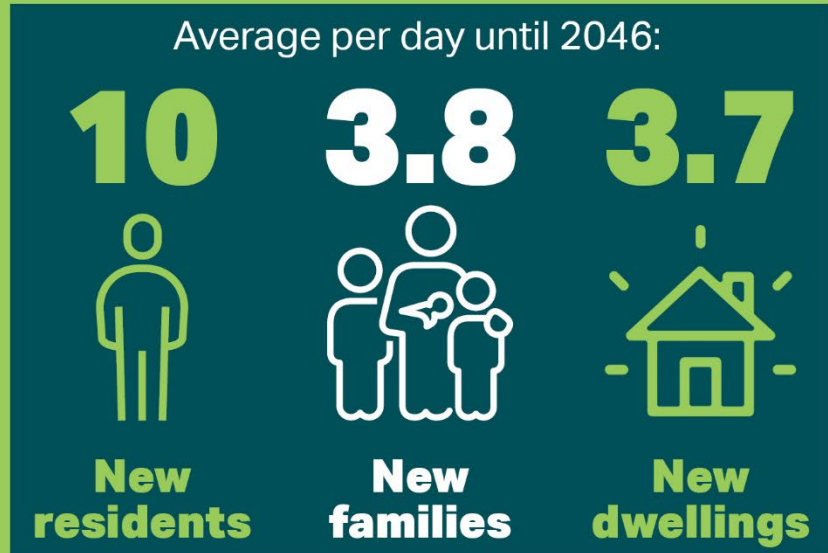
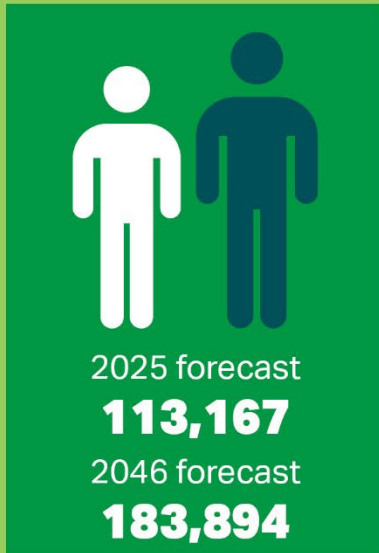
The ABP includes a 4.54% increase in rate revenue for 2025/26. This increase funds new projects and services that the community has asked for, while covering rising costs due to inflation and meeting budget goals that support long-term financial sustainability. We will continue to deliver on the everyday needs of our community, mindful that the decisions we make today will shape our city and community over the next five, ten and twenty years.

Our City



Playford at a glance

Population → What this means for our city



*ABS 2021

Residents living with a disability **8,373**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **4.2%**

Diversity



*ABS - Australian Bureau of Statistics

Employment

Health care and social assistance are our biggest employers. We also work in retail trade, education and training, as well as manufacturing.

345km²
Area

Covering the northern perimeter of metropolitan Adelaide



Existing assets

Council has a significant portfolio of assets, ranging from roads and footpaths, to parks, community buildings, stormwater and fleet.

Transport

MORE THAN
900KM

of roads, plus eight Adelaide Ovals worth of carparks, as well as bridges, traffic islands and fencing



Footpaths & Signage



MORE THAN
870KM

of paths plus signage, bus pads and pram ramps

Parks & Sportsfields

OVER
1100

hectares of open space including 27 sportsfields and 107 playgrounds



Buildings

196

buildings including civic and corporate buildings, community centres, sports club rooms and halls



Stormwater

557KM

of stormwater pipes and drains plus 54km of network distributing recycled water to Council reserves, as well as schools and external customers



Fleet

244

assets including cars, van, utes, heavy machinery and mowers essential to delivering services to our community

Technology



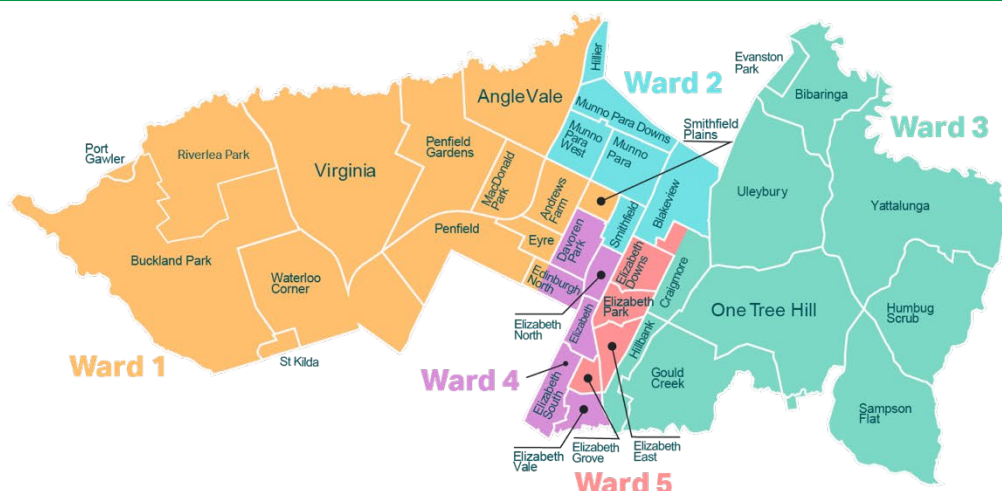
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items of technology equipment including computers, mobile devices and community audio-visual equipment

Your Council



Mayor Glenn Docherty



Cr Peter Rentoulis



Cr Rebecca Vandepeear



Cr Clint Marsh

Ward 1 covers the suburbs of Angle Vale, Buckland Park, Virginia, Eyre, Penfield, Penfield Gardens, MacDonald Park, Andrews Farm, Riverlea Park and Smithfield Plains; and part of the suburbs of Edinburgh North and Waterloo Corner.



Cr Jane Onuzans



Cr Gay Smallwood-Smith



Cr Chantelle Karlsen

Ward 2 covers the suburbs of Munno Para Downs, Munno Para West, Munno Para, Smithfield and Blakeview; and part of the suburb of Hillier.



Cr Andrew Craig



Cr David Kerrison



Cr Tanya Smiljanic

Ward 3 covers the suburbs of Hillbank, Gould Creek, One Tree Hill, Sampson Flat, Humbug Scrub, Uleybury, Yattalunga and Bibaringa; and part of the suburbs of Craigmore and Evanston Park.



Cr Zahra Bayani



Cr Katrina Stroet



Cr Marilyn Baker

Ward 4 covers the suburbs of Davoren Park, Elizabeth North, Elizabeth, Elizabeth South and Elizabeth Vale; and part of the suburb of Edinburgh North.



Cr Akram Arifi



Cr Misty Norris



Cr Shirley Halls

Ward 5 covers the suburbs of Elizabeth Downs, Elizabeth Park, Elizabeth East and Elizabeth Grove; and part of the suburb of Craigmore.

Strategic Planning Framework

Our Strategic Plan sits at the centre of our Strategic Planning Framework. It outlines Council's four-year goals for the city and provides direction for decision-making and how we prioritise the allocation of resources.



Strategic Planning Framework



Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan is a roadmap that guides Council's decision-making and aims to deliver on the long-term aspirations of liveability, prosperity and happiness outlined in the 2043 Playford Community Vision.

The City of Playford has taken a 12-year approach to planning, broken down into three 4-year strategic plans:



Strategic Planning Framework

The **Strategic Plan 2020-2024** focused on Community and City Foundations, addressing the foundational needs of the community and the critical social and physical building blocks for success.

The **Strategic Plan 2025-2028** will maintain and build on these foundations while bringing into focus connecting our people to each other and their local community.

The 2025-2028 Plan has been developed with valuable input from community engagement, which has played a crucial role in shaping the Draft Strategic Plan. The Draft Plan is now open for further community consultation to gather final insights. Following this consultation, the Draft Plan will be reviewed and refined before its final adoption by Council in May 2025.

The three phases of our Strategic Planning Framework

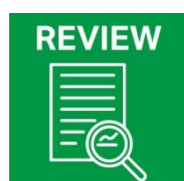


Our high-level plans guide our investment. **The Playford Community Vision 2043*** was developed in 2013 based on extensive community engagement and reflects the longer-term aspirations of the community, organised under the goals of Prosperity, Liveability and Happiness.

Our **City-wide Strategies** focus on a particular area such as open space or cycling and walking and help prioritise projects across the city. Our **Masterplans** outline our vision across a particular precinct or project area such as the Lyell McEwin Health Precinct, Playford Health and Wellbeing Precinct and the Virginia Township.



We continue to invest in our growing community by undertaking new projects and delivering new services. The **Long Term Financial Plan*** ensures Council can deliver services, maintain assets and achieve its strategic objectives in a financially sustainable manner. The **Annual Business Plan and Budget*** is the 12-month plan to deliver the Strategic Plan and secure funding.



We are constantly reviewing our investment. **The Strategic Asset Management Plan*** ensures effective and comprehensive management of our asset portfolios. We complete a range of different **analyses and planning activities** such as the Public Health Plan and Disability Access and Inclusion Plan that continue to guide our investment in our existing services.

**These plans meet our obligations under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1999, which states that a council must develop and adopt plans for the management of its area, to be called collectively the strategic management plans.*

Growth in focus



Growth in focus

The way Playford grows - where homes are built, jobs are created, and infrastructure is delivered - is guided by long-term strategies developed by Council as well as the State and Federal Governments.

These plans are designed to support population growth, deliver infrastructure and create a strong local economy. There have been several major announcements from the State and Federal Governments in recent months, that will directly shape the future of our city.

Here's a breakdown of what's been announced and what it means for Playford.

Planning with purpose: The Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP)

The new 30-year Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP) sets the direction for growth across the region and places Playford firmly in focus, recognising our role as a key service centre for the north and a driver of jobs for South Australia.

Key elements include:

- Greater Edinburgh Parks (GEP) has been formally identified as a National Employment Cluster, reinforcing its importance in job creation for Playford, South Australia, and the nation. Council's long-standing advocacy helped secure this recognition, strengthening our case for critical infrastructure investment.
- Elizabeth Centre is now part of a State Significant Infill Area, with a State-led masterplan to be delivered over the next two years. This aligns with Council's vision to revitalise Elizabeth as a vibrant hub for services, shopping, business, and entertainment.
- The Playford Health and Wellbeing Precinct has been designated a State Innovation Place, reflecting its role in health delivery and its potential for growth in research and innovation, building on Council's foresight more than a decade ago.

Council is pleased to see its contributions reflected in the plan and welcomes the State Government's collaborative approach, recognising that local insight is vital to shaping a sustainable and successful future for our community.

Angle Vale Infrastructure Scheme

The State Government has announced it will investigate a new Infrastructure Scheme for Angle Vale. Council welcomes this as a step toward a more equitable and transparent system that gives our community greater certainty about who funds infrastructure, when it will be delivered, and how it will keep pace with the State's growth agenda.

We see potential for the proposed Infrastructure Scheme to be part of a better system that that delivers services when new residents need them most, and supports sustainable, well-served communities from the start.

Federal and State support for Curtis Road

The State and Federal Governments have announced funding towards easing traffic congestion along Curtis Road.

Council welcomes the Federal Government's \$125 million investment to remove the railway crossing on Curtis Road. Following years of sustained advocacy, this is an important step towards easing congestion.

Growth in focus

Combined with the previously announced upgrade to the Curtis and Heaslip Road roundabout, we now have commitments at both ends of this key route.

As part of its announcement to develop 1,300 new homes at Playford Alive East, the State Government has also committed \$15 million to upgrade Curtis Road. This includes an expectation of matching funding from the City of Playford.

While these commitments are important, they do not provide a whole-of-road solution.

In 2023 the State Government commissioned a traffic study which is critical in determining the design and funding solutions required for a whole of road upgrade. This study has not yet been shared with Council.

Council is unable to consider any financial commitment to the upgrade of Curtis Road until a fully developed, integrated solution for the entire road system is in place. This ensures that funding is allocated only when a comprehensive plan, addressing all key aspects of the road infrastructure and achieving the desired community outcomes, has been established.

Smithfield Code Amendment

The State Government is progressing a Code Amendment for Smithfield, focused on the Konanda Road area. Council will review the proposal and make a formal submission during public consultation, with a strong focus on ensuring any development is well-planned, liveable and supported by the right infrastructure.

We're calling for a coordinated approach across all state-owned land in the Munno Para and Smithfield areas that considers road upgrades, interface with the Munno Para Shopping Centre, access to the Gawler Rail Line, open space, and essential services like stormwater, water and sewer.

State transport and infrastructure strategies

The State Government has released two major long-term strategies to guide South Australia's growth: the 30-Year Transport Strategy and the 20-Year State Infrastructure Strategy. While no Playford-specific projects are listed yet, both plans highlight goals around improving connectivity, sustainability, and support for growing communities.

For northern Adelaide, key priorities include exploring new water supply solutions and reviewing wastewater capacity to support future growth.

Council has taken into account the growth context, along with Federal and State Government strategies and plans, in developing this ABP to ensure a well-planned and collaborative approach to our city's future development.

Budget Summary

The Annual Business Plan and Budget focuses on the services and projects to be delivered in the next 12 months, while ensuring the decisions we make this year do not undermine our long-term financial sustainability.



Budget Summary

Capital and Operating Budgets

Each year Council develops a capital and an operating budget.

- The **capital** budget is Council's expenditure on projects that will create or renew long-term assets.
- The **operating** budget incorporates all costs associated with delivering our existing services, including maintaining our community assets. The budget is adjusted for inflation and cost pressures for existing services, and for the introduction of new projects and services.
- Our four-year planning horizon ensures the decisions we make within a specific budget year do not undermine our long-term strategic direction and financial sustainability.

Capital budget summary 2025/26

	Capital Budget \$M
Asset Management Plans – Capital Renewal	38.4
Multi-year projects commenced in prior years	41.2
New capital projects 2025/26	37.1
Council expenditure – Sub Total	116.7
Donated Assets	39.5
Increase in Council capital assets – Total	156.2

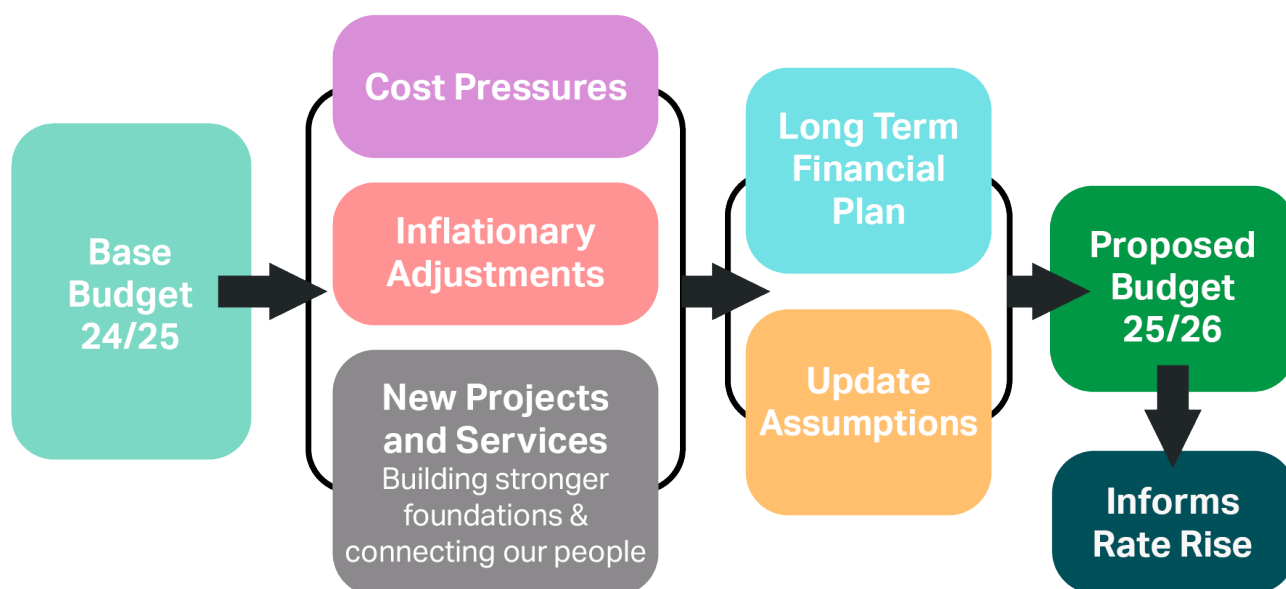
Note that many of our projects are multi-year projects, and it is currently estimated that \$20.7M of the above capital costs will be delivered in subsequent financial years.

Operating budget summary 2025/26

	Operating Budget \$M
Operating Income	163.6
Operating Expenditure	152.9
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	10.7

Budget Summary

How we develop the budget



Base Budget

BASE BUDGET

Council's existing 25 services make up most of our base budget. Service Standards articulate the service Council delivers and the benefits the community can expect to receive.

Cost Pressures

COST PRESSURES

Our costs may be impacted by increases above inflation due to external pressures such as the increasing cost of waste and statutory increase in super contributions.

Inflationary Adjustments

INFLATIONARY ADJUSTMENTS

Inflation relates to increases in the cost of doing business. To ensure the budget is sufficient to cover inflationary pressures we reference the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Council's Enterprise Agreement on wages.

Budget Summary

NEW PROJECTS AND SERVICES

Council's Strategic Plan 2025-28 outlines the decision-making filters and themes we use to decide on any new projects or services to be introduced to the community each year.

New Projects and Services

This year's Annual Business Plan invests in new projects and services to support the needs of our growing and diverse community. We will continue to balance the needs of existing residents while laying the foundations for future generations, by providing the parks, sporting facilities, stormwater infrastructure, footpaths, and services our growing community will need.

Long Term Financial Plan

LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (LTFP)

The LTFP provides information on Council's long-term financial sustainability. It is the key tool used by Council to assess the long-term financial implications of decisions.

Update Assumptions

UPDATE ASSUMPTIONS

Each year Council reviews the assumptions used to form the budget. These include interest rates, asset disposals, developer contributions and growth.

Proposed Budget 25/26

PROPOSED BUDGET 2025/26

After considering the above, Council can see how much budget it needs to fund services and any new projects/services for the coming year.

Informs Rate Rise

INFORMS RATE RISE

Rates are a financially sustainable funding pathway to pay for Council services. Council uses the proposed budget to inform any required rate rise, and this ensures that we only rate the community for what is needed.

Budget Summary

2025/26 BUDGET

As a result of the budget process, Council intends to fund the following changes to the 2025/26 budget:

	\$'000	Rate Rise Equivalent %
Base Budget	384	0.35
Cost Pressures	2,019	1.82
Inflationary Pressures	1,727	1.56
New Services/Assets	2,033	1.83
New Services/Assets – Growth	741	0.67
Growth Existing Services	2,121	1.91
Total Additional Costs	9,025	8.14
Commitment to Financial Sustainability	1,023	0.92
Total to be funded	10,048	9.06

Council's commitment to financial sustainability

The City of Playford's Finance Strategy outlines our commitment to financial sustainability. Developed in 2017/18, the strategy aims to achieve long-term financial sustainability while enabling Council to deliver planned services, responsibly manage debt and promote the growth of the city, both now and into the future.

When considering our financial sustainability, we reference our operating and structural position. The difference between these terms is explained below:

The **operating position** shows Council's income compared to the operating costs required to deliver services to the community. Where income exceeds expenses, Council would be in an operating surplus and where income is less than expenses, Council would be in an operating deficit.

The **structural position** reflects our operating position, **without** the inclusion of once-off grants and developer contributions. Grants and developer contributions are committed to be spent in future years. They do not form part of our ongoing sustainable base budget for delivering day-to-day services in any given financial year.

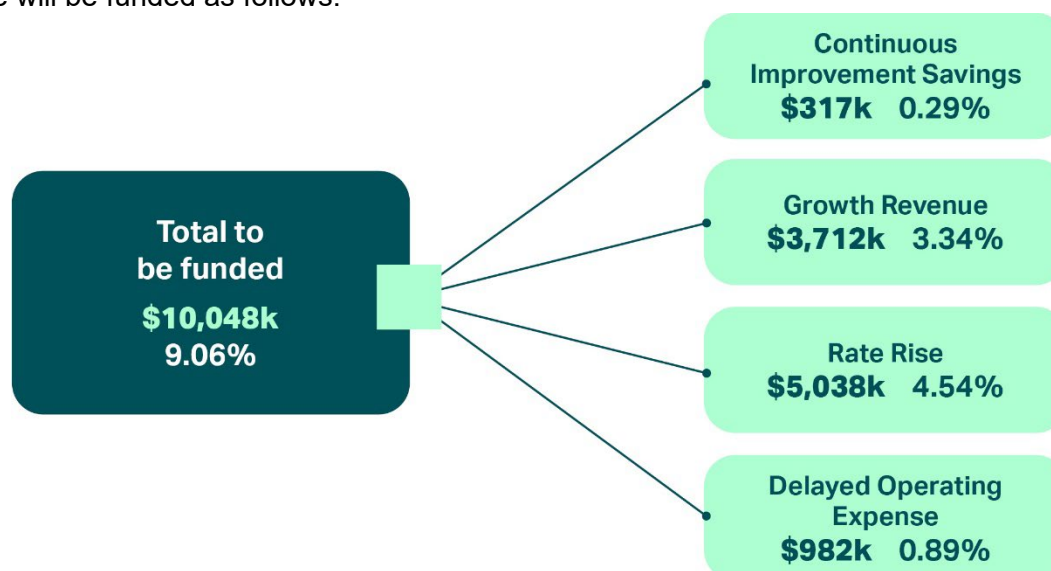
Maintaining operating and structural surplus positions over the long-term ensures Council can meet current and long-term commitments and be financially sustainable.

To ensure Council remains financially sustainable, we monitor our budgets and our performance against an operating surplus ratio and a structural surplus ratio. Council has endorsed a target range of 1% to 10% for the operating surplus and 1% to 4% for the structural surplus.

Budget Summary

Budget Funding Pathways

This Annual Business Plan details how we will fund the inflationary costs for our existing services, new projects and services, and meet our commitment to financial sustainability. The budget increase will be funded as follows:



Continuous Improvement Savings

Council's focus on continuous improvement has resulted in savings of over \$18.4M since 2011, including \$0.3M as part of 2025/26 budget process.

The savings have either been:

- allocated to services to reduce the rate burden of providing new services and assets to the community; or
- used to ensure that Council is operating within its means and not using debt to fund its operations.

Growth Revenue

Council receives new rate revenue from new dwellings and commercial properties. This is used to fund the additional services required in a growing community.

Rate Rise

Council's primary revenue stream comes from raising and collecting rate revenue. Council will need to increase rates to fund the remainder of the budget unable to be funded by Continuous Improvement savings and Growth revenue as outlined above. As a result, there will be a 4.54% increase in rate revenue for 2025/26. The increase funds new projects and services that the community has asked for while covering rising costs due to inflation and meeting budget goals that support long-term financial sustainability.

Delayed Operating Expense

All new projects and services have an associated operating cost. With new assets that will be delivered over multiple years, there is the short term opportunity during construction to use some of the associated operating cost to help fund other budget items reducing the need to raise additional ongoing funding.

Delivering for our Community

The City of Playford provides a wide range of services, programs and infrastructure to meet the needs of our community and to fulfil our legislative requirements under the *Local Government Act (1999)*.



Delivering for our community

What makes up our 2025/26 budget



Existing Services Operating Budget

Council has 25 core services it delivers to the community annually. Each of these services is delivered to its own specific standard to ensure the same level of service across the city from year-to-year.

Page 26



Existing Assets Capital Budget

Council has a significant portfolio of assets, ranging from roads and footpaths to parks and community buildings. Council manages these assets through regular maintenance and renewal programs.

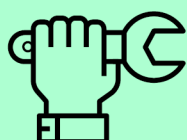
Page 35



Projects Capital Budget & Operating Budget

This includes projects that commenced in prior years and will continue in 25/26 as well as new projects that will start in the coming year.

Page 39



New or Adjusted Services

Operating Budget

These are new or adjusted services that will be introduced in 2025/26.

Page 54



Rising Costs Operating Budget

Rising costs and inflationary pressures in 2025/26 mean that it will cost Council more to deliver the services we offer to the community.

Page 56



Funding Pathways

Capital Budget & Operating Budget

This section details the costs and funding pathways for the new projects and services.

Page 58



Delivering Existing Services in 2025/26

Community Facilities, Programs and Events

Club Development and Access to Sporting Facilities

This service supports over 80 sporting clubs with facilities for training and competition. We work with clubs and associations to support effective administration, operations, participation and compliance to optimise utilisation of facilities for the community.

Community Development and Health Initiatives

Community Development services supports knowledge and skills development for people at all stages of life. Services are delivered at several sites including the Grenville Hub, John McVeity Centre, The Precinct, the Healthy Food Co, Marni Waiendi, Playford Libraries and the Elizabeth Rise Community Centre.

These initiatives support the community in various ways, such as promotion of health and wellbeing practices, providing volunteer opportunities, advocacy and the provision of a range of social and educational activities.



Community Inclusion

Council's Community Inclusion services provide education, information and support to assist older and vulnerable people to remain independent and connected within the community. Inclusion programs are run at sites including the Grenville Hub and Playford Wellbeing Hub, as well as outreach programs in One Tree Hill and Virginia. We also support people living with disability through National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Council funded social and capacity building supports. Broader initiatives and projects are also supported by Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Community Venues

A broad range of facilities and venues are available for the community to access for events and experiences.

The Shedley Theatre is the northern suburbs' premier theatre venue, hosting a calendar of high-profile, professional artists, as well as supporting local amateur groups and school events.

The Function Room at the Playford Civic Centre provides a high-quality venue space for use by business and community groups.

The Uley Road Hall, Spruance Hall and Virginia Institute also provide high-quality space for the community to utilise.



Existing Services Operating Budget

The Northern Sound System (NSS) is the state's leading youth music facility, engaging young people through music and creative industries. An extensive range of programs build the capacity of young people, while also offering a live music venue, rehearsal spaces and recording studio.

Customer Contact

Council's Customer Contact service provides prompt, helpful and accurate information and transactional services to our community. Our Customer Contact staff are the first point of contact for many of our residents, rate payers, businesses and visitors at one of Council's sites. Your website, email and phone queries are handled by our knowledgeable team members who are happy to action requests for service and connect you with the right people across Council.





Existing Services Operating Budget

Event Management

Council delivers a range of community and civic events across the city to create interesting and fun ways for our community to come together and connect. Where appropriate, Council looks to partner with others to extend the range of events on offer. These events celebrate the community and promote a sense of connection.

Library Services

Library Services provide access to information, technology, educational programs, cultural engagement, local history, social interaction, entertainment and leisure for our community. Branches at the Civic Centre and Stretton Centre are supported by the Mobile and Home Library Services.

Volunteer Development

Volunteers extend and enhance the services and programs delivered by Council through sharing their time, energy and skills to benefit the community. Volunteers receive many opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge, connect with others and enjoy a sense of accomplishment.





Existing Services Operating Budget

City Maintenance

Parks and Reserves

Council maintains some 785 reserves throughout the city. This includes parks which provide amenities such as welcoming outdoor spaces, accessible play spaces, park furniture and green open space to encourage sporting activities and recreation. Wetlands, buffer reserves and natural areas also provide natural open space for our community to enjoy.

Rapid Response

Council provides a rapid response team to attend to urgent situations and help reduce risk to our community. The primary objective is to make the situation safe, with additional work then referred to other Council services.

Rural Streetscapes

Regular road maintenance is undertaken in our rural areas, with a programmed and proactive approach based on risk. This service enables a safe and connected community for our rural residents.

Sportsfield Maintenance

The maintenance of Council's many and varied sportsfields provides important green space for individuals, families, groups and clubs to come together for leisure or competition. We strive for diversity in sportsfield options to ensure our community can actively engage and participate in a range of sporting activities on offer across our city.

Stormwater Network

The stormwater network provides for the collection and transportation of stormwater throughout the city. Maintenance of the network reduces the risk of flooding and associated property damage. It also improves the water quality to wetlands and protects against water damage to road infrastructure.





Tree Services

Our tree team plant and maintain trees on community land, which contributes to the look and feel of the city, as well as positively impacting on the environment, local wildlife and the health and wellbeing of Playford residents and visitors.

Urban Streetscapes

This service provides safe pedestrian access, a safe and orderly urban road network, and improved appearance of street frontages. This service contributes towards the character of our places, neighbourhoods and to overall city presentation.

Graffiti Operations

The graffiti team provides a quick and timely response to the removal of graffiti from Council assets, leading to a clean and attractive city with a reduction in overall visible graffiti.



Existing Services Operating Budget

Waste and Recycling

Kerbside Waste

The kerbside waste management service includes household waste, recycling, green organics and hard waste. Diverting waste away from landfill, through recycling, reduction in contamination rates, and uptake of the green organics service are a focus of this service.

Illegal Dumping

This service manages the collection and disposal of illegally dumped rubbish throughout the city as well as penalising illegal dumping offences. Illegally dumped rubbish can create safety hazards and detracts from the amenity of our neighbourhoods. Council provides important waste education services to reduce the instance of illegal dumping.

Public Health, Regulatory and Environment

Environmental Health

This service seeks to protect the community from environmental public health risks by managing statutory responsibilities. Council's commitment to a healthy and safe community means that we also prioritise education and promotion of public health, food safety and wastewater standards.

Environmental Sustainability

In collaboration with our community and interested stakeholders, we enhance our local environment with resident education and engagement initiatives such as plant distribution programs, projects to improve our urban and rural biodiversity, and targeted biodiversity management on rural roadsides.





Existing Services Operating Budget

Immunisation

Our immunisation service seeks to minimise the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases. Services undertaken include early childhood immunisation, secondary school programs, New Arrival Refugee Immunisation (NARI) program and public and business programs, including education.

Regulatory Services

We provide comprehensive regulatory services including animal management, parking compliance, fire prevention, and compliance with by-laws to promote community resilience, understanding and improve the safety, appearance and accessibility of our city.

Development Services

This service facilitates safe and desired city development by coordinating and managing growth, assessing development applications, providing advice and ensuring that development is constructed in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Local Business Support

Business Support and Industry Development

This service fosters business growth and supports and facilitates the creation of local jobs. Our modern co-working facility at the Stretton Centre provides cost-effective office space and one-to-one business support. Support is also provided at an industry level through specific projects, advocacy and connection, as well as through the Virginia Horticulture Centre.





Existing Services Operating Budget

Service Standard	2025/26 Net Operating Budget \$'000
Business Support and Industry Development	1,379
Club Development and Access to Sporting Facilities	879
Community Development	2,845
Community Inclusion	1,942
Community Venues	1,417
Customer Contact	3,759
Development Services	5,991
Environmental Health	1,083
Environmental Sustainability	687
Event Management	1,517
Graffiti Operations	480
Health Initiatives and Healthy Food Co.	764
Illegal Dumping	1,302
Immunisation	248
Kerbside Waste	19,272
Library Services	2,986
Parks and Reserves	14,142
Rapid Response	1,520
Regulatory Services	625
Rural Streetscape	6,893
Sportsfield Maintenance	5,513
Stormwater Network	7,470
Tree Services	5,095
Urban Streetscape	36,856
Volunteer Strategy and Development	214

NB The cost of service delivery is calculated based on both direct and indirect costs of delivering the services.

Direct costs such as materials, contract fees and salaries that are directly attributable to delivering the service form the base of these service costs. Indirect costs such as corporate overheads and depreciation are spread proportionately across all service areas and are included in the net cost of each service. Costs are also net of any direct revenues in the form of grants, user charges and fees earned during the course of service provision.



Existing Assets

Each year, Council spends a large proportion of its budget on the renewal program for existing assets. This involves replacing our existing assets that have either reached the end of their useful life or are no longer able to provide a service to the community at the required standard. A summary of the renewal program is included below, and further details on Asset Management Planning can be found in the Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Transport

Transport assets such as roads, kerbing, car parks and traffic islands degrade over time due to age, increasing vehicle loads, soil movement, tree roots and drainage problems. Transport assets are regularly inspected and given a condition rating which informs our renewal plans.

Bridges

Bridge assets include road bridges, pedestrian bridges and major culverts. These are formally inspected every four years, supplemented by minor inspections annually to identify required works.

Stormwater

Stormwater assets are essential to reducing the risk of flooding. Most of our stormwater network is underground, out of sight and has a long lifespan. Each year a sample of Council's underground stormwater pipe network is inspected using CCTV cameras to inform our renewal plans.



Existing Assets Capital Budget

Streetscapes

Footpaths are an important way for our community to access our city. Footpaths fail over time due to age and can also be damaged by soil movement, tree roots and construction traffic. Just like transport assets, footpath assets are regularly inspected and given a condition rating which informs our renewal plans.

Footpath Widening – AMP Supplementary

Council's Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) recommend that footpaths on roads that attract higher pedestrian activity e.g. proximity to community amenities, bus routes or open space, be considered for widening to 1.8m.

Sections of the following footpaths have been identified for widening in 2025/26:

- Coventry Road, Davoren Park
- Tolmer Road, Elizabeth Park
- Adams Road, Craigmore

Shared Use Path Widening – AMP Supplementary

This project will widen existing footpaths that are due for renewal from their current width to shared use path width. This supports the creation of physically connected communities through walking and cycling routes identified in Council's Cycling and Walking Strategy.

Sections of the following paths have been identified for widening in 2025/26:

- Yorktown Road, Elizabeth Park
- Collingbourne Drive, Elizabeth Vale
- Fremont Park, Elizabeth Park

Playford Alive

Playford Alive is one of the biggest urban renewal projects in Australia. As our contribution to this project, Council renews targeted public realm and streetscape assets in coordination with Renewal SA / SA Housing developments that have reached 80% development completion in a given street.

Parks and Sportsfields

Council manages an extensive number of parks and sportsfields throughout the city for our community to enjoy. The assets within these spaces – such as irrigation systems, fencing, park furniture, playground equipment and sporting surfaces – are inspected regularly to meet safety standards as well as helping to inform our renewal plans.

Browne Circuit Playground Upgrade – AMP Supplementary

The playground at Browne Circuit Reserve is set for asset renewal, with additional features being added to enhance the park's service level in line with the Open Space Strategy. New irrigation, garden beds, benches, and a drinking fountain will ensure the park can be fully utilised for its intended purpose.



Buildings

Council provides a number of buildings and spaces to support our community to thrive. Building renewals are triggered by inspections, safety standards, compliance requirements and data such as expected life and maintenance expenditure.

Kalara Reserve Building Upgrade – AMP Supplementary

The building in the northwest corner of Kalara Reserve, previously home to the Andrews Farm Soccer Club, will be repurposed as a community space following the construction of new clubrooms to accommodate the soccer club.



Existing Assets Capital Budget

Water Delivery – (Playford Water)

Playford Water provides a sustainable alternative to mains water for irrigating sportsfields, parks, and reserves. To ensure reliability and efficiency, its assets are proactively renewed before failure based on inspections, condition assessments, and performance monitoring. By addressing aging or deteriorating components before they fail, this approach minimises disruptions, reduces maintenance costs, and ensures long-term service continuity for the community.

Fleet, Minor Plant, and Technology & Office

Council's fleet of vehicles, plant and equipment is critical to ensuring our services can be delivered reliably, efficiently, and safely. By renewing these assets proactively, we minimise the chances of physical injury to staff and community members, infrastructure damage and excessive downtime for repairs.

Asset Category	AMP	Supplementary	Total Budget
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Transport (including bridges)	15,649	-	15,649
Stormwater	308	-	308
Streetscapes	4,947	968	5,915
Playford Alive	4,262	-	4,262
Parks and Sportsfields	3,232	206	3,438
Water Delivery	97	-	97
Buildings	5,968	252	6,220
Minor Plant	22	-	22
Fleet	3,281	-	3,281
Technology and Office	632	-	632
Grand Total	38,398	1,426	39,824

NB: The tables in Appendix 1, Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26 provide further detail on the specific assets scheduled for renewal across the city in 2025/26. Also see Appendix 2, Proposed Capital Works 2025/26 – Suburb Maps.



Projects

In addition to the annual renewal program and ongoing services, Council works on a variety of infrastructure and community projects each year.

These projects serve to meet current and future community needs, expectations or interests. Where possible and appropriate, Council will seek to partner with others to reduce the financial burden of projects on our community. The projects in 2025/26 include both large-scale initiatives that take several years to complete and smaller projects that are finished within a single year.

We have a process in place to carry over funding from one year to the next, ensuring we can continue work on projects that extend across multiple years.

New projects are identified through the decision-making filters and themes outlined in our Strategic Plan 2025-2028 - *Building Stronger Foundations & Connecting Our People*, ensuring we focus on what matters most to our community.

The Lifecycle of our Projects

The lifecycle of our projects includes everything from feasibility studies, planning and design to community engagement, procurement, and construction. Many things need to happen, some behind the scenes, before a project is brought to life and the community starts to see activity on the ground.

The phases of a project lifecycle are explained below, including what we as Council will be working on and what the community can expect at each phase. Council aims to have projects across each phase included in each Annual Business Plan and Budget, ensuring project planning is proactive, considered, sustainable and addresses current and future needs. This enables a continuous pipeline of outcomes for our community.



Definition

**This phase:**

Includes defining what is and is not included, feasibility studies, concept planning, community engagement and seeking Council approval to proceed with delivery of the project.

Community experience:

The community may be asked to share thoughts about initial plans and designs through a community engagement process. You may read about projects in this phase within Council reports or publications such as Playford News.

Planning and Design

**This phase:**

Includes activities such as engaging a designer, undertaking site investigations, and producing detailed design drawings or designing the outcome for a project (depending on if it is capital or operational in nature).

Community experience:

Council is busy working behind the scenes on finalising detailed designs based on the concept planning in the previous stage. You may read about projects in this phase within Council reports or publications such as Playford News.

Execution

**This phase:**

Includes the delivery tender process and construction of the project. At the end of this phase the project is commissioned into service.

Community experience:

For operating projects, the commencement of the Execution phase is likely to be experienced by our community through service changes and improvements.

For capital projects, construction work commences in this phase and access may be restricted to the project site. There may be fencing, signage, traffic alterations, and increased noise and dust in the area. However, once completed, the outcome will be available to the community and enhance the liveability of our city.

In both operating and capital projects, we will inform and communicate about the changes. You may read about projects in this phase within Council reports or publications such as Playford News. We appreciate your understanding through these transition phases as we work towards creating positive outcomes for our community.



Projects Capital & Operating Budget

The following section outlines the projects that will continue from prior years as well as the new projects planned for 2025/26.

Projects in the Execution Phase are listed first, as these are the ones where the community will begin to see physical work on the ground or new amenities completed and ready for use.



Execution

The following projects will be in Execution Phase in 2025/26.

Infrastructure Projects Continuing from Previous Years

The information below provides a summary of the work that is forecast to continue into 2025/26. The proposed carry-in budget for 2025/26 is \$41.2M.

Kalara Reserve Upgrade

The Sports Facility Strategy identifies Kalara Reserve as a high-priority district-level sportsground with a focus on soccer. To align with this strategy, a new club facility and carpark is being built in a more suitable location to improve the sportsground's functionality and use.

The State Government has committed \$1M to this project and a further \$1.395M has been allocated through the Local Roads & Community Infrastructure (LRCI) fund.

Construction works for this project commenced in October 2024 and will be largely completed in 2024/25, however car park works may be continuing into 2025/26.

Gloaming and Don Hardy Reserve Upgrades – AMP Supplementary

These two reserve upgrades are being delivered in conjunction with the renewal program and augment the renewal works with formalised pathways, trees and landscaping.

Construction will be underway in 2024/25 but will not be completed until the first quarter of 2025/26.

This project is funded partly by renewal and partly by Council's Open Space Fund.

Mark Oliphant Kiss & Drop

Construction of the kiss and drop at Mark Oliphant College will provide improved safety and convenience for students and parents. It will also help to reduce congestion during school drop-off and pick-up times. Carparking will also support the new Munno Para Regional Sportsground.

This project leverages a \$2.5M State Government grant.

Construction commenced in December 2024 and is forecast for completion in July 2025.

The following projects will also continue from prior years, however they require additional funding due to unforeseen construction site issues, or escalation of budgeted costs prior to progressing to construction.



Munno Para Sportsground Stage 1

Munno Para Sportsground is identified as a priority growth area project in Council's Sports Facility Strategy. The facility is proposed to be delivered in three stages and construction of Stage 1 will include the following:

- Synthetic soccer pitch
- Clubroom and changeroom
- Parking (inclusive of the Mark Oliphant College kiss and drop)
- Multi-purpose soccer pitch

The multi-purpose soccer pitch forms part of an expanded scope of Stage 1 and has been included to take advantage of an opportunity to leverage external grant funding and to ensure functionality for a sporting club to sustainably operate out of the facility.

Argana Park – Car Park and Change Facilities

Stages 1, 2a and 2b of the Master Plan will deliver two additional light towers to the AFL Oval and increased parking around the AFL Oval and Clubrooms. Additional car parks and road widening are also proposed throughout the site with the aim to improve traffic flow.

Stage 3b of the Master Plan will result in a new shared change room facility to cater for increasing participation at the Elizabeth Netball Association and the Elizabeth Downs Soccer Club.

This project is part funded by Council's Open Space Fund and leverages \$1.46M in external State Government funding.

Construction works for this project commenced in December 2024 and are forecast for completion in late 2025.

Park Road Drainage System

The Park Road Drainage System is identified in the regional Stormwater Management Plan (SMP) for the Smith Creek catchment. Construction of the drainage system will protect housing in Virginia from flooding and substantially reduce flood damages for horticultural land in the area. This project delivers the construction of Sections 3-7.

This project is part funded by a \$2.6M State Government grant.

Stebonheath Road/Dalkeith Road Roundabout – Blackspot

The upgrade of the intersection of Stebonheath Road / Dalkeith Road will include:

- A new roundabout, designed to Austroads and relevant Australian Standards.
- Improved road safety by reducing approach speeds and establishing clear give-way priority.
- Utility service relocations and lighting upgrades.
- New pram ramps and pedestrian refuges on all roundabout approaches, including future proofing for new footpath links.

This project leverages \$1.986M in Black Spot funding and is a joint project with the Town of Gawler.



Dwight Reserve – Changerooms and Car Park

Construction of changerooms at Dwight Reserve will replace the current changerooms that are no longer fit for purpose. A new car park will alleviate traffic and pedestrian movement issues experienced by the Eastern Park Football and Cricket Club patrons. The car park will also leverage off the Department for Infrastructure and Transport's (DIT) upgrade of the Yorktown Road and Adams Road intersection, creating a new entry to the Dwight Reserve Sportsground.

This project is part funded by a \$0.5M State Government grant.

New Projects for 2025/26

The following new projects are set to enter the Execution Phase during 2025/26. Planning and Design is either already complete or will take place in the first quarter/half of the year, with construction beginning later in the year. For estimated timelines of each phase, please refer to the table on page 49.

Sheedy Road Upgrade (design completed 2024/25)

The western end of Sheedy Road, from O'Loughlin Road to 80m west of Juniper Boulevard, has been upgraded to urban standard, with kerb and water table on both sides and a footpath on the southern side.

In contrast, the eastern end, from Old Port Wakefield Road to O'Loughlin Road, retains its original rural form. The eastern end will be upgraded to match the same standard as the western end.

This project is critical in providing a connection to the existing township and supporting future urban growth developments, and includes the following works:

- Road resurfacing, kerb and water table, stormwater, and lighting on Sheedy Road between Old Port Wakefield Road and O'Loughlin Street
- Construction of a new shared use path on the southern side of Sheedy Road from O'Loughlin Road to the shopping centre entry road, new footpath on the northern side of Sheedy Road from Sofia Street to Old Port Wakefield Road, and new shared use path from O'Loughlin Road to Coratina Road.

This project is subject to grant funding.

Broster Road Shared Use Path (design completed 2023/24)

This project will deliver approximately 160m of missing kerb, verge, shared use path and stormwater along a portion of Broster Road, Angle Vale, connecting to the shared use path network within the northern half of Angle Vale.

Unsealed Road Capping – Bevan Road and Bentley Road

This project will seal cap the unsealed sections of the following two rural roads that require a high level of maintenance that is in excess of the usual requirements for unsealed roads:

- Bentley Road, Blakeview – between Medlow Road and Smith Road (approximately 570m)
- Bevan Road, Virginia – unsealed section between two sealed sections (approximately 335m)

Seal capping of the roads will extend the life of these existing assets.



New Footpaths 25-26

This project will provide over 3km of new footpaths to address some of the safety and connectivity issues across the city. Footpaths will be constructed on:

- Graeber Road, Smithfield
- Adams Road, Elizabeth Downs
- Olive Grove Reserve, Elizabeth Park
- Garlick Road, Elizabeth Downs
- Heytesbury Road, Davoren Park
- Uley Road Hall access, Elizabeth Downs
- Vincent Road, Smithfield Plains
- Brady Street, Elizabeth Downs
- Coratina Road, Virginia
- McGilp Road, One Tree Hill (design only)

DDA Streetscape Infrastructure 25-26

Pram ramp infrastructure that is non-compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) will be upgraded across areas of the city where there is a high percentage of the community that reported the need for assistance, specifically targeting areas that are not forecast to be renewed in the near future.

The proposed locations for 2025/26 are the top 30 ramp locations selected from the list of non-compliant and non-existent ramps in those areas.

Stormwater Minor Projects 25-26

This project will deliver design and construction of stormwater solutions to resolve nuisance flooding and ponding issues. The locations identified for 2025/26 are:

- Turner Drive, Hillbank
- Kent Road, McDonald Park
- Moloney Road, Penfield Road intersection, Virginia

Traffic Management Minor Projects 25-26

This project aims to improve road, pedestrian, and traffic safety within the city through the delivery of crossing upgrades. Projects identified for 2025/26 are:

- Maltarra Road, Munno Para - installation of an Emu crossing and construction of 120m footpath on eastern side of Maltarra Road
- Turner Drive, Craigmore - a pedestrian actuated crossing kerb extension and a median island with a pedestrian walk through at the T-junction of Yorktown Road and Turner Drive

Sport and Recreation Minor Projects 25-26

These minor projects address storage provisions, accessibility and safety concerns for clubs, organised groups and informal community users of infrastructure and assets for sport and recreation pursuits. Detailed design and construction of the following projects is identified for 2025/26:



Projects Capital & Operating Budget

- Riverbanks College, Angle Vale – shed
- Kalara Reserve (eastern side), Davoren Park – cricket pitch
- Blakes Crossing Oval, Blakeview – cricket pitch
- Mark Oliphant College, Munno Para – cricket pitch
- Uley Reserve West, Elizabeth Downs – permanent synthetic cricket matting for cricket pitch
- Ridley Reserve Softball Hub, Elizabeth South – cut out home plate and pitching area
- Barry Warren Reserve, Elizabeth Park – fence
- Various – 2 x sets of portable soccer goals for temporary relocations during upgrades

Open Space Minor Projects 25-26

Minor improvements to several of Council's reserves will be undertaken to complement existing facilities. Projects identified for 2025/26 are:

- West Parkway Reserve, Andrews Farm – fencing barrier
- Mayfair Ride Safe Park, Andrews Farm – fencing of reserve
- Playford Alive Town Park, Munno Para – fencing barrier
- Uley Cemetery, Uleybury – path, benches and signage
- Barry Warren Reserve (formerly Dwight Reserve North), Elizabeth Downs – 2 x benches at pump track
- Pinehurst Reserve, Craigmore – 1 x bench

These projects are funded by Council's Open Space Fund.

Playford Water Business Expansion

This project will expand Council's "Playford Water" recycled water network, reducing reliance on potable water for irrigation of green spaces.

Key components include:

- Expanding the Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) at Stebonheath Park (Andrews Farm Wetlands) and connecting to an additional 18 new locations.
- Upgrading Mofflin Pump Station to meet increased demand in the south of the city and ensure reliable water delivery to the Playford Health Precinct and Philip Highway medians
- Increasing Stebonheath Park Wetlands stormwater capture by 50 megalitres annually, enabling more stormwater harvesting.

There is a pending grant application for this project.

Transportable Changerooms

Many sports facilities are experiencing a shortfall in changeroom provisions or non-compliant facilities, as identified in Council's Sports Facility Strategy. To address this, transportable changerrooms will be purchased and installed as an interim solution until permanent upgrades are completed.

Owning transportable changerrooms is a cost-effective solution to support facility upgrades and meet short-term demands as they arise. Ramsay Park will be the first site that will benefit from transportable changerrooms to address a need for additional changerrooms.



City Uplift Projects

As part of our ongoing commitment to uplift city appearance two locations have been identified for uplift projects in 2025/26:

- Roundabout at Haydown Road/Hogarth Road
- Roundabout at Mofflin Road/Hogarth Road

Works are likely to include new irrigation, trees and turf to the central area of the roundabouts with concrete edging, and a ring of Yankalilla fines to the outer boundary edge.

Riverlea District Sportsground (North) – Stage 1

Riverlea District Sportsground (North) is a high-priority new facility outlined in Council's Sports Facility Strategy (2023). It will promote active lifestyles and strengthen social connections within the growing Riverlea development. Stage 1 construction will include a soccer pitch, a multi-purpose oval, and supporting infrastructure, which will be shared with a school.

This project will be delivered by the developer in consultation with Council.

Stebonheath Road, Eyre Upgrade

This project will deliver additional kerb and footpath infrastructure to ensure appropriate connectivity between Council's existing network and the upgraded Stebonheath Road. The project will also deliver landscaping upgrades to improve the amenity and aesthetics of the area.

This project will be delivered by a developer, with supplementary funding required from Council in order to deliver the best possible outcome for the community.



Planning & Design

The following projects will be in the Planning & Design Phase in 2025/26.

Infrastructure Projects Continuing from Previous Years

These projects were also funded in prior years and planning and design will continue in 2025/26.

AV23 Frisby Road Upgrade – Road and Stormwater

This project will deliver detailed design for the upgrade of Frisby Road within the Angle Vale Township. The design will upgrade the existing two-lane carriageway to an urban standard including kerbing and pavement reconstruction. A pit and pipe stormwater system is also included that will replace the existing roadside open swale drainage.

This project forms part of the Angle Vale Growth Area Infrastructure Deed.



AV34 Fradd Road Upgrade (Heaslip Road to Frisby Road) – Road and Stormwater

This project will deliver detailed design for the upgrade of Fradd Road within the Angle Vale Township. The design will include upgrade of the kerbing and footpaths to an urban standard. A pit and pipe stormwater system is also included that will replace the existing roadside open swale drainage.

This project forms part of the Angle Vale Growth Area Infrastructure Deed.

AMP Angle Vale Bridge

Concept designs have been prepared for options to replace the Angle Vale footbridge. As a shared asset between City of Playford and Light Regional Council, both Councils will need to agree on the preferred option moving forward. Existing allocated funding will be carried forward to prepare detailed design of the selected option.

Health Precinct Super Stop

The project will deliver detailed design for the bus super stop on Haydown Road, Elizabeth Vale to prepare for future construction including increased bus stopping area, additional shelters and the removal of the existing bus shelter on the adjacent NorthWest Healthcare site.

Prince Charles Street

This project will deliver road geometry upgrades to Prince Charles Street, Elizabeth, between the Windsor Carpark and Playford Library, to improve accessibility and achieve compliance with road standards.

McEvoy Road Basin and Culvert

This project will be continuing from a previous year and requires additional funding prior to progressing to Planning and Design.

Detailed design for McEvoy Road basin and associated drainage infrastructure is required as part of the need to move increased stormwater flows generated by urban growth. Flows will be captured and directed under Port Wakefield Highway and ultimately discharged into Smith Creek.

This project forms part of the Virginia Interim Stormwater Infrastructure Deed.

New Projects for 2025/26

Planning and Design will commence for the following new projects in 2025/26.

Traffic Management Minor Projects 25-26

This project aims to improve road, pedestrian, and traffic safety within the city through the delivery of traffic management upgrades. Projects identified for 2025/26 are:

- Jamieson Road, Craigmore – detailed design for traffic management devices to improve safety and traffic flow generated by Trinity College Blakeview, Craigmore High School, Blakeview Primary School and Blakeview Preschool.
- Playford Boulevard and Philip Highway T- junction, Elizabeth – detailed design for this intersection to ensure it is ready to progress to construction as surrounding development progresses.



Infrastructure Deeds

Infrastructure Deeds are legal agreements between landowners, Council and the State Government covering social, transport and stormwater infrastructure in the Playford Growth Areas. They spread the cost of infrastructure more evenly among interested parties.

Deeds are executed when land developments achieve certain sales numbers, or when the population increases to a specific level. When these triggers are met, parties involved in the deeds need to fulfil their obligations to fund or construct infrastructure. In 2025/26, Council will contribute to the following projects through its Infrastructure Deed agreements:

AV21 Curtis Road/Frisby Road Intersection

This project will provide the detailed design for the intersection of Curtis Road and Frisby Road, including its connection to the Northern Expressway interchange, and requires significant input from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT). Advancing the design is essential to explore potential funding options, as road deed funding is inadequate for an intersection of this size, which is becoming increasingly congested. Both a roundabout and traffic signals will be considered, with the most appropriate treatment being selected.

This project forms part of the Angle Vale Road Infrastructure Deed.

AV29 Chivell Road Upgrade, AV30 Harris Road Upgrade and AV32 Bubner Road Upgrade

These local roads north of Angle Vale Road provide access to the northern growth area of Angle Vale. Each road needs to be upgraded to urban standards, including the conversion of roadside swales to pit and pipe drainage systems and the installation of kerb and footpaths. This project will produce a detailed design for all three roads as a unified package, ensuring a consistent design approach across all of them.

This project forms part of the Angle Vale Growth Area Road Infrastructure Deed.





Project Milestones

The table below shows the indicative milestones, by quarter, for both continuing and new projects that are in the Planning and Design and/or Execution Phases for 2025/26.

Project		2025/26			
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Planning & Design	Execution				
Kalara Reserve					
Gloaming Reserve Upgrade – AMP Supplementary					
Don Hardy Reserve Upgrade – AMP Supplementary					
Mark Oliphant kiss & drop					
Argana Park – car park & change facilities					
Park Road Drainage System					
Stebonheath /Dalkeith Road Roundabout - Blackspot					
Munno Para Sportsground Stage 1*					
Dwight Reserve – Changerooms & Car Park*					
New Footpaths 25-26					
DDA Streetscape Infrastructure 25-26					
Stormwater Minor Projects 25-26					
Sport & Recreation Minor Projects 25-26					
Traffic Management Minor Projects 25-26					
Open Space Minor Projects 25-26					
Sheedy Road Upgrade					
Broster Road Shared Use Path					
Unsealed Road Capping – Bevan Road and Bentley Road					
Playford Water Business Expansion					
Transportable Changerooms					
Riverlea District Sportsground (North) – Stage 1		External delivery			
Stebonheath Road, Eyre Upgrade		External delivery			
AV23 Frisby Road Upgrade – Road and Stormwater					

*Multi-year project – will continue into 2026/27



Project	2025/26			
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
AV34 Fradd Road Upgrade (Heaslip Road to Frisby Road) – Road and Stormwater				
AMP Angle Vale Bridge				
Health Precinct Super Stop				
Prince Charles Street				
McEvoy Road Basin and Culvert				
Traffic Management Minor Projects 25-26				
AV21 Curtis Road/Frisby Road Intersection				
AV29 Chivell Road Upgrade, AV30 Harris Road Upgrade and AV32 Bubner Road Upgrade				

*Multi-year project – will continue into 2026/27.

See Appendix 2, *Proposed Capital Works 2025/26 – Suburb Maps*, for further details of where these projects will be undertaken.



Definition

The following projects will be in the Definition Phase in 2025/26.

Each year we budget for the planning work that needs to be done to support future projects. This work includes strategic projects where we develop concept plans for projects that are in definition phase, as well as strategies, investigations and studies for projects that will be delivered in future years. This is part of Council's long-term approach to planning and is important to ensure projects are not viewed in isolation from year to year.

The proposed budget for projects in the Definition Phase in 2025/26 is \$600k.

Strategic Projects

Heaslip Road Streetscape Upgrade (continuing)

This project responds to the Angle Vale Urban Design Framework (2010) and community concerns about safety. The project will involve concept planning to inform streetscape uplift opportunities in partnership with required Angle Vale Road Infrastructure Deed works.



Sarah Court Stormwater

Downstream flooding is occurring near the SA Water tank facility on Williams Road, Hillbank, impacting the adjacent Sarah Court Reserve, damaging a footpath and leading to its closure for safety. Council also uses an informal access route through the site for maintenance of the Little Para River.

Stormwater investigations will identify the causes and impacts of the flooding, informing a strategy to manage it. Once resolved, the footpath will be repaired.

One Tree Hill Streetscape Upgrade

The streetscape upgrade aligns with the One Tree Hill Urban Design Framework (2010) to enhance the main street as a hub for activity, shopping, socialising, and town character. It aims to improve the area's identity, pedestrian experience, traffic safety, and parking convenience. This project will deliver concept planning for Blacktop Road, One Tree Hill.

A walkability study will also support the streetscape project by reviewing walkability more holistically through the township, rather than just creating 'islands' of pedestrian access at specific locations.

Midway Road Corridor

This project is classified as high ranking in the Draft City-Wide Integrated Transport Strategy. High traffic volumes and speed environment, along with generous geometry and lane widths are contributing to poor road safety outcomes. A corridor study will be undertaken to improve road safety and efficiency for all road users and transport modes.

Gawler River Levee Bank Plan

During heavy rains, the Gawler River overflows, flooding land west of the Northern Expressway and affecting crops, homes, roads, and infrastructure. To reduce flooding, levees are in place to contain the water. This project will deliver a concept plan for management of the levee system along the Gawler River to ensure compliance with Council standards.

Angle Vale Community Sports Centre – Social Space

The Sports Facility Strategy recommends an all-weather alfresco area extending from the existing clubrooms to support multi-club use. This project aims to expand the building, improve site functionality, and enhance its usability and aesthetic appeal. Concept planning will explore options for the clubroom expansion and additional flexible space to achieve the best outcome.

Playford Sports Precinct – Softball Change and Clubrooms (continuing)

Ridley Reserve West, part of the Playford Sports Precinct, is a regional-level facility and the Softball Hub of the North. Concept planning will continue for upgrades to the facility to provide a fit-for-purpose building, allowing the Central District Softball Association and Northern Area Men's Softball Association to co-locate and run competitions.



Strategies, investigations and studies

Dauntsey Reserve Masterplan (continuing)

Master planning and concept design for Stage 1 of Dauntsey Reserve will respond to the Sports Facility Strategy which identifies changeroom facilities and car parking as high priorities.

Opportunities to increase sporting provisions to better accommodate growing participation and community demand will also be investigated.

Ramsay and Womma Park Masterplan

The Ramsay Park and Womma Park Master Plan aligns with the Sports Facility Strategy, addressing the need for additional changerooms and upgrades to meet required standards.

The strategy also recommends assessing building consolidation when planning new amenities to maximise space and efficiency and identify opportunities that enhance sporting outcomes.

Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Study

This project will initiate a local area traffic management study across the city. Traffic studies will take place in the following suburbs:

- Craigmore
- Elizabeth Vale
- Hillbank
- Davoren Park
- Smithfield
- One Tree Hill
- Andrews Farm
- Eyre

Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP) – Infrastructure Planning

This project will deliver studies and investigations relevant to the City of Playford to inform Council or State-led Code Amendments as part of implementing the directions of the GARP.

Northern Adelaide Plains Food Cluster

This is a continuation of funds for a partnership arrangement with the Northern Adelaide Plains Food Cluster. This work will underpin the delivery of a suite of activities that will support the growth of the local food industry.

Elizabeth Vale Community Centre & Service

This project will deliver concept plans for a community centre in Elizabeth Vale with the focus on various services to service the following groups:

- Babies, toddlers and children
 - Literacy
 - Skill development
- Families and young people
 - Parent support
 - Youth support



Projects Capital & Operating Budget

- CALD community members
 - Parent support
 - Connection with support services

Disability Action & Inclusion Plan (DAIP)

This project will deliver a new DAIP for 2025-2028 that fulfils our requirements under the Disability Inclusion Act 2018. The updated DAIP will serve as a strategic framework, guiding Council activities over the next four years and driving meaningful improvements in access and inclusion for all members of the community.

Youth Hub Review

This project will see the operation of a Youth Hub at the Northern Sound System site in partnership with a local community group. A youth hub is a dedicated space that provides young people with access to support services, activities, and opportunities for personal, social, and professional development in a safe and inclusive environment. The hours of operation will be expanded beyond 6pm weekdays and over weekends.

Grenville Service Review

A review of the current services that operate within the Grenville Hub will provide recommendations for a service model that takes this into account and considers alternative funding options for non-Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) funded services. This will ensure that the Grenville service provision is flexible and caters to a wider range of community members.





New or Adjusted Services

In addition to the existing services outlined on page 26, the following new or adjusted services will be delivered in 2025/26.

Waste Improvements – Council Venues

Council is enhancing waste management and landfill diversion through its Kerbside Waste Management Service Standard, including the introduction of Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) green organics bins for residents. This service adjustment will introduce a three-bin system (general, recycling, organics) across Council venues to improve waste diversion.

Community Support and Grant Program

An expanded Financial Support Program will offer financial support to eligible local community organisations with a project that aims to increase social inclusion and participation and promote health and wellbeing outcomes for Playford residents. This may include start-up funding, financial support for day-to-day operations of a service, or funding for a new program within a current service.

Community Development Events

This work will help establish an annual schedule of Community Development Events that offer opportunities to gather, celebrate, and enjoy a vibrant lifestyle in Playford.



New or Adjusted Services Operating Budget

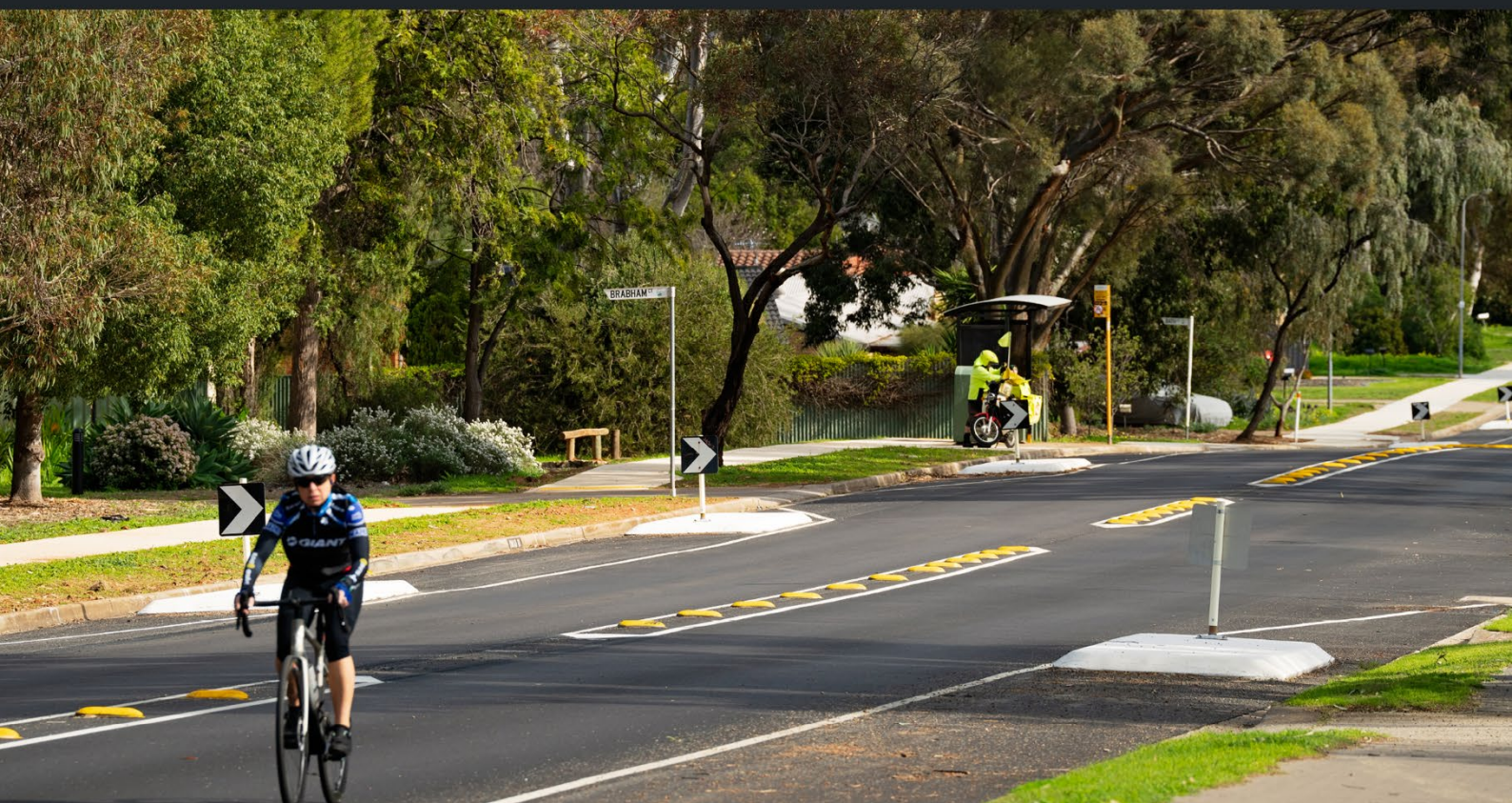
Sportsground and Irrigation service uplift

Our community require well maintained sportsgrounds and parks, and increased participation on our sportsgrounds require greater planning. This service uplift will enable the recruitment and training of staff with qualifications in sportsground management.

New Project Manager – Deed Project Planning

To ensure Council is responsibly planning for the delivery of infrastructure in line with continued growth and our commitments under the Growth Area Infrastructure Deeds, additional capacity through an additional resource is required. This resource will be required to deliver the planning of multiple growth area projects that are due to commence in 2025/26. See page 48 for more information on these projects.





Rising Costs

Like much of the community, local government is facing rising costs and inflationary pressures in 2025/26. This means it will cost us more to deliver the services we offer to the community.

Waste

Increase in rate above CPI as advised by the Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority (NAWMA) due to market driven cost increases.

The impact for 2025/26 is \$1.2M.

Licence Fees

Renewal of 3-year Microsoft licence contract which expired during 2024/25. Increases are above inflation as a result of a prior 3-year fixed-price contract, and the introduction of new corporate licences.

The impact for 2025/26 is \$374k.

Superannuation Guarantee Charge

From 1 July 2025, the prescribed Superannuation Guarantee rate has been legislated to increase to 12.0% from 11.5%.

The impact for 2025/26 is \$222k.



Rising Costs Operating Budget

Contracts

Increase in contracted prices and subscription fees above inflation for services provided in some sectors. Council continues to monitor and where possible negotiate better future pricing.

The impact for 2025/26 is \$116k.

Valuation Roll Rates

Fee for supply of valuation roll based on total capital value which has increased by 23% from 2024/25 as set by the Valuer General.

The impact for 2025/26 is \$63k.





Funding Pathways



2025/26 NEW CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDING PATHWAYS	Total Capital Budget	Capital Tied Funding	Operating Grant Funding	Reserves Allocation	Council Debt Funding	Contributions	Total Operating Budget	Other Funding	Growth
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Argana Park – Car Park and Change Facilities	427	-	-	-	427	-	50	-	50
AV21 Curtis Road/Frisby Road intersection	416	-	-	-	416	-	37	-	37
Broster Road Shared Use Path	827	-	-	-	827	-	88	-	88
City Uplift Projects	88	-	-	-	88	-	8	8	-
DDA Streetscape Infrastructure 25-26	293	-	-	-	293	-	31	31	-
Dwight Reserve – Changerooms and Car Park	3,809	-	-	-	3,809	-	445	-	445
McEvoy Road Mega Basin and Culvert Upgrade and Supple Road Outfall Drain	479	-	-	-	479	-	38	-	38
Munno Para Sportsground Stage 1	5,839	-	-	-	5,839	-	784	784	-



Funding Pathways

2025/26 NEW CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDING PATHWAYS	Total Capital Budget	Capital Tied Funding	Operating Grant Funding	Reserves Allocation	Council Debt Funding	Contributions	Total Operating Budget	Other Funding	Growth
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
New Footpaths 25-26	2,634	-	-	-	2,634	-	280	280	-
Open Space Minor Projects 25-26	414	-	-	362	52	-	37	-	37
Park Road Drainage System (Downstream)	107	-	-	-	107	-	9	9	-
Park Road Drainage System (Upstream)	1,990	-	-	-	1,990	-	160	160	-
Playford Water Business Expansion	4,976	1,998	-	-	2,978	-	-	-	-
Riverlea District Sportsground (North) – Stage 1	15,764	5,501	-	-	10,263	-	1,092	-	1,092
Sheedy Road (between O'Loughlin Road and Old Port Wakefield Road)	5,037	87	4,913	-	37	-	198	198	-
Sport and Recreation Minor Projects 25-26	405	-	-	-	405	-	54	54	-
Stebonheath Road, Eyre	1,009	-	-	-	1,009	-	-	-	-
Stebonheath Road/Dalkeith Road Roundabout – Black Spot	653	-	-	-	353	300	-	-	-
Stormwater Minor Projects 25-26	226	-	-	-	226	-	18	-	18
Traffic Management Minor Projects 25-26	337	-	-	-	337	-	30	30	-
Transportable Changerooms	231	-	-	-	231	-	20	20	-
Unsealed Road Capping – Bentley Road	436	-	-	-	436	-	30	30	-
Unsealed Road Capping – Bevan Road	63	-	-	-	63	-	4	4	-
AV32 - Bubner Road from Angle Vale Road to Harris Road – Road & Stormwater	214	-	-	-	214	-	19	-	19



Funding Pathways

2025/26 NEW CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDING PATHWAYS	Total Capital Budget	Capital Tied Funding	Operating Grant Funding	Reserves Allocation	Council Debt Funding	Contributions	Total Operating Budget	Other Funding	Growth
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
AV30 – Harris Road between Chivell Road and Bubner Road - Road & Stormwater	214	-	-	-	214	-	19	-	19
AV29 – Chivell Road - Angle Vale Road to Harris Road - Road & Stormwater	214	-	-	-	214	-	19	-	19
Grand Total	47,102	7,586	4,913	362	33,941	300	3,470	1,608	1,862

2025/26 NEW SERVICES FUNDING PATHWAYS	Total Operating Budget	Other Funding	Growth
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Community Support and Grant Framework	100	100	-
Community Development Events	100	100	-
Sportsground and Irrigation uplift in service	315	-	315
Waste Improvements – Council Venues	12	12	-
New Project Manager – Deed Project Planning	156	-	156
Grand Total	683	212	471

Rates

Council is committed to maintaining a financially sustainable budget whilst keeping rates as low as possible. Balancing the need to fund new infrastructure in both established and growth areas with fairness and equity in the distribution of rates.

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The numbers in this section are draft and will be finalised upon completion of Rates Modelling. The final numbers will be reflected in the version of this Plan that is considered for adoption at the Ordinary Council Meeting



Rates

Rates

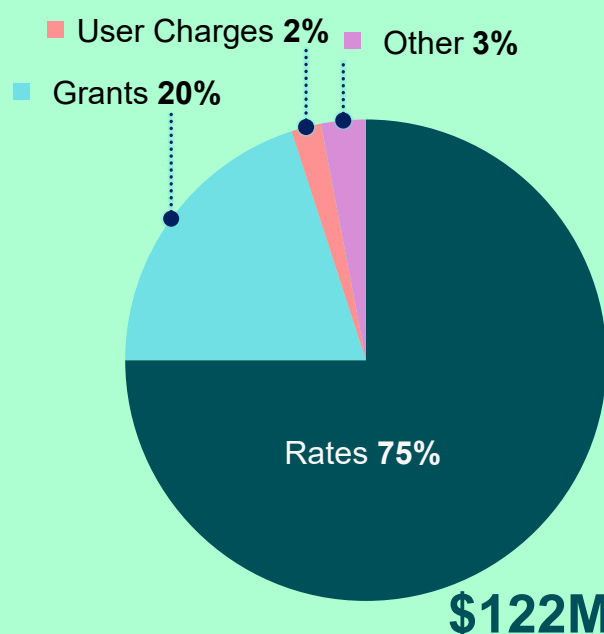
Why are rates important?

Rates are the primary source of revenue for Council. Rates are used to deliver Council services and to maintain community infrastructure.

This Annual Business Plan provides details of how we will continue to fund and deliver our existing services, as well as new services, projects and cost pressures. Just like members of our community, Council is facing increasing costs and seeks to cover these costs while minimising the impact on ratepayers. The additional costs to our budget have been partially offset with \$0.3M of continuous improvement savings and through new ratepayer revenue. However, to ensure Council maintains a financially sustainable budget, we also need to raise rates to keep pace with the budgetary impacts. As a result, the Annual Business Plan includes a 4.54% increase in rate revenue for 2025/26. This increase funds new projects and services that the community has asked for, while covering rising costs due to inflation and meeting budget goals that support long-term financial sustainability.

Rate Revenue

Of \$163.6M total revenue, Council requires **\$122.1M** in general rates to fund existing services.



How we distribute our rates

Once our budget has been finalised, Council needs to determine how rates will be distributed amongst our community.

Our Rating Policy explains how rates are distributed across the community and why. Our Rate Rebate Policy explains how and why Council approves rebates. Rating policies are all underpinned by the principles of fairness and equity.

Rates

About Our Rate Revenue

The table below summarises information on how general rate revenue has increased from 2024/25 to 2025/26.

Rate Revenue	2024/25	2025/26	% Movement in Total Rate Revenue
General Rates (existing properties)	112,363,543	121,689,582	
General Rates (new properties)	4,293,839	3,712,223	
General Rates (gross)	116,657,382	125,401,805	
Less: Mandatory Rebates	-5,012,661	-5,098,707	
General Rates (After Mandatory Rebates)	111,644,721	120,303,098	7.76%
Less: Discretionary Rebates	-762,871	-679,992	
General Rates (After Discretionary Rebates)	110,881,850	119,623,105	7.88%

Note the table above does not take into account other rates collected such as the Regional Landscape Levy (net of rebates) of \$1.7M (collected on behalf of State Government) or other charges of \$0.75M.

The 7.88% increase in total general rate revenue (after rebates) includes both the increase in rates from existing rate payers and new rates from new properties. See below table for breakdown:

Rate Revenue Source	Average % change in Rate Revenue
Rate revenue from existing rate payers	4.54%
Rate revenue from new properties	3.34%
Total	7.88%

Rates

Fixed Charge

City of Playford’s rating structure allows for a maximum of 50% of Council’s total general rate revenue to come from a fixed charge. It is expected that \$61.3M in fixed rates will be levied in 2025/26. Rebates will be applied to this amount bringing the collected general fixed rate revenue equal to 50% of General Rates after rebates.

In 2024/25, the fixed charge was \$1,188.55. The fixed charge to apply in 2025/26 is \$1,234.78.

Differential Charge

As per Council’s Rating Policy, the remaining 50% of General Rates (after rebates) is collected from a differential charge. The amount payable per property is based on a rate in the dollar applied to the capital value of your property. City of Playford has two rate types declared, commercial and general. The table below provides indicative information on how rate revenue from each rate type is expected to increase from 2024/25 to 2025/26 and will be updated prior to final adoption by Council.

Expected Differential Revenue and Properties¹

Differential Charge	Differential Rate Revenue			Rateable properties		Average per rateable property		
	2024/25	2025/26	Change	2024/25	2025/26	2024/25	2025/26	Change
Rate Type	\$'000s	\$'000s	%	#	#	\$	\$	\$
General	35,768	38,469	7.55%	47,281	49,081	757	784	27
Commercial	24,000	25,608	6.70%	690	695	34,782	36,846	2,064
Total	59,768	64,076	7.21%	47,971	49,776			

¹ Table presented as gross revenue. Due to the impact of rate rebates gross rate revenue does not present as 50% of total gross revenue.

Rates



Our Growing City

As one of South Australia's fastest growing council areas, the population of the City of Playford is estimated to increase from 113,167 to over 183,000 by 2046.

In 2024/25, City of Playford had 47,971 rateable properties. This is expected to increase to 49,776 in 2025/26, representing 3.76% growth in the number of rateable properties.

Measures and Targets

A range of performance measures and financial targets help track our progress as we deliver against the Annual Business Plan and Budget.



Measures and Targets



Measures and Targets

Section 123 of the *Local Government Act 1999* states that the Annual Business Plan must include “the measures (financial and non-financial) that the council intends to use to assess the performance of the council against its objectives over the financial year”.

Council has a strong focus on engaging with our community and customers to understand their experience of us and gather feedback and insights to help measure our performance and improve service delivery. Council will monitor its performance in several ways to ensure we are on track to meet the objectives of our Strategic Plan.

Measures and Targets

Playford Community Survey

Each year, Council undertakes a survey to better understand the views of our community. A move towards aligning community feedback with Council's strategic goals resulted in changes to the way the survey was delivered from 2021.

The annual community survey aligns to the Strategic Plan themes to capture sentiment, perception, and performance of Council's delivery against strategic objectives. Questions are focused on what it is like to live in or experience Playford.

The August 2024 survey saw over 1220 members of the Playford community sharing their thoughts and experiences. The graphics below show the average rating out of five for each Community Theme. The average Community Sentiment is also shown below. This represents community trust and confidence in Council, as well as satisfaction with Council over the past 12 months.

We use the decision-making filters and Community Themes in the Strategic Plan to inform the development of the annual budget and to ensure we are working towards our longer-term objectives. The results of the Community Survey also guide our decision-making around priorities for the budget to ensure up-to-date feedback from the community is considered as part of our planning.



Note: Ratings are out of 5

Measures and Targets

Financial Indicators

Financial sustainability is achieved when Council can deliver the services it provides to the community at an agreed and consistent standard across a long period, without the need for significant rate increases above inflation or significant service reductions, whilst maintaining inter-generational equity.

Financial sustainability enables Council to:

- Deliver and maintain inter-generational equity
- Maintain a solid and healthy financial position
- Maintain a degree of stability and predictability for future rate increases
- Manage its debt levels

Council has six financial indicators used to measure its financial sustainability:

- Operating surplus ratio
- Structural surplus ratio
- Cashflow from operations ratio
- Asset renewal funding ratio
- Net financial liabilities ratio
- Interest expense ratio



Measures and Targets

Primary Financial Indicators

Financial Indicator	Explanation	Target	2024/25 Revised Budget	2025/26 Budget	Projected 5 Year Average
Operating Surplus Ratio	This ratio gives an indication of Council's ability to service its operations from expected income, while maintaining long-term financial sustainability.	Between 1% and 10%	5.3%	6.6%	4.5%
Structural Surplus Ratio	This ratio gives an indication of Council's ability to service its operations from expected income excluding one-off items that are not recurrent in nature, while maintaining long-term financial sustainability.	Between 1% and 4%	0.8%	1.4%	1.1%
Cashflow from Operations Ratio	This ratio measures whether Council is generating enough cash from its operations to cover the replacement of assets over time.	Between 90% and 110%	129.0%	118.8%	127.9%
Asset Renewal Funding Ratio	This ratio shows whether or not Council is replacing assets at the rate as required in the Asset Management Plan.	Between 90% and 110%	115.7%	107.8%	101.6%
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	This ratio shows the extent to which Council is managing its debt.	Between 50% and 160%	80.1%	97.3%	88.5%
Interest Expense Ratio	This ratio shows how much discretionary income is used to pay interest on borrowings	Between 0% and 8%	5.5%	5.5%	4.0%

Operating Surplus Ratio

Performance against this ratio has increased to 6.6% from 5.3% as at the 2024/25 revised budget. Although the ratio for 2025/26 remains within the target range, the operating surplus includes one-off operating grants/contributions which will need to be spent on future infrastructure projects. One-off grants have increased in 2025/26 resulting in the ratio increase.

Structural Surplus Ratio

The structural surplus excludes one-off operating grants/contributions which will need to be spent on future infrastructure projects. Meeting the target range for this measure ensures Council remains financially sustainable. Performance against this ratio remains within target range.

Measures and Targets

Cashflow from Operations Ratio

The 2025/26 ratio is above Council's target range at 118.8%. While it may appear that Council has "extra money", this is not the case. Cashflows from operations is in excess of the short-term funding requirements for the asset management plan replacement annuity asset. These funds are committed to replacing assets which will come to end of their life over the next 20 to 50 years. Smoothing the requirement to fund the renewal over time ensures intergenerational equity – the idea that each generation pays their fair share for use of an asset or resource.

Asset Renewal Ratio

The ratio for 2025/26 is within the target range at 107.8% indicating Council is replacing assets at the rate as required in the Asset Management Plan.

Net Financial Liabilities Ratios

The ratio sits within the target range in 2025/26. The forecasted debt for 2025/26 remains relatively stable and this is primarily due to Council's ongoing commitment to achieving a financially sustainable surplus and effective debt management.

Interest Expense Ratio

Notwithstanding the significant investment in the city, the ratio is within the target range due to Council's commitment to achieving a financially sustainable surplus and effective debt and interest rate risk management.



ESCOSA Local Government Advice

On 30 April 2022, amendments to the *Local Government Act 1999* came into operation and introduced an advisory scheme that aims to give ratepayers confidence that the rates they pay are set at the level necessary for their council to provide the services they value. The Essential Services Commission SA (ESCOSA) is the advisory body. The State's 68 councils are subject to the scheme and were allocated across four tranches to be reviewed over a four-year cycle.



ESCOSA Local Government Advice

Council is obliged under the *Local Government Act 1999* to publish ESCOSA's advice and its response, if applicable, in its 2024/25 Annual Business Plan and subsequent plans until the next cycle of the scheme. Note that Council is not compelled under the Local Government Act to follow the advice.

A summary of ESCOSA's findings is provided below.

Financial Performance

The Essential Services Commission finds the City of Playford's current and projected financial performance is **sustainable** taking into account the council's average expected growth in properties of 2.3% p. a. over the next 10 years, and the planned average rate increases of 2.2% p. a. per property over this period.

Continue

- ☑ Monitoring average rate rises annually
- ☑ Reviewing rateable property growth forecasts annually
- ☑ Focusing on selling and disposing of assets to help reduce debt
- ☑ Reporting any actual and projected cost savings in its annual budget and long term financial plan

Risks Impacting Sustainability

- ⚠ Forecast growth in rateable properties is lower than anticipated and not realised by Council
- ⚠ Failure to reduce its exposure to debt

Commission's Recommendations

- Reduce its level of net financial liabilities, as forecast in its latest long-term financial plan, and continue to focus on asset sales or disposals as one of its strategies to help reduce debt.
- Improve transparency on borrowing assumptions, including loan facilities and loan terms, in its long-term financial plan.
- Include efficiency goals and projected cost savings in its long-term financial plan, to provide further evidence of projected cost growth constraint and efficiencies across its operations and service deliveries.

Council Response

Council's sustainable financial position is a result of many years of prudent financial management consistent with its Finance Strategy. This seeks to ensure the Council has adequate funding to support the needs of a growing community. Supporting the Finance Strategy is a suite of policies, procedures, and reporting arrangements that ensure that Council decision making considers the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council when considering current and future service provision.

The full advice provided by ESCOSA can be found as Appendix 2.

Budgeted Financial Statements

Council is committed to delivering long-term financial sustainability with a focus on producing a sustainable operational surplus position, effectively managing debt and sustainably growing assets and services.

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This section will need updating post rates modelling to allow for final growth and capital values.



Budgeted Financial Statements

Budgeted Financial Statements & Explanations

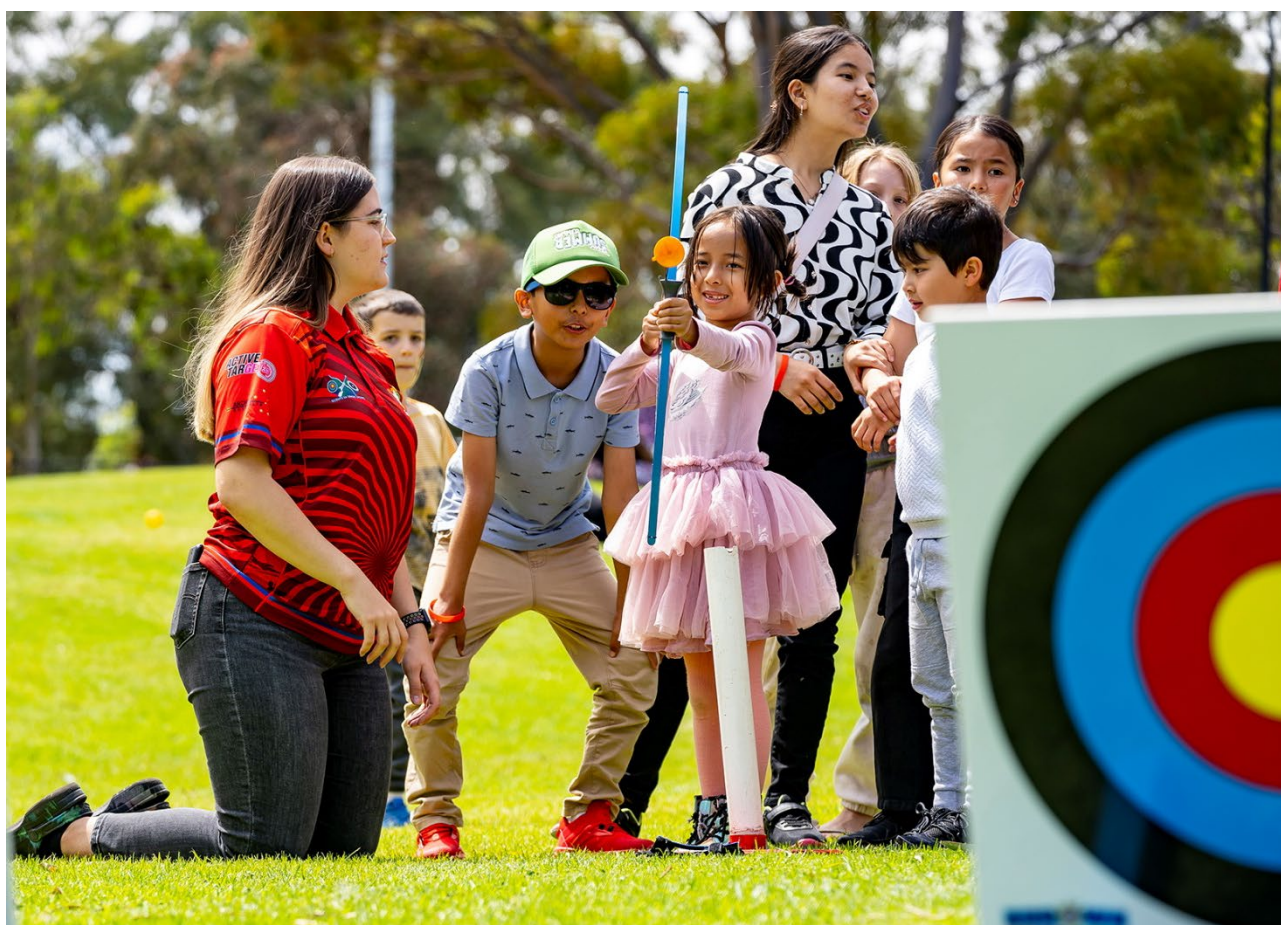
Financial Summary

	Operating Budget \$M
Operating Income	163.6
Operating Expenditure	152.9
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	10.7

Council continues to be committed to maintaining an operating surplus as a key strategy of the Council's long-term financial sustainability.

Council's budget provides an operating surplus of \$10.7M. This budgeted operating surplus includes developer contributions and grants associated with future capital spend that does not form part of our ongoing sustainable structural position.

Council continues to be committed to maintaining an operating surplus as a key strategy of the Council's long-term financial sustainability.



Budgeted Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Resource Group	Revised Budget 2024/25 \$'000's	Budget 2025/26 \$'000s	Increase (Decrease) \$'000
Rates	113,041	122,115	9,074
Statutory Charges	3,134	3,443	309
User Charges	4,384	4,517	133
Investment Income	72	89	17
Reimbursements	677	663	(14)
Other Income	208	259	51
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	20,942	23,574	2,632
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	7,532	8,383	851
Net Gain – Joint Ventures & Associates	-	635	635
Revenue Total	149,990	163,678	13,688

Rates Income – \$122.1M

Increases in Council rates allow Council to meet the community service delivery expectations and achieve Long Term Financial Plan objectives. The 2025/26 Budget includes the following:

- A rate revenue increase of 4.54% for existing ratepayers
- Additional rate income of \$3.7M from new developments in the city
- The Landscape Levy collected on behalf of the Green Adelaide Board of \$1.7M. Once collected this is paid to the Green Adelaide Board with no impact on the bottom line
- Penalties and Legal recoveries \$0.75M

Statutory Charges – \$3.4M

Statutory charges are fees for the provision of regulatory services. They are associated with the granting of a permit or licence or with the regulation of an activity, including the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act* (2016), fees, parking fines and dog registration fees.

Most fees are set by State Government legislation and administered by Council.

Council is notified of the fee amounts in late June of each year and these will be adopted by Council to apply from July 2025.

Budgeted Financial Statements

User Charges – \$4.5M

User charges income is received from individuals, sporting groups and various other bodies that utilise user-pay services and hire or lease Council owned property.

Council also receives commercial activity income from the operation of the theatres, café, function centre and the Northern Sound System, with a minor amount coming from the hiring of Council facilities for functions or meetings.

User charges for 2025/26 have increased as a result of increased demand for user-paid services and to take into account inflationary cost pressures.

Reimbursement – \$0.7M

Reimbursement income consists of all reimbursements paid to Council by insurance companies, ratepayers, developers, and other tiers of government.

Reimbursements have decreased slightly compared with the 2024/25 budget.

Other Income – \$0.3M

Other income is comprised of donations, sponsorships, and other miscellaneous receipts, which varies from year to year.

Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating – \$23.6M

Grants, subsidies, and contributions received from Federal and State Governments specifically to fund operations. Income is budgeted to increase, mainly due to a projected increase in Federal Assistance Grant support, consistent with the growth of our city and past history.

Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital – \$8.4M

Grants, subsidies, and contributions that are untied received from Federal and State Governments specifically to fund the construction or purchase of new or upgraded assets, in addition to contributions from developers for future capital investment. The budgeted increase is mainly due to an increase in Roads to Recovery grant, offset by decrease in developer contributions.

Net Gain – Joint Ventures & Associates – \$0.6M

Council's share of the Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority (NAWMA) will result in a net profit of \$0.6M in 2025/26, based on advice from the Authority and improved operating position.

Budgeted Financial Statements

Operating expense by category

Resource Group	Revised Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Budget 2025/26 \$'000	Increase (Decrease) \$'000
Employee Costs	50,391	55,140	4,749
Contracts, Material and Other	50,378	53,543	3,165
Finance Costs	6,179	6,692	513
Depreciation	34,519	37,365	2,846
Share of Equity Loss on Associates and Joint Ventures	599	196	(403)
Expense Total	142,066	152,936	10,870

Employee Costs – \$55.1M

Employee costs include base salary and all relevant on-costs, such as superannuation and work cover, as well as agency labour costs. The budget covers recurrent labour, project labour and externally funded labour.

The budgeted increase in employee costs is the combined result of estimated salary increases (subject to Enterprise Bargaining negotiations) and 0.5% increase in Superannuation Guarantee Charge.

Materials, Contracts and Other Expenses – \$53.5M

Materials covers many different expenses of Council including utility payments for water and electricity, library books and consumable materials.

Contracts covers costs such as contractors, waste collection, equipment hire, software licence fees and consultants.

Other expenditure includes audit and legal fees, contributions, communication expenses, insurance and registration, levies paid to other organisations, Elected Member allowances, advertising, fringe benefits tax, training, and travel expenses.

The budget increase reflects cost pressures in the market largely related to waste, licence and subscription fees, and general inflation.

Finance Costs – \$6.7M

Finance costs include interest payable on borrowings and finance leases, and other banking charges.

Council is budgeting for an increase in finance costs due to additional costs arising from new capital spend during 2025/26.

Budgeted Financial Statements

Depreciation – \$37.4M

Depreciation is a non-cash expense that recognises the systematic allocation of the service potential, (cost or replacement value) of an asset over its useful life. Over the long-term, depreciation represents the minimum amount which, on average, Council needs to allocate each year towards asset replacement. This is a different concept from maintenance expenditure, which is the amount Council needs to spend each year to ensure that its assets last as long as planned.

Depreciation is increasing in 2025/26, largely due to the increase in asset values resulting from the revaluation of assets and new assets to service our growing community.

Loss on Associates and Joint Ventures – \$0.2M

Council's share of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority (GRFMA) will result in a net loss of \$0.2M in 2025/26, based on advice from the Authority.

Financial Statements

Cashflow Statement

The cashflow statement shows the cash movement reflective of Council's operating position and investment decisions for 2025/26.

Cashflow from operating activities increases by \$0.3M reflecting additional rates revenue and increase in FA grant income offset by higher operating costs.

Cash used for investment activities increases by \$23.4M due to increased capital spend on new and existing infrastructure.

The overall impact in cashflow results in increased borrowing requirements for 2025/26.

Balance Sheet

Total Non-Current Assets are projected to rise to \$2,470M in 2025/26, an increase of \$168M. This increase arises from the capital expenditure program, contributed assets and revaluation of assets.

Total borrowings are projected to increase to \$145M by 30 June 2026. This is a result of a higher debt funded capital program. The level of borrowings is within the target range. Please see the financial indicator section for more information.

Budgeted Financial Statements

Uniform Presentation of Finances

Operating Surplus / (deficit)

The operating surplus or deficit indicates the extent to which income is sufficient, or insufficient, to fund the cost of services. A surplus indicates Council is raising enough operating income to cover its operating expenses, whereas a deficit indicates it is not.

Net Outlays on Existing Assets

This is expenditure that returns the service potential of existing assets back towards their original level. Consistent negative outlays on existing assets indicate that, overall, existing assets may be deteriorating as expenditure on their renewal or replacement is less than the rate of depreciation.

Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets

Outlays on new and upgraded assets indicate the net cost to Council of acquiring or creating new assets. Outlays on new or upgraded assets will increase depreciation and maintenance expenses in future periods.

Net Lending / (borrowing) for Financial Year

Net lending, if a positive result, indicates that Council will reduce its level of borrowings over the period. Net borrowings, if a negative result, means Council is required to borrow additional funds increasing the level of net borrowings over the period.

Budgeted Financial Statements

City of Playford
Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the year ended 30 June 2026

2023/24 Actual \$000's		2024/25 Original Budget \$000's	2024/25 Revised Budget \$000's	2025/26 Original Budget \$000's
	INCOME			
102,176	Rates	113,041	113,041	122,115
3,034	Statutory Charges	3,134	3,134	3,443
4,161	User Charges	6,243	4,384	4,517
319	Investment Income	72	72	89
1,123	Reimbursements	677	677	663
467	Other Income	173	208	259
5,290	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - operating	21,859	20,942	23,574
8,789	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - capital	6,255	7,532	8,383
-	Net Gain - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	635
125,359	TOTAL INCOME	151,454	149,990	163,678
	EXPENSES			
46,249	Employee costs	50,391	50,391	55,140
45,385	Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	51,893	50,378	53,543
3,695	Finance costs	6,363	6,179	6,692
30,173	Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	34,479	34,519	37,365
496	Net Loss - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	599	599	196
125,998	TOTAL EXPENSES	143,725	142,066	152,936
(639)	Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	7,729	7,924	10,742
(2,584)	Asset Disposal & Fair Value Adjustments	-	(2,661)	-
8,733	Amounts Received Specifically for New or Upgraded Assets	13,932	9,816	11,480
37,167	Physical Resources Received Free of Charge	39,460	63,941	39,460
42,677	NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	61,121	79,020	61,682
	Other Comprehensive Income			
248,166	Changes in Revaluation Surplus - I,PP&E	31,664	260,361	53,489
6,582	Share of Other Comprehensive Income - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-
(3)	Other Equity Adjustments - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-
-	Impairment (Expense) / Recoupments Offset to Asset Revaluation	-	-	-
254,745	Total Other Comprehensive Income	31,664	260,361	53,489
297,422	TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	92,785	339,381	115,171

Budgeted Financial Statements

City of Playford
Year End Balance Sheet
For the year ended 30 June 2026

2023/24 Actual \$000's		2024/25 Original Budget \$000's	2024/25 Revised Budget \$000's	2025/26 Original Budget \$000's
	CURRENT ASSETS			
1,751	Cash & Cash Equivalents	1,500	1,500	1,500
8,750	Trade & Other Receivables	8,233	7,580	8,068
266	Inventories	255	265	282
26	Other Financial Assets	-	27	28
1,185	Other current assets	878	1,045	1,110
362	Non-current assets classified as Held for Sale	8,011	18,560	4,387
12,340	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	18,877	28,977	15,375
	NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
223	Financial Assets	195	196	167
16,969	Equity Accounted Investments in Council Businesses	8,994	16,370	16,810
1,918,154	Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	1,866,599	2,254,381	2,422,301
30,683	Other Non-Current Assets	12,726	30,683	30,683
1,966,029	TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	1,888,514	2,301,630	2,469,961
1,978,369	TOTAL ASSETS	1,907,391	2,330,607	2,485,336
	CURRENT LIABILITIES			
17,579	Trade & Other Payables	23,101	15,379	16,406
5,364	Borrowings	4,442	4,525	3,559
6,363	Provisions	6,637	6,520	6,739
29,306	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	34,180	26,424	26,704
	NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
86,067	Long Term Borrowings	126,553	101,711	140,945
1,225	Long Term Provisions	1,413	1,320	1,364
87,292	TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	127,966	103,031	142,309
116,598	TOTAL LIABILITIES	162,146	129,455	169,013
1,861,771	NET ASSETS	1,745,245	2,201,152	2,316,323
	EQUITY			
495,110	Accumulated Surplus	556,110	575,780	634,141
1,350,798	Asset Revaluation Reserves	1,178,377	1,611,159	1,664,648
15,863	Other Reserves	10,758	14,213	17,534
1,861,771	TOTAL EQUITY	1,745,245	2,201,152	2,316,323

Budgeted Financial Statements

City of Playford
Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2026

2023/24 Actual \$000's		2024/25 Original Budget \$000's	2024/25 Revised Budget \$000's	2025/26 Original Budget \$000's
Inflows / (Outflows)		Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)	Inflows / (Outflows)
CASHFLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Receipts				
101,220	Rates Receipts	112,630	113,279	121,796
3,034	Statutory Charges	3,104	3,185	3,406
4,442	User Charges	6,219	4,444	4,501
5,493	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	21,555	21,147	23,583
319	Investment Receipts	71	99	89
1,189	Reimbursements	672	746	664
14,988	Other Receipts	179	269	354
Payments				
(46,432)	Payments to Employees	(50,139)	(50,139)	(54,877)
(55,078)	Payments for Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	(50,873)	(46,945)	(52,718)
(3,695)	Finance Payments	(6,363)	(6,179)	(6,691)
25,480	NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	37,055	39,906	40,107
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Receipts				
84,719	Proceeds from Borrowings	36,413	58,738	72,695
	Proceeds from Bonds & Deposits			
Payments				
(94,659)	Repayments of Borrowings	(5,260)	(43,860)	(34,413)
(15)	Repayment of bonds and deposits			
(104)	Repayment of Finance Lease Liabilities	(52)	(136)	(113)
(10,059)	NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES	31,101	14,742	38,169
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES				
Receipts				
934	Sale of Replaced Assets	-	464	-
571	Sale of Surplus Assets	11,211	763	18,560
8,024	Amounts Received Specifically for New/Upgraded Assets	9,227	4,272	11,415
6,468	Grants utilised for capital purposes	6,468	8,043	8,445
23	Repayments of Loans by Community Groups	26	26	28
Payments				
(23,577)	Expenditure on Renewal/Replacement of Assets	(34,125)	(33,430)	(41,401)
(21,516)	Expenditure on New/Upgraded Assets	(60,963)	(35,037)	(75,323)
(29,073)	NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES	(68,156)	(54,899)	(78,276)
(13,652)	NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	-	(251)	-
15,403	CASH AT BEGINNING OF REPORTING PERIOD	1,500	1,751	1,500
1,751	CASH AT END OF REPORTING PERIOD	1,500	1,500	1,500

Budgeted Financial Statements

City of Playford
Statement of Changes in Equity
For the year ended 30 June 2026

2023/24 Actual \$000's		2024/25 Original Budget \$000's	2024/25 Revised Budget \$000's	2025/26 Original Budget \$000's
	ACCUMULATED SURPLUS			
447,720	Balance at end of previous reporting period	492,340	495,110	575,780
42,677	Net Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	61,121	79,020	61,682
	Adjustments (Correction of Prior Period Errors)			
(3)	Other Equity Adjustments - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-
4,638	Transfer to Accumulated Surplus on Sale of I,PP&E	-	-	-
78	Transfers between Reserves	2,649	1,650	(3,321)
495,110	Balance at end of reporting period	556,110	575,780	634,141
	ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE			
1,100,688	Balance at end of previous reporting period	1,146,713	1,350,798	1,611,159
6,582	Other Comprehensive Income	-	-	-
248,166	Gain(Loss) on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	31,664	260,361	53,489
-	Impairment (expense) / recoupments offset to asset revaluation reserve	-	-	-
(4,638)	Transfers to accumulated surplus	-	-	-
-	Transfers between Reserves	-	-	-
1,350,798	Balance at end of reporting period	1,178,377	1,611,159	1,664,648
	OTHER RESERVES			
15,941	Balance at end of previous reporting period	13,407	15,863	14,213
-	Transfers to accumulated surplus	(2,649)	(1,650)	3,321
-	Transfers from accumulated surplus	-	-	-
(78)	Transfer between Reserves	-	-	-
15,863	Balance at end of reporting period	10,758	14,213	17,534
1,861,771	TOTAL EQUITY AT END OF REPORTING PERIOD	1,745,245	2,201,152	2,316,323
495,110	Accumulated Surplus	556,110	575,780	634,141
1,366,661	Reserves	1,189,135	1,625,372	1,682,182
1,861,771	TOTAL EQUITY AT END OF REPORTING PERIOD	1,745,245	2,201,152	2,316,323

Budgeted Financial Statements

City of Playford
Uniform Presentation of Finances
For the year ended 30 June 2026

2023/24 Actual \$000's		2024/25 Original Budget \$000's	2024/25 Revised Budget \$000's	2025/26 Original Budget \$000's
	INCOME			
102,176	Rates	113,041	113,041	122,115
3,034	Statutory Charges	3,134	3,134	3,443
4,161	User Charges	6,243	4,384	4,517
319	Investment Income	72	72	89
1,123	Reimbursements	677	677	663
467	Other Income	173	208	259
8,789	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - capital	6,255	7,532	8,383
5,290	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - operating	21,859	20,942	23,574
	Net Gain - Equity Accounted Council Businesses			635
125,359	TOTAL INCOME	151,454	149,990	163,678
	EXPENSES			
46,249	Employee costs	50,391	50,391	55,140
45,385	Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	51,893	50,378	53,543
3,695	Finance costs	6,363	6,179	6,692
30,173	Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	34,479	34,519	37,365
496	Net Loss - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	599	599	196
125,998	TOTAL EXPENSES	143,725	142,066	152,936
(639)	Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	7,729	7,924	10,742
15,345	Net timing adjustment for general purpose grant funding	-	-	-
(8,789)	Less: grants, subsidies and contributions - capital	-	(7,532)	(8,383)
5,917	Adjusted Operating surplus/ (deficit)	7,729	392	2,359
	Net outlays on existing assets			
(23,577)	Capital expenditure on renewal and replacement of existing assets	(34,125)	(33,430)	(41,401)
(93)	Finance lease payments for right of use assets on existing assets		(151)	(121)
30,173	add back Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	34,479	34,519	37,365
934	add back Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	-	464	-
7,437	Net Outlays on Existing Assets	354	1,402	(4,157)
	Net outlays on new and upgraded assets			
(21,516)	Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets (including Investment Property & Real Estate Developments)	(60,963)	(35,037)	(75,323)
(15)	Finance lease payments for right of use assets for new and upgraded assets	-	-	-
8,789	add back Grants, subsidies and contributions – Capital	-	7,532	8,383
8,024	add back Amounts Received Specifically for New and Upgraded	9,227	4,272	11,415
571	add back Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets : (including Investment Property, Real Estate Developments & non- current assets held for sale)	11,211	763	18,560
(4,147)	Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets	(40,525)	(22,470)	(36,965)
9,207	NET LENDING / (BORROWING) FOR FINANCIAL YEAR	(32,442)	(20,676)	(38,763)

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26



Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26

Transport Renewals

Suburb	Location
Roads – Asphaltic Concrete/Pavement Design/Reinforced Concrete/Spray Seal Overlay/Reconstruction	
Andrews Farm	Everard Avenue Greenfields Close Greenfields Drive Hughes Street Pinicle Court President Avenue* Ranee Court
Angle Vale	Elm Drive Ivy Way
Blakeview	Bluestone Lane Cleland Avenue Coachwood Close Corella Drive Heathcott Court Hedgestone Place Heysen Court Oxford Terrace Park Avenue Park Lake Boulevard* Pinewood Avenue Regent Grove Sanctuary Walk Shelter Close Stratford Lane
Craigmore	Axminster Crescent Bluebush Court Boronia Court Caitlin Avenue Cedar Court Cranmore Avenue Enmore Drive Fergusson Bowl Karen Avenue Lachlan Drive Magnolia Crescent Mander Crescent Mark Avenue Mintbush Place Silvertop Court Yeovil Circuit
Davoren Park	Bristol Crescent Dartmouth Street Davoren Road Edgecombe Road* Thomas Street

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26

Suburb	Location
	Woodcutts Road
Edinburgh North	Stebonheath Road (detailed design only)
Elizabeth	Frobisher Road intersection # Stockton Street Woodford Road/Dauntsey Road roundabout
Elizabeth East	Chillingworth Road Halsey Road Jenkins Court Midway Road
Elizabeth Grove	Hogarth Road (detailed design only)
Elizabeth North	Homington Road Main North Service Road Whitsbury Road
Elizabeth Park	Shillabeer Road*
Elizabeth South	Wiley Street* Willison Road
Elizabeth Vale	Chicklade Street Quarley Street Ryall Street Semley Street Shaftesbury Road
Hillbank	Abercrombie Court Alandry Court Brackenmoor Close Christine Avenue Gray Street Oberon Court Perthville Court Reserve Court Rockley Court Ryandal Court Snell Avenue
Munno Para	Douglas Drive* Illalong Crescent Karri Street Peachey Road* Roma Street
Smithfield	Morialta Drive
Virginia	Bevan Road*

*Potential multi-year projects

#Multi-year project

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26



Suburb	Location
Kerbs	
Andrews Farm	President Avenue
Blakeview	Balmoral Circuit Corella Drive Maplewood Drive Park Lake Boulevard Pinewood Avenue
Craigmore	Mander Crescent
Davoren Park	Woodcutts Road
Elizabeth	Philip Highway Stockton Street Woodford Road/Dauntsey Road roundabout
Elizabeth East	Chillingworth Road Halsey Road Midway Road
Elizabeth Park	Shillabeer Road
Elizabeth South	Trimmer Road
Elizabeth Vale	Semley Street Shaftesbury Road
Hillbank	Annette Road
Munno Para	Douglas Street Peachey Road
Bridges	
Munno Para	Karri Street - Footbridge

Stormwater Renewals

Suburb	Location	Item
Blakeview	Cowley Street	Pipe, junction box, side entry pit
Craigmore	Currawong Crescent Dimboola Crescent	Pipe, 2 x side entry pit Pipe
One Tree Hill	One Tree Hill Cemetery	Pipes

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26



Streetscape Renewals

Suburb	Location
Footpaths	
Andrews Farm	Crittenden Road
Craigmore	Adams Road# Blair Park Drive Perre Drive Uley Road Zurich Road
Davoren Park	Coventry Road# Whittington Road
Elizabeth	Fairfield Road Judd Road
Elizabeth Downs	Bush Street Dauntless Crescent Forrestall Road Hamblynn Road (removal) Kenner Street Mckenzie Road Midway Road#
Elizabeth East	Halsey Road Midway Road
Elizabeth Park	Fremont Park## Marshalsea Road Midway Road# Shillabeer Road Tolmer Road# Yorktown Road#
Elizabeth Vale	Collingbourne Drive#
Hillbank	Main North Road #
Munno Para	Karri Street (removal) Koongarra Crescent (removal) Tallara Crescent (removal)
Smithfield Plains	Featherstone Street Stebonheath Road
Pram Ramps	
Streetscape	x 79
Transport	x 196

*Potential to be multi-year project

#Sections of these roads have budget allocated for widening

#Multi-year project

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26



Playford Alive Renewals

Suburb	Location
Footpaths, Roads, Kerbs & Verge Compacted Fines	
Davoren Park	Charmouth Road Clarendon Street* Drimpton Street Easton Road Ferris Street Kilmington Road# Kingston Street
Pram Ramps	
Streetscape	9
Transport	16

*Roads & kerb only

#Roads, kerb and path only

Parks and Sportsfield Renewals

Suburb	Location	Item
Andrews Farm	Stebonheath Park West Parkway Reserve	Irrigation design Playground, rubber softfall, fencing
Craigmore	Craigmore Park West (Browne Circuit)* Tareena Reserve	Playground, basketball court, signage Irrigation
Elizabeth East	Playford Tennis Centre	Tennis court resurfacing
Hillbank	Michael Crescent	Irrigation
One Tree Hill	McGilp Recreation Park	Playground, softfall, shelter, BBQ, bins, benches
Smithfield Plains	Kooranowa Reserve	Long jump, shot put, fence, pathways
Various Sites	Multiple irrigation controllers	Irrigation controllers
Virginia	Virginia Oval	Playground, shades, softfall, basketball surface, benches, bins, gates

*Renewal is being supplemented by upgrade projects

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26

Suburb	Location	Item
Andrews Farm	West Parkway Reserve	Fencing barrier
	Mayfair Ride Safe Park	Fencing barrier, gate, kerb ramps and footpath
Craigmore	Pinehurst Reserve	Bench
Elizabeth Downs	Barry Warren pump track	2 x bench
Munno Para	Playford Alive Town Park	Fencing barrier
Uleybury	Uley Cemetery	Gravel path, benches and signage

Buildings Renewals

Suburb	Location	Item
Andrews Farm	Stebonheath Park	CCTV and public toilet
Angle Vale	Angle Vale Sports Facility Clubrooms	LED lighting
Davoren Park	Kalara Reserve Playford Operations Centre	Clubroom renewal Toilets, storage bays, fence and gates
Elizabeth	Aquadome	Café & Kitchen, reception refurb, pool vacuum and blanket winch
	Civic Centre	Design
Elizabeth Downs	Argana Park	LED lighting, switchboard
	The Rise Community Centre Uley Road Hall	CCTV Access control
Elizabeth East	Spruance Hall	Access control
Elizabeth North	Broadmeadows Reserve	Access compliant amenities
Elizabeth Park	Dwight Reserve	Internal fitout, LED lighting
Elizabeth Vale	Mofflin Reserve	Changeroom and amenities
One Tree Hill	One Tree Hill Institute	Septic tank
Smithfield Plains	John McVeity Centre	CCTV
	Kooranowa Reserve The Precinct	Public toilet CCTV
Various	Master Keying Upgrade	Master key upgrade
Virginia	Virginia Institute	Access control
	Virginia Oval	LED lighting

Proposed Infrastructure Renewal Works 2025/26



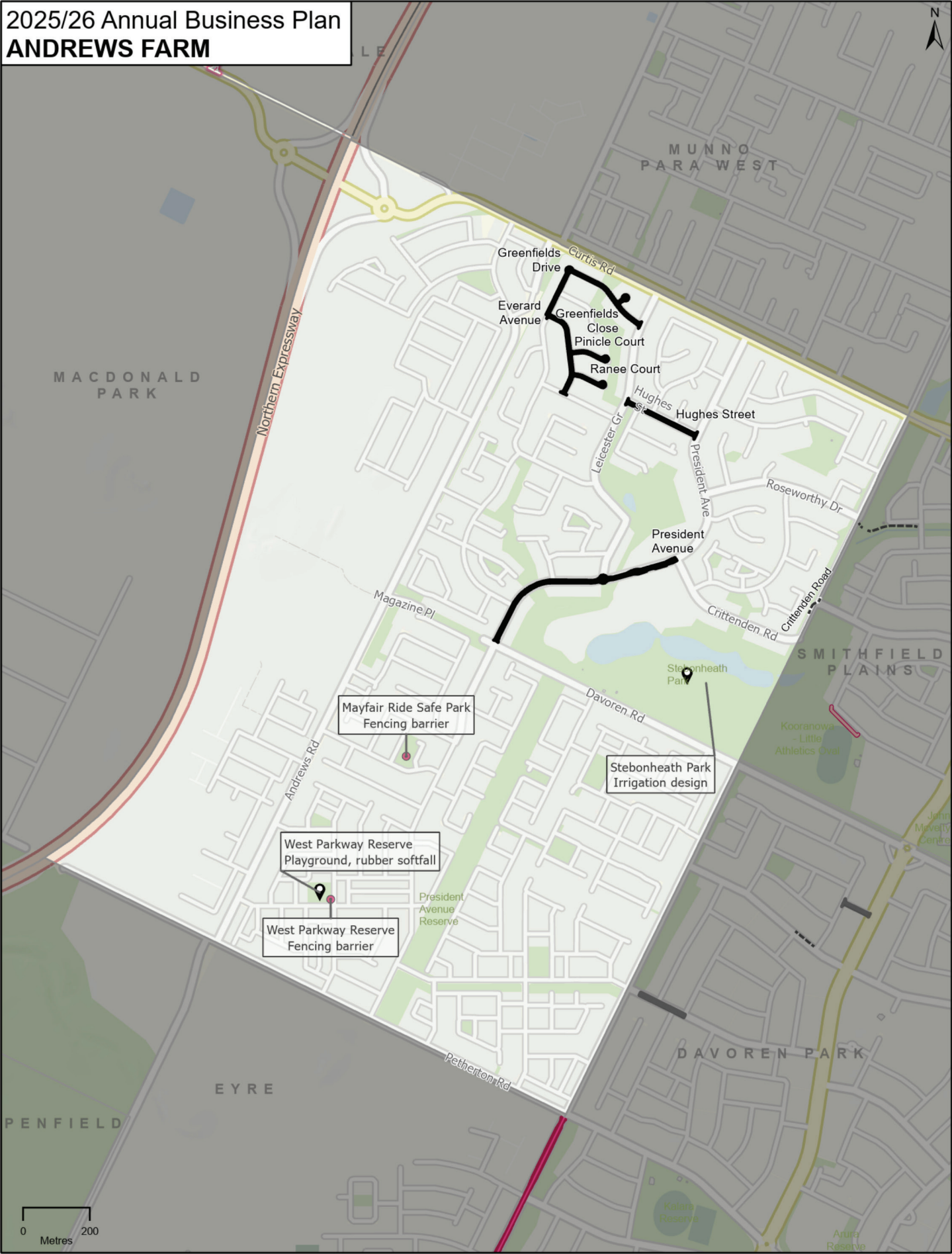
Water Delivery Renewals

Facility	Item
Main Terrace - Aquifer Sr	Aquifer connection
Kalara Reserve - Aquifer Sr	Aquifer connection
Playford Boulevard - Prince George Plaza Windsor Fountain	Lighting and drain grills

Proposed Capital Works 2025/26 – Suburb Maps



2025/26 Annual Business Plan ANDREWS FARM



- Footpath - Renewal
- Parks - Renewal
- New Assets and Upgrades
- Road - Renewal

Disclaimer
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2025/26 Annual Business Plan

ANGLE VALE



- Road - Renewal
- Footbridge - Renewal
- New Assets and Upgrades
- Road - Upgrade (design only)

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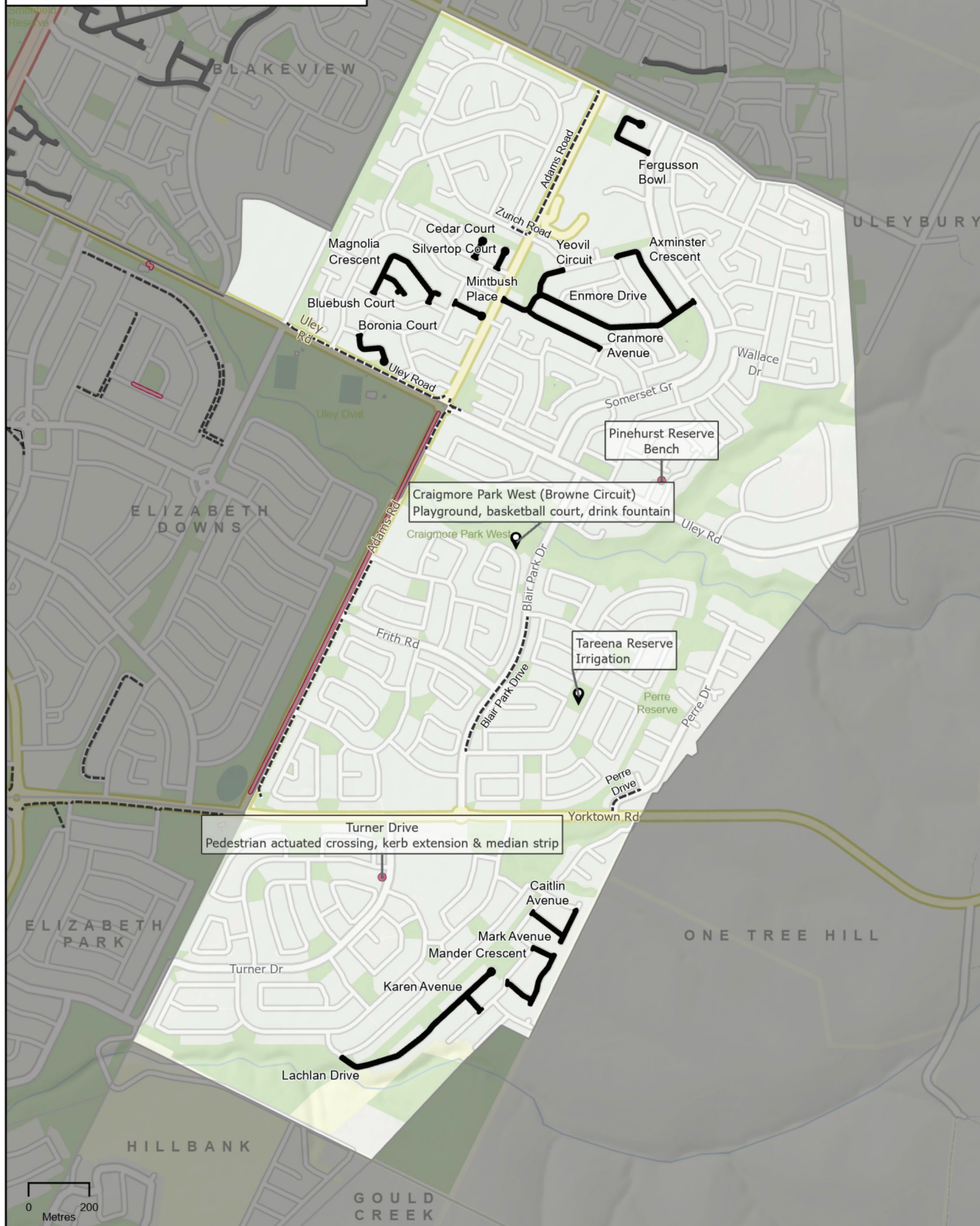
2025/26 Annual Business Plan BLAKEVIEW



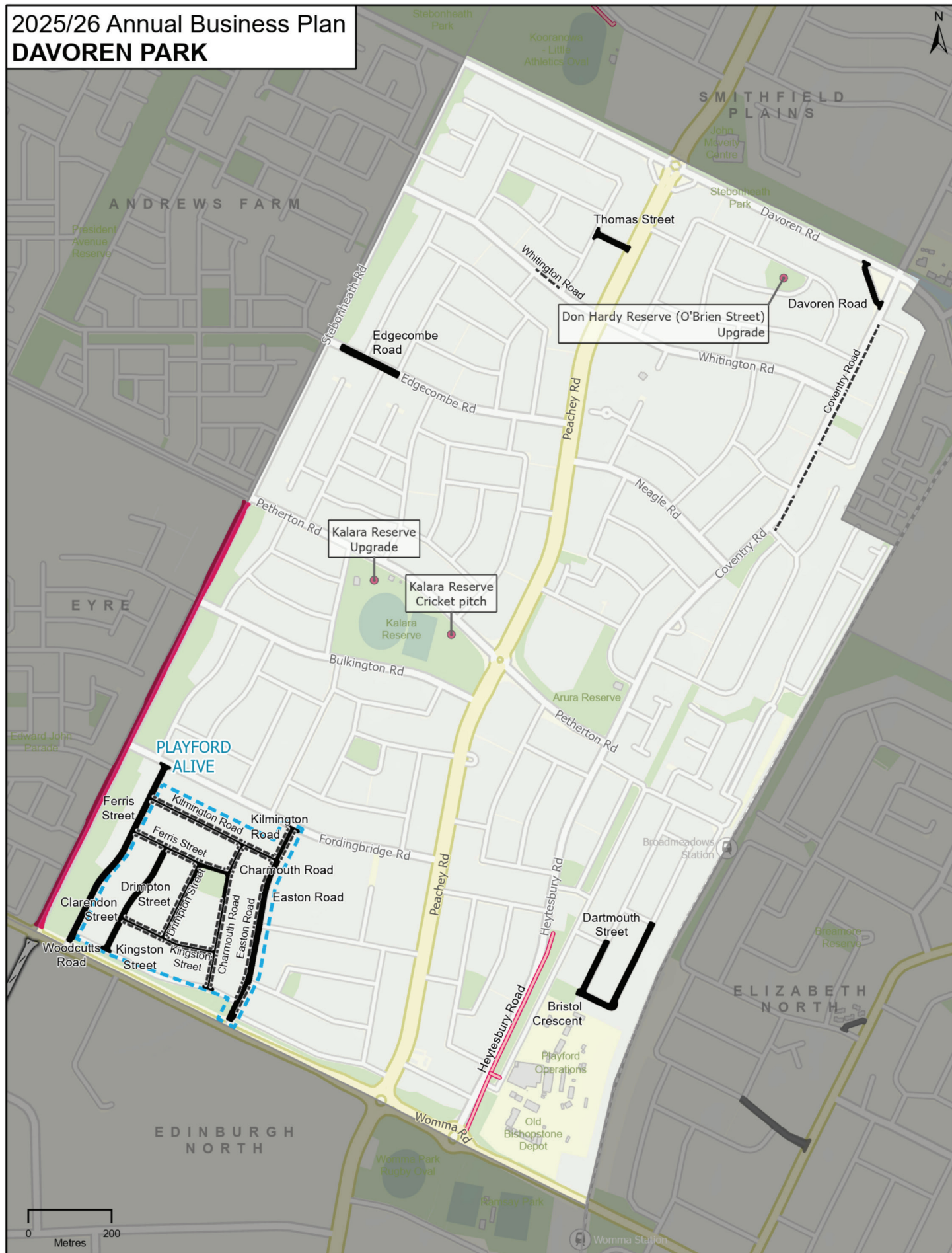
- Road - Renewal
- New Assets and Upgrades
- Road - Upgrade

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2025/26 Annual Business Plan CRAIGMORE



2025/26 Annual Business Plan DAVOREN PARK



2025/26 Annual Business Plan EDINBURGH NORTH



- New Assets and Upgrades
- Road - Renewal (design only)

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2025/26 Annual Business Plan ELIZABETH



2025/26 Annual Business Plan ELIZABETH DOWNS



2025/26 Annual Business Plan ELIZABETH EAST

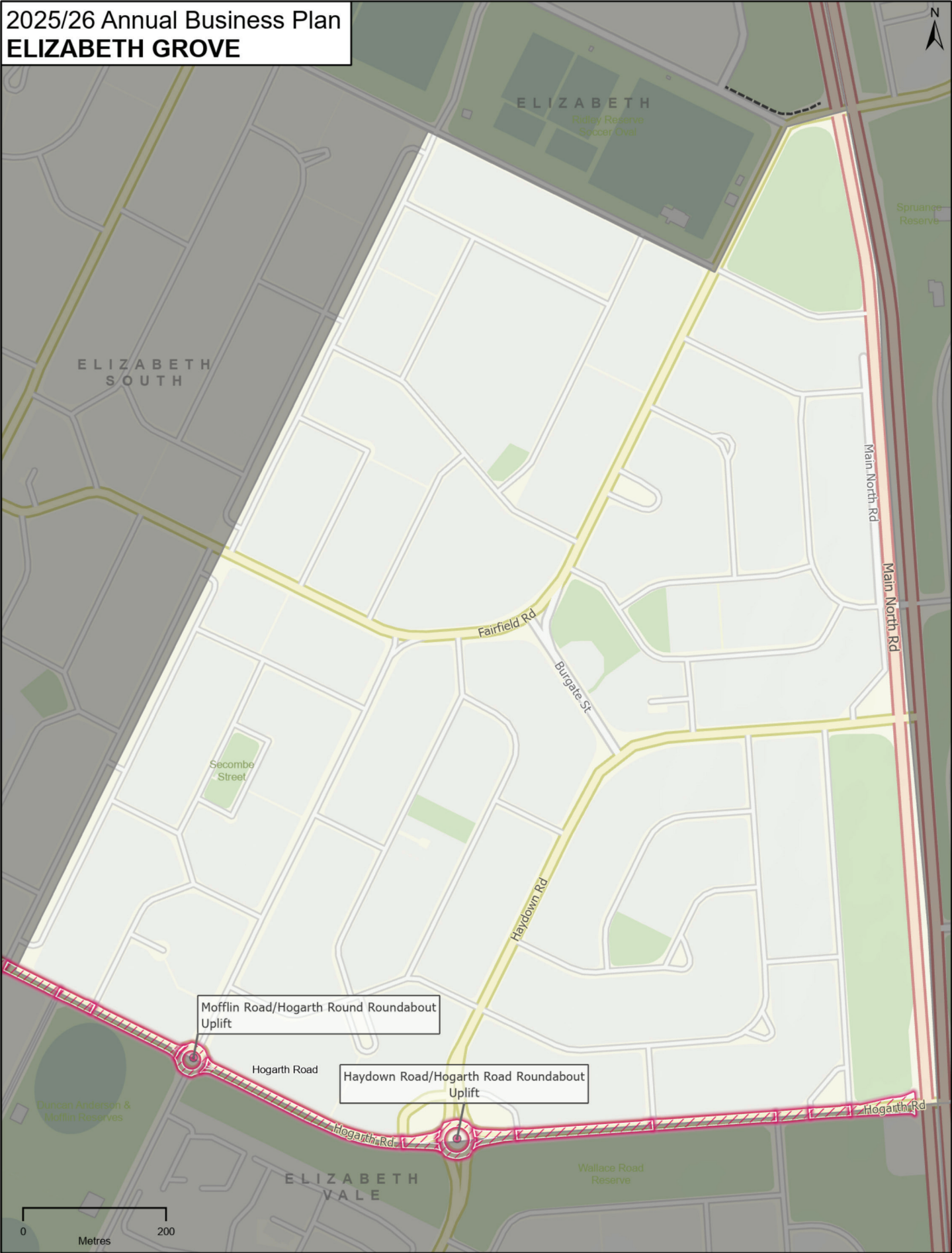


- Footpath - Renewal
- Parks - Renewal
- Road - Renewal

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2025/26 Annual Business Plan

ELIZABETH GROVE



2025/26 Annual Business Plan ELIZABETH NORTH

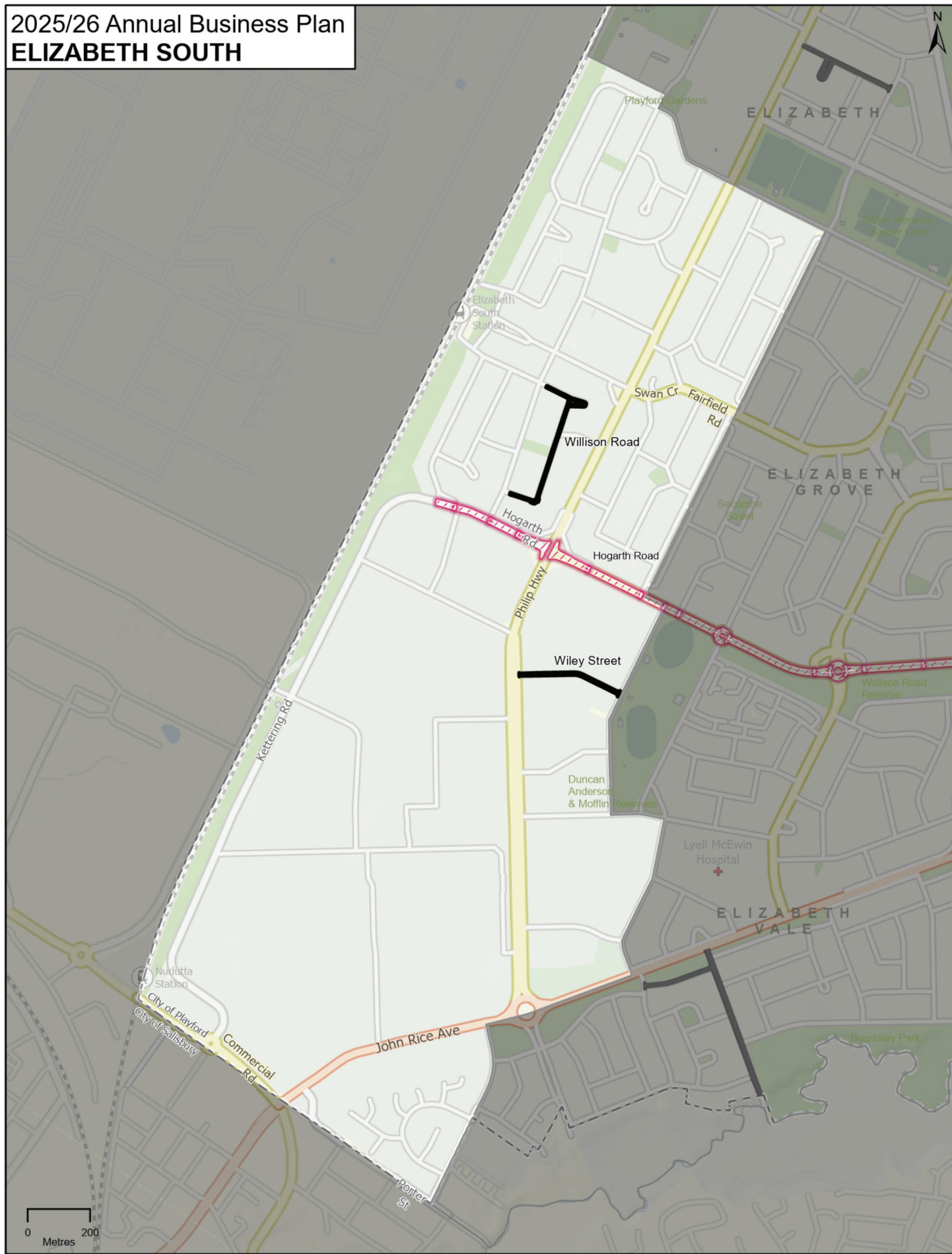


2025/26 Annual Business Plan ELIZABETH PARK

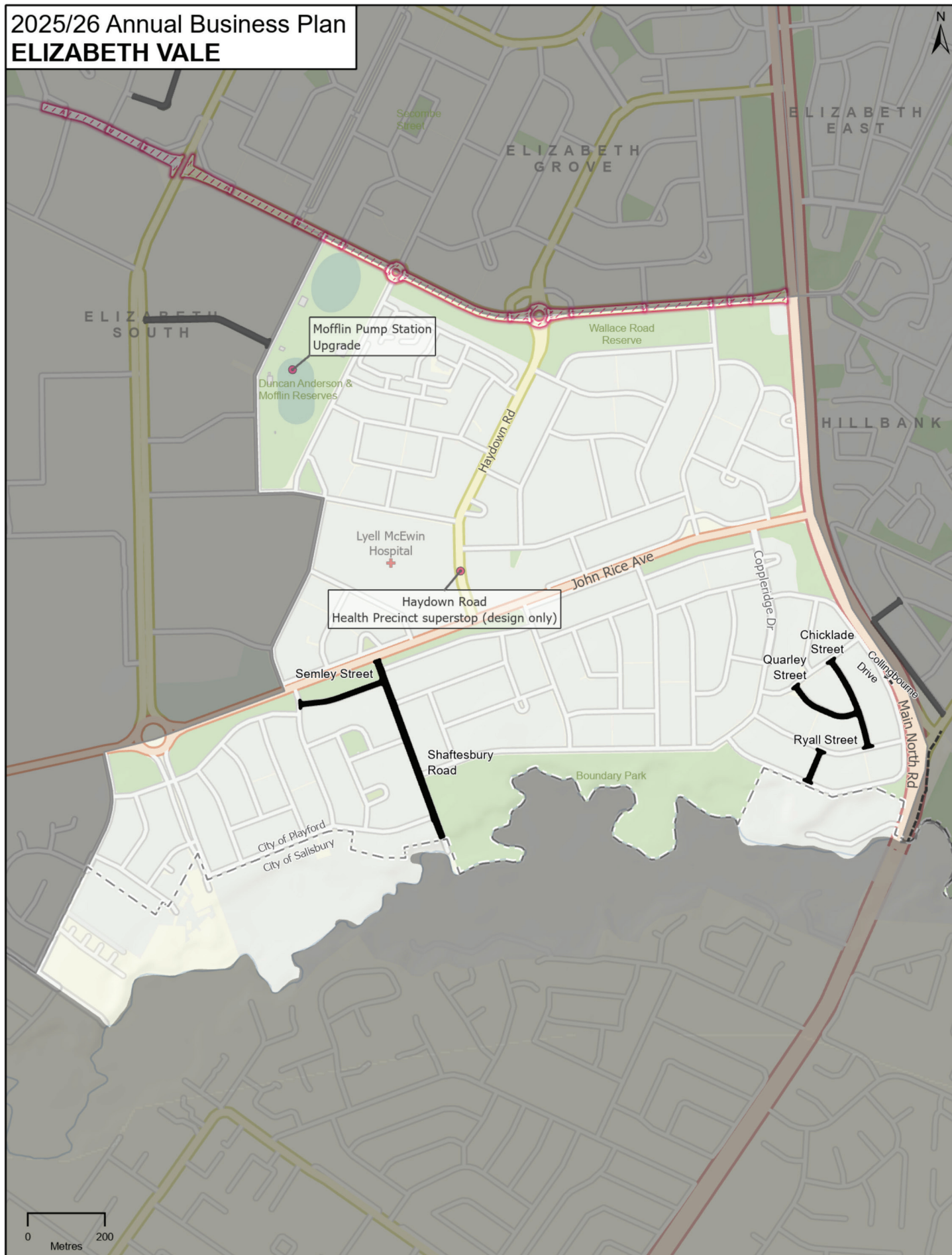


2025/26 Annual Business Plan

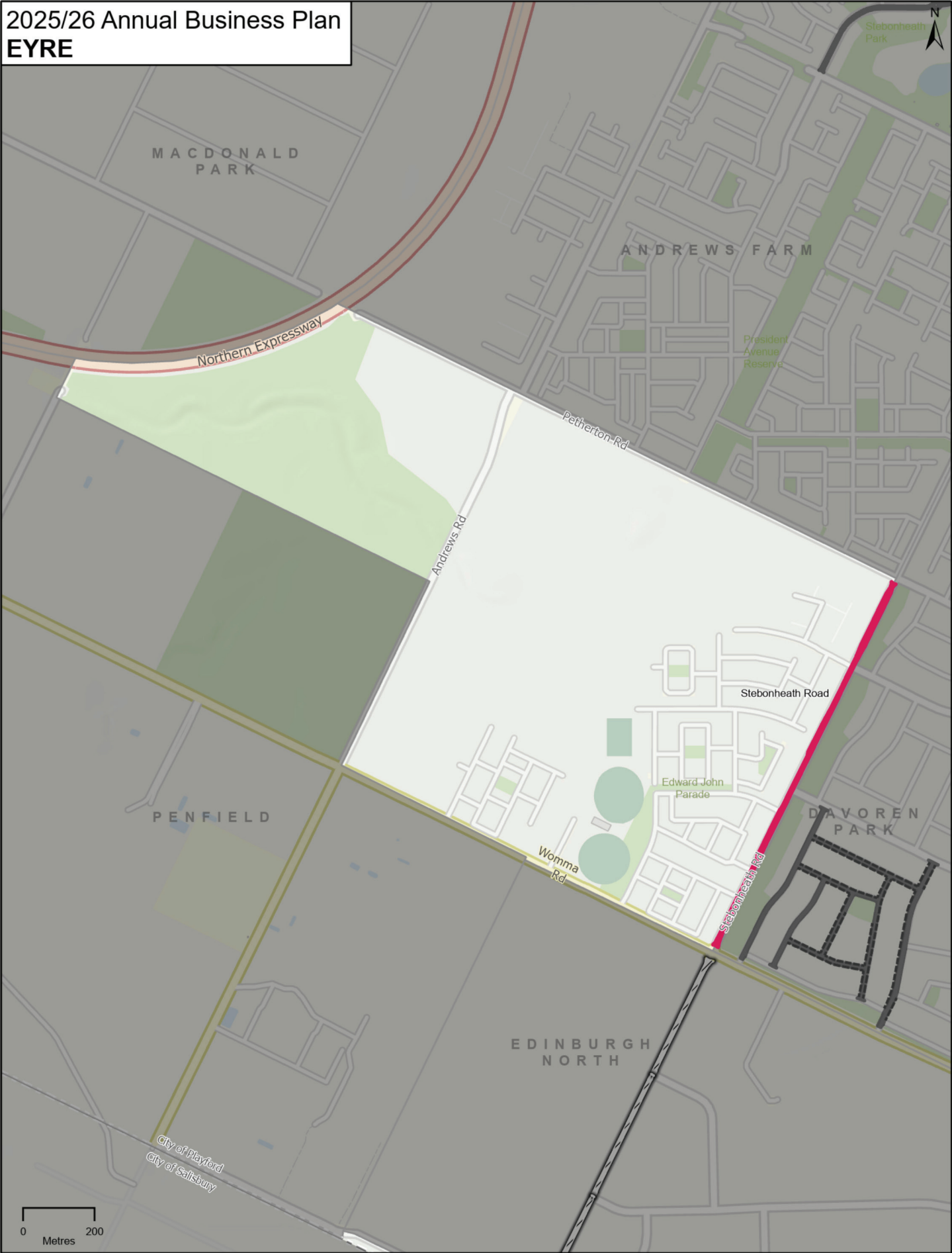
ELIZABETH SOUTH



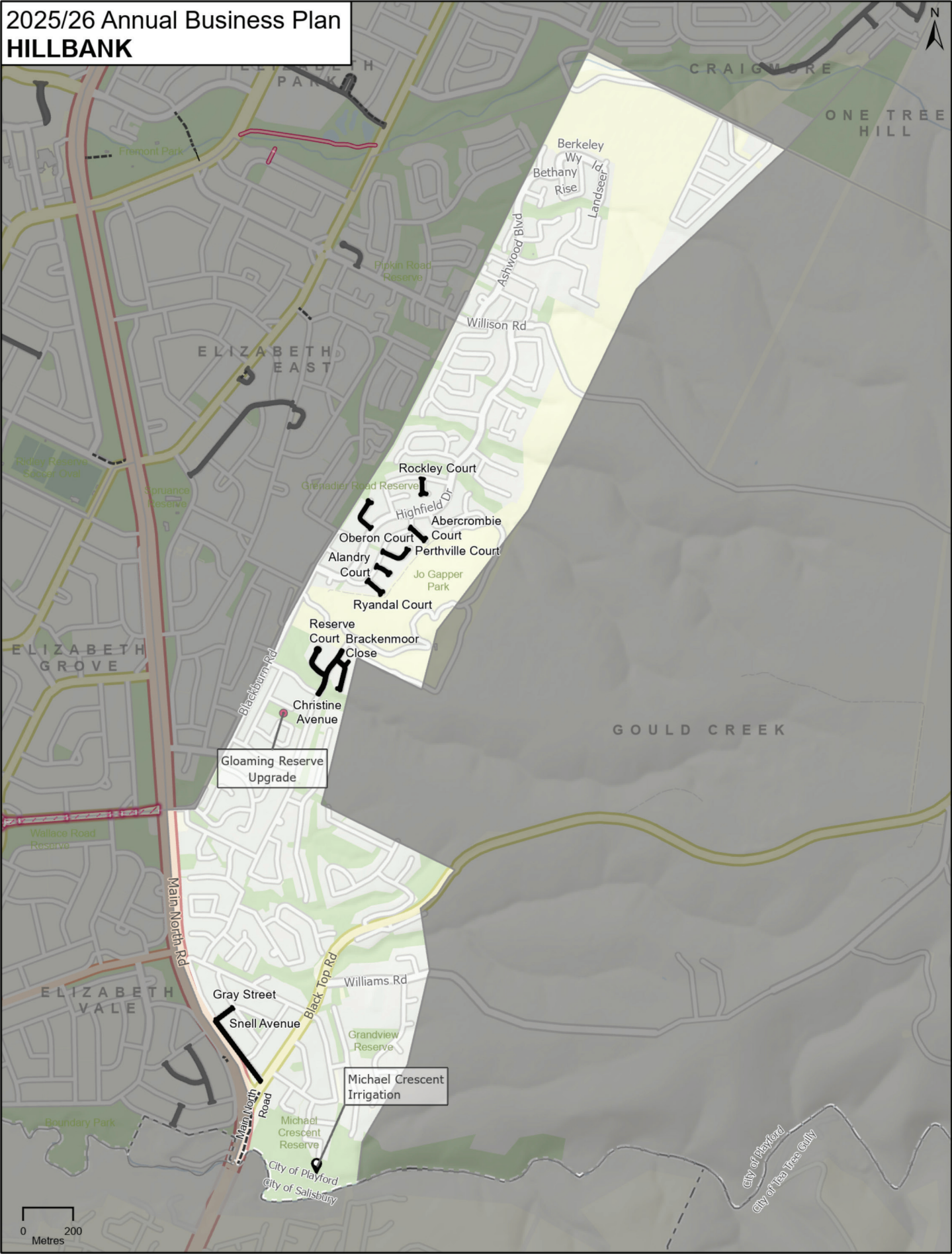
2025/26 Annual Business Plan ELIZABETH VALE



2025/26 Annual Business Plan EYRE



2025/26 Annual Business Plan HILLBANK



- Footpath - Renewal
- Road - Renewal
- Parks - Renewal
- New Assets and Upgrades

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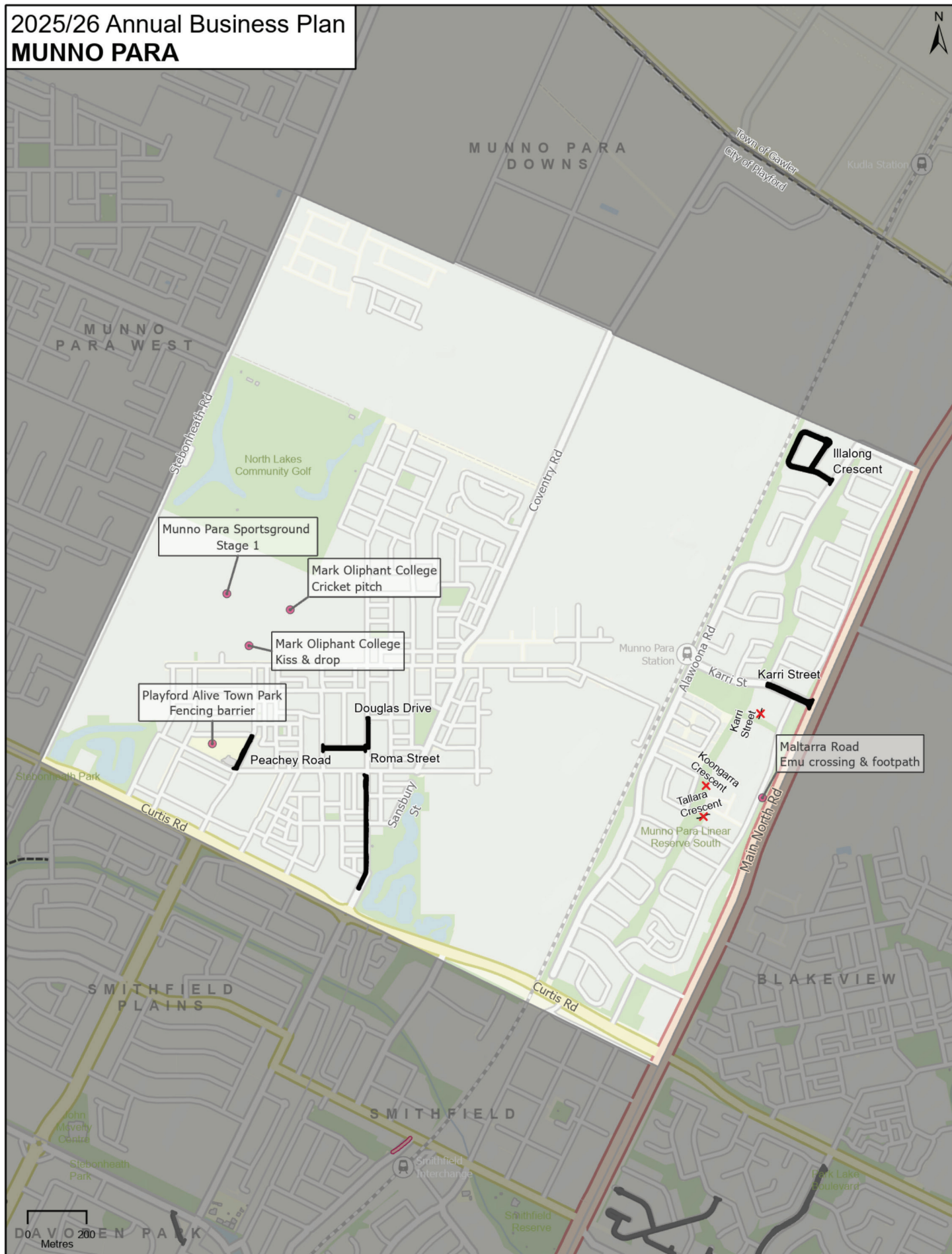
2025/26 Annual Business Plan

MACDONALD PARK



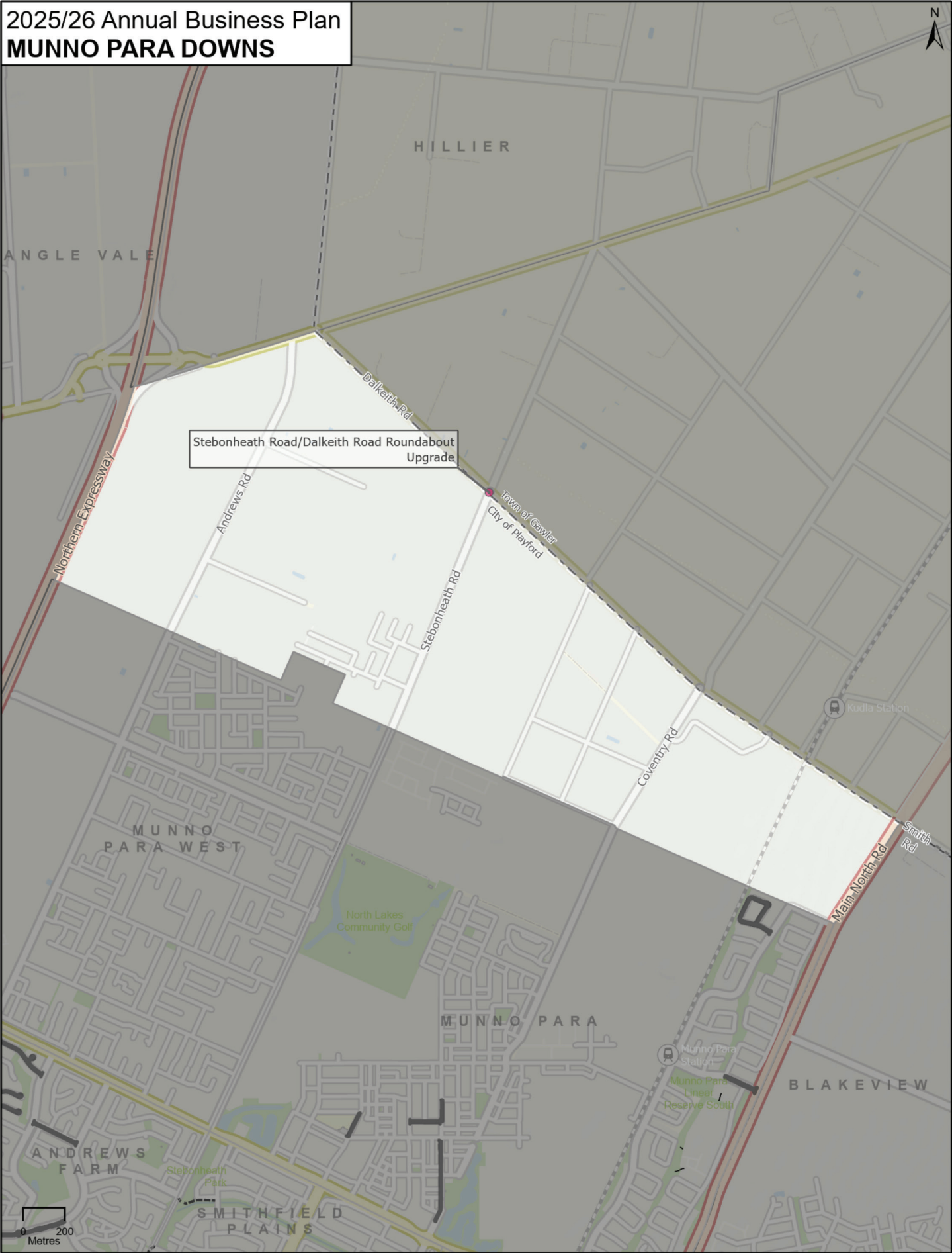
2025/26 Annual Business Plan

MUNNO PARA



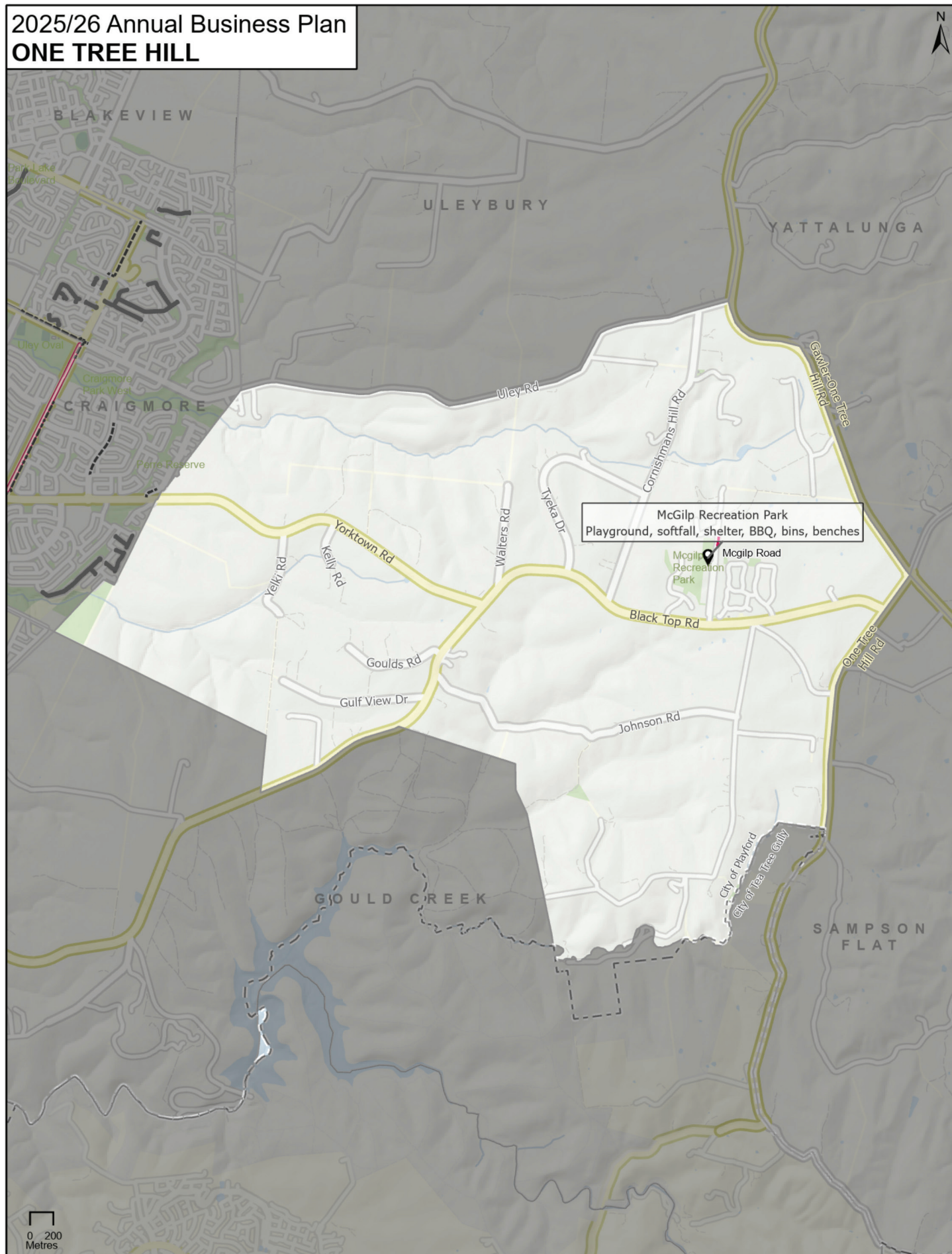
2025/26 Annual Business Plan

MUNNO PARA DOWNS



2025/26 Annual Business Plan

ONE TREE HILL



Parks - Renewal

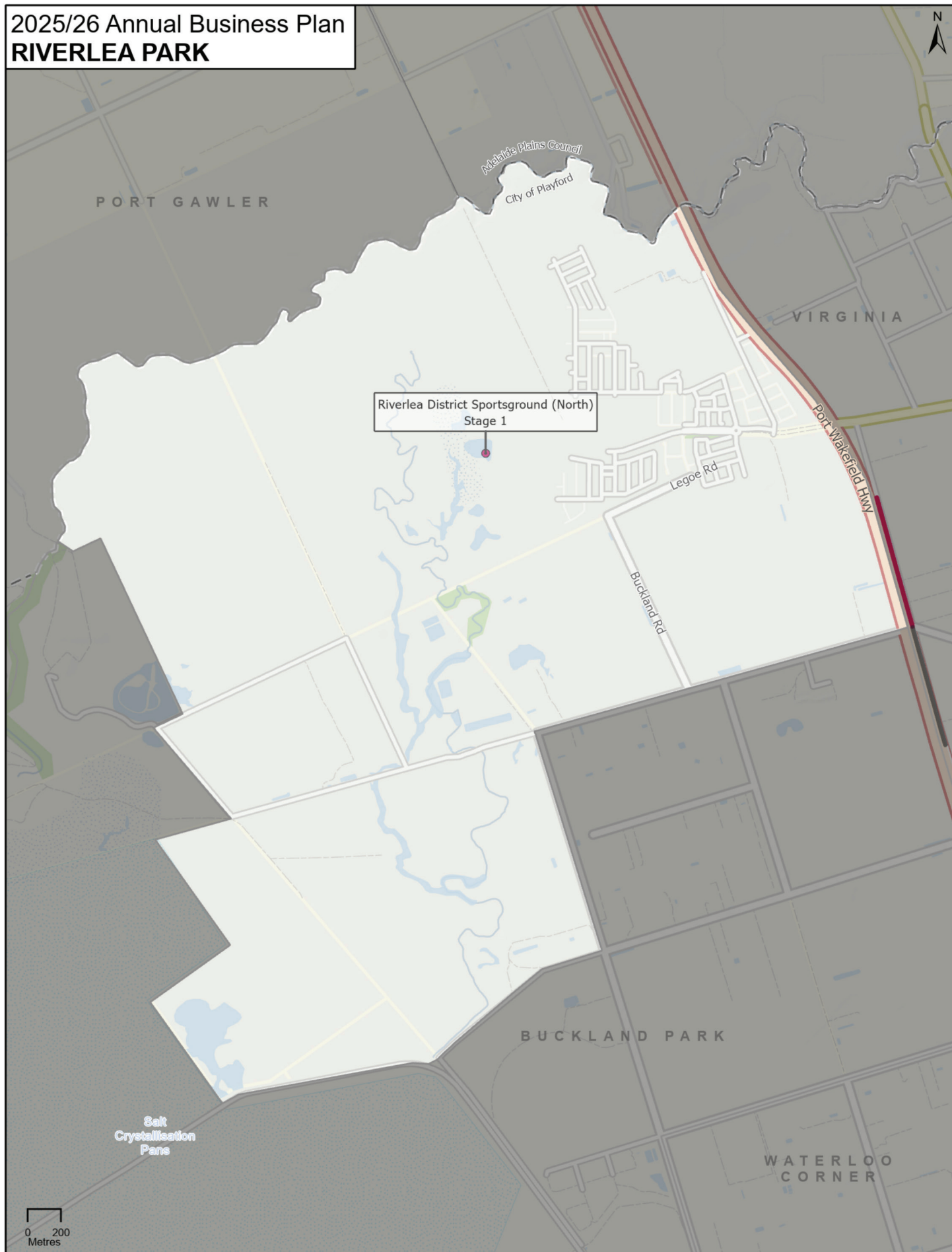


Footpath - New (design only)

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2025/26 Annual Business Plan

RIVERLEA PARK



2025/26 Annual Business Plan SMITHFIELD



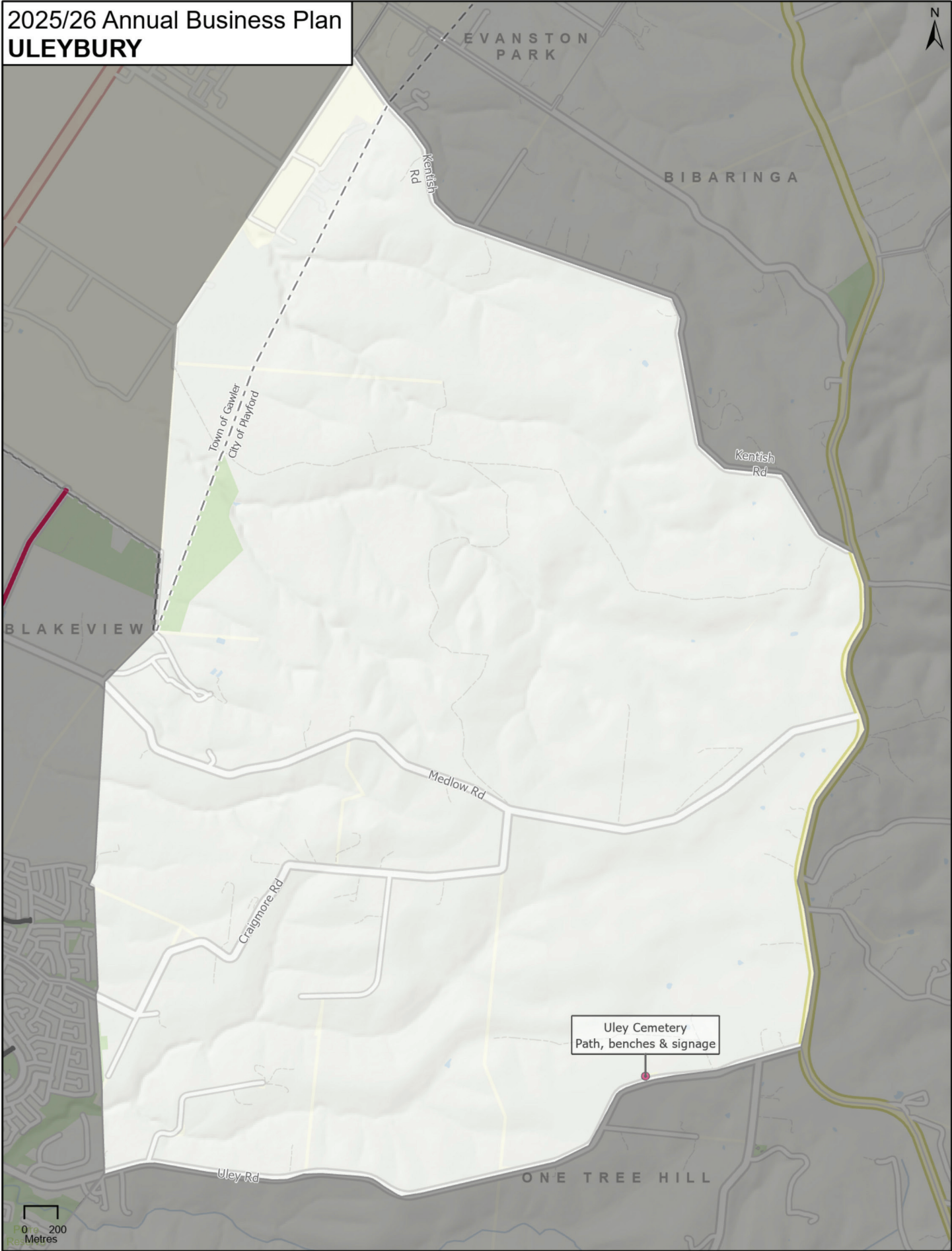
-  Road - Renewal
-  Footpath - New

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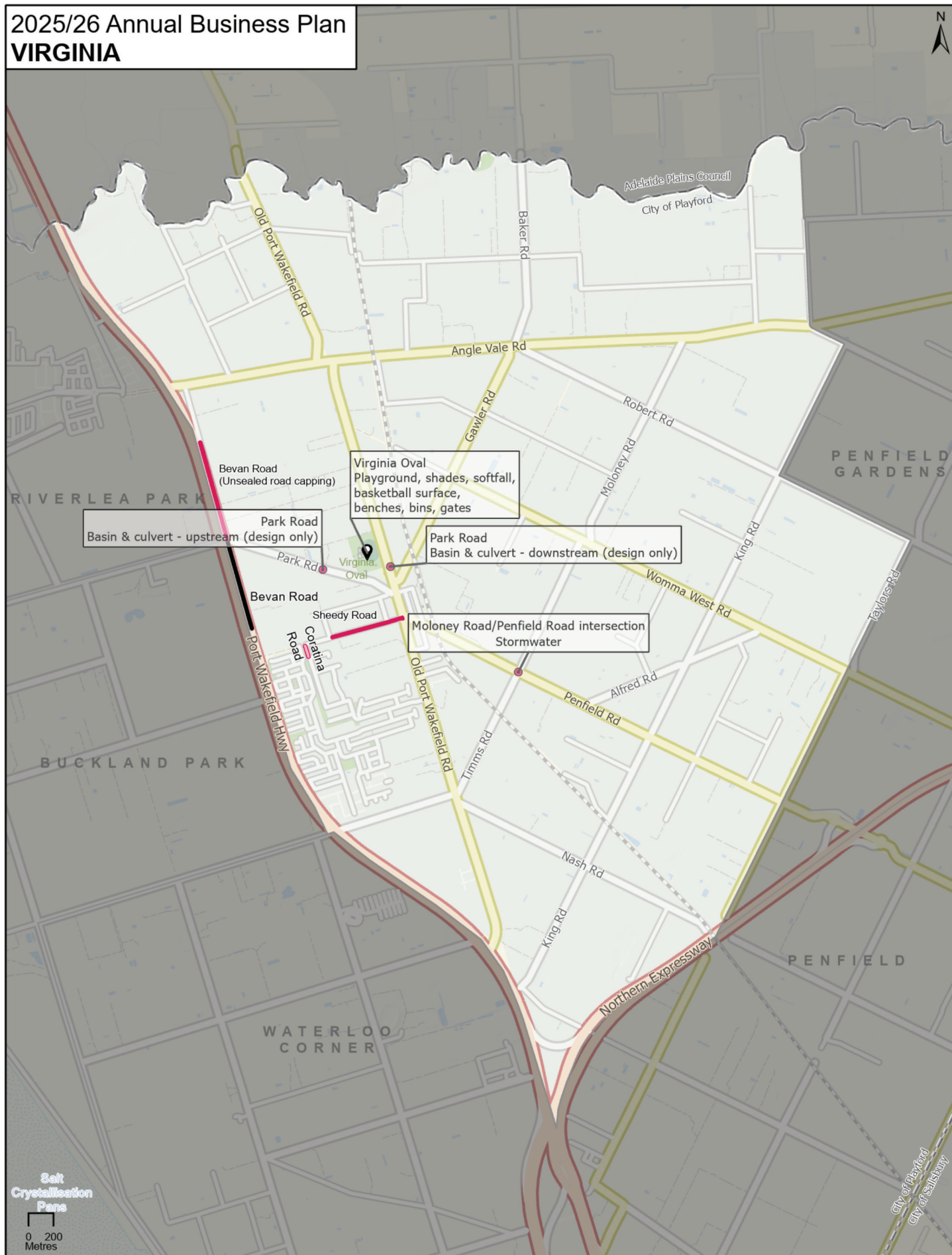
2025/26 Annual Business Plan SMITHFIELD PLAINS



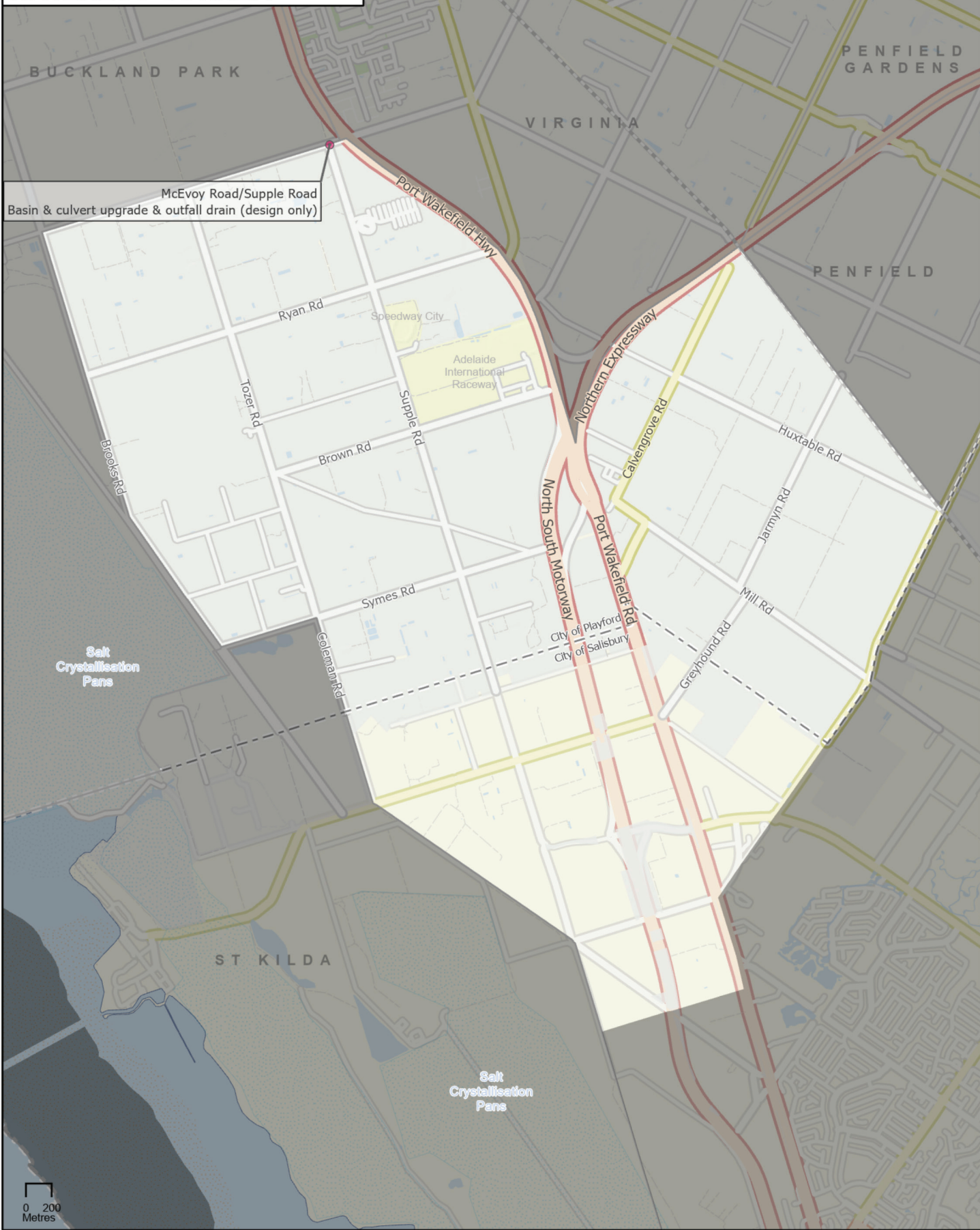
2025/26 Annual Business Plan ULEYBURY



2025/26 Annual Business Plan VIRGINIA



2025/26 Annual Business Plan WATERLOO CORNER



ESCOSA Advice



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Advice

Local Government Advice

City of Playford

February 2024

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Enquiries concerning this advice should be addressed to:

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City of Playford

AT A GLANCE

OVERVIEW

The Essential Services Commission finds the City of Playford's current and projected financial performance **sustainable** taking into account the council's average expected growth in properties of 2.3% p.a. over the next 10 years, and the planned average rate increases of 2.2% p.a. per property over this period

RISKS IMPACTING SUSTAINABILITY

- ⚠️ Forecast growth in rateable properties is lower than anticipated and not realised by council
- ⚠️ Failure to reduce its exposure to debt

CONTINUE

- ✅ Monitoring average rate rises annually
- ✅ Reviewing rateable property growth forecasts annually
- ✅ Focusing on selling and disposing of assets to help reduce debt
- ✅ Reporting any actual and projected cost savings in its annual budget and long-term financial plan

COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- Reduce the level of net financial liabilities
- Improve transparency on borrowing assumptions
- Include efficiency goals and cost savings in the long-term financial plan

KEY FACTS

- Population in 2021 was **99,190**
- Council covers **345 square kilometres**
- **44,407** rateable properties in 2022-23
- **\$91.8 million of rate income** in 2022-23
- Value of assets held in 2022-23 equals **\$1.621 billion**

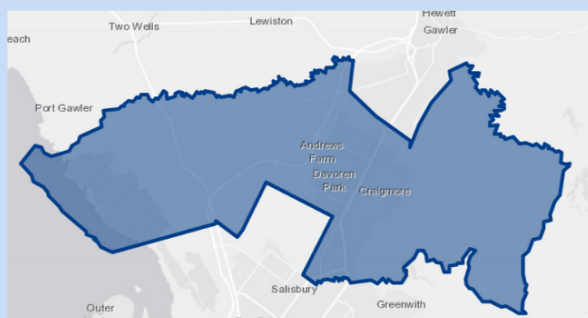


Table of contents

Glossary of terms.....	2
1 The Commission's key advice findings for the City of Playford	3
Current financial performance:	3
Projected financial performance (future):	3
Previous financial performance (past ten years):.....	3
2 About the advice	5
2.1 Summary of advice	5
2.2 Detailed advice findings	6
2.2.1 Advice on material plan amendments in 2023-24.....	6
2.2.2 Advice on financial sustainability	7
2.2.3 Advice on current and projected rate levels.....	11
2.3 The Commission's next advice and focus areas.....	12

Glossary of terms


ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AMP	Asset management plan (also called an IAMP)
Commission	Essential Services Commission, established under the <i>Essential Services Commission Act 2002</i>
CPI	Consumer Price Index (Adelaide, All Groups)
Council	City of Playford
CWMS	Community Wastewater Management System
ESC Act	<i>Essential Services Commission Act 2002</i>
F&A	Local Government Advice: Framework and Approach – Final Report
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IAMP	Infrastructure and asset management plan (also called an AMP)
LG Act	<i>Local Government Act 1999</i>
LGA SA Financial Indicators Paper	Local Government Association of South Australia, Financial Sustainability Information Paper 9 - Financial Indicators Revised May 2019
LGGC	Local Government Grants Commission
LGPI	Local Government Price Index
LTFP	Long-term financial plan
Regulations	<i>Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011</i>
RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
SACES	The South Australian Centre for Economic Studies
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SMP	Strategic management plan
SG	Superannuation Guarantee
The scheme or advice	Local Government Advice Scheme

Legend:  Low-risk  Moderate-risk  High-risk

1 The Commission's key advice findings for the City of Playford

The Essential Services Commission (**Commission**) finds the City of Playford's (**Council's**) current and projected financial performance **sustainable** as it prepares for continued high levels of projected population growth. After a period of significant infrastructure and service expansion, leveraged by substantial borrowings and grant funding, the Council appears, based on historical surpluses, to demonstrate sound operating performance.

Current financial performance:




Unsustainable	Potentially Unsustainable	Mostly Sustainable	Sustainable

Projected financial performance (future):



Unsustainable	Potentially Unsustainable	Mostly Sustainable	Sustainable

Previous financial performance (past ten years):



Unsustainable	Potentially Unsustainable	Mostly Sustainable	Sustainable

The Commission notes the Council's strategy to reduce its borrowings via the sale of assets (repurpose of assets) and operating surplus growth. However, it is not clear what level of borrowing can be reduced via asset sales in the 10 years to 2032-33. If the Council is unable to fulfill its asset sale strategy, then it risks a greater burden of revenue shifting to its ratepayers.

In addition, the Council's ability to reduce its borrowings via operating surplus growth also highlights the importance of its forecast growth in rateable properties. If the Council overestimates the growth in rateable properties to 2032-33, the burden of debt repayment will fall on existing ratepayers.

Noting that the Council's projections are somewhat reliant on its high growth assumptions, the Commission considers it important for the Council to ensure that its costs align to actual growth achieved – including having contingency plans to defer or avoid costs and new infrastructure if forecast growth does not transpire. In addition, the Council should focus on achieving scalability so that the marginal cost of serving a new ratepayer is financially sustainable.

Budgeting considerations

1. **Continue** its good practice of reviewing inflation forecasts in its budget and forward projections from 2024-25, given the potential for higher short-term inflation outcomes, followed by a return to long-term averages.
2. **Continue** its good practice of reviewing the rateable property growth forecasts in budget projections each year, to ensure that they remain current and do not create a need for additional rate increases to generate the same level of projected revenue.

Continue to provide evidence of ongoing cost efficiencies

3. **Continue** its good practice of reporting any actual and projected cost savings in its annual budget (and long-term financial plan, as appropriate), to provide evidence of constraining cost growth and achieving efficiency across its operations and service delivery.
4. **Include** efficiency goals and projected cost savings in its long-term financial plan, to provide further evidence of projected cost growth constraint and efficiencies across its operations and service deliveries.

Continue to manage borrowing risk

5. **Reduce** its level of net financial liabilities, as forecast in its latest long-term financial plan, and continue to focus on asset sales or disposals as one of its strategies to help reduce debt.
6. **Improve** transparency on borrowing assumptions, including loan facilities and loan terms, in its long-term financial plan.

Containing rate levels

7. **Continue** to monitor average rate rises to help reduce cost of living pressure on the community.

2 About the advice

The Essential Services Commission (**Commission**), South Australia's independent economic regulator and advisory body, has been given a role by the Parliament to provide advice on material changes proposed by local Councils in relation to elements of their strategic management plans (**SMPs**) and on the proposed revenue sources, including rates, which underpin those plans.¹

One of the main purposes of the Local Government Advice Scheme (**advice or the scheme**) is to support Councils to make 'financially sustainable' decisions relating to their annual business plans and budgets in the context of their long-term financial plans (**LTFPs**) and infrastructure and asset management plans (**IAMPs**)² – both required as part of a Council's SMP.³ Financial sustainability is considered to encompass intergenerational equity,⁴ as well as program (service level) and rates stability.⁵ The other main purpose is for the Commission to consider ratepayer contributions in the context of revenue sources, as outlined in the LTFP.⁶ In addition, the Commission has discretion to provide advice on any other aspect of a Council's LTFP or IAMP it considers appropriate, having regard to the circumstances of that Council.⁷

The first cycle of the scheme extends over four years from 2022-23 to 2025-26, and the Commission has selected 17 Councils for advice in the second scheme year (2023-24), including the Council.

This report provides the Local Government Advice for the Council in 2023-24.

The Council is obliged under the *Local Government Act 1999* (**LG Act**) to publish this advice and its response, if applicable, in its 2024-25 annual business plan (including any draft annual business plan) and subsequent plans until the next cycle of the scheme.⁸ It does not need to publish the attachment to the advice (these will be available with the advice on the Commission's website⁹), nor is it compelled under the LG Act to follow the advice.

The Commission thanks the Council for providing relevant information and engaging with Commission staff to assist the Commission in preparing this advice.

2.1 Summary of advice

Historically, the Council's community has had strong rateable property growth, accompanied by strong infrastructure growth and increasing contributions from ratepayers and government grants. In general, the Commission finds the Council's current financial position sustainable, on balance, with small historical and projected operating surpluses. However, there are some risks to the income and expense forecasts and the Council's strategy to reduce its borrowings.

The Council is one of South Australia's fastest growing areas. In 2022-23, the Council had 44,407 rateable properties. The Council expects this to increase to 46,306 in 2023-24, a 4.3 percent growth in rateable properties.¹⁰

The Council's cost base is expected to rise in the short-term, driven by further growth projections, with the Council forecasting an average of 1,075 new properties each year from 2023-24 to 2032-33. This growth will become embedded into the underlying cost base of the Council. In addition, the Council has

¹ Amendments to the LG Act (s122(1c) to (1k) and (9)) specify the responsibilities for the Commission and local Councils for the Local Government Scheme Advice. The Commission must provide advice to each Council in accordance with the matters outlined in s122(1e), (1f) and (1g).

² Commonly referred to as asset management plans.

³ The objectives of the advice with reference to a Council's LTFP and IAMPs are presented under LG Act, s122(1g). LG Act s122(1) specifies the requirements of a Council's SMP, including the LTFP and IAMPs.

⁴ 'Intergenerational equity' relates to fairly sharing services and the revenue generated to fund the services between current and future ratepayers.

⁵ Commission, *Framework and Approach – Final Report*, August 2022, pp. 2-3, available at www.escosa.sa.gov.au/advice/advice-to-local-government.

⁶ LG Act s122(1f)(a) and (1g)(a)(ii).

⁷ LG Act s122(1f)(b) and (1g)(b).

⁸ LG Act s122(1h).

⁹ The Commission must publish its advice under LG Act s122(1i)(a).

¹⁰ City of Playford, *2023-24 annual business plan*, June 2023, p. 60.

factored this growth into its additional rate revenue estimates. Therefore, the future sustainability of the Council is strongly linked to its expectations regarding the further development of the community.

The Council has predominantly used borrowings from the Local Government Finance Authority of South Australia (**LGFA**) to fund its renewal of existing assets and acquisition of new and upgraded assets. In doing so, the Council's net financial liabilities ratio¹¹ has been outside (or above) the suggested target range (the 10-year average to 2021-22 was 121.3 percent). The Council has forecast a reduction in its net financial liabilities ratio from a peak of 88.4 percent in 2023-24 to an average of 49.9 percent in the five years to 2032-33. The reduction in the ratio from 2022-23 to 2031-32 is proposed to come from the progressive repayment of total borrowings (\$33.1 million over the next ten years to 2032-33), via the sale of assets and from operating surplus growth.

The Council's forward projections from 2023-24 (in its LTFP) forecast a slightly improved financial sustainability outlook as a result of the forecast rate of operating revenue growth set to slightly outpace the forecast rate of expense growth with:

- ▶ average growth in rates and expenses per property below the Reserve Bank of Australia (**RBA**)-based forecast inflation rate (and generally aligned with the Council's forecast inflation), and
- ▶ a reduction in its net financial liabilities ratio from a progressive repayment of total borrowings (of \$33.1 million over the next ten years to 2032-33), via the sale of assets¹² and forecast available net annual cashflow.

The Commission notes the Council's current good practice of reporting cost savings (the Council has identified \$0.6 million of savings during the 2023-24 budget process). However, these savings equate to only 0.4 percent of the Council's total forecast expenses in 2023-24.¹³

The Commission encourages the Council to include efficiency goals and challenging projected cost savings in its long-term financial plan that could provide some mitigation if the forecast increase in rateable properties does not arise. There are also other opportunities for the Council to be more transparent about its price, service level and efficiency-related assumptions in its forward cost projections. In general, a transparent focus on cost constraint should help the Council to identify opportunities to reduce any affordability risk emerging for residential ratepayers, who account for the major share of the rates revenue.

2.2 Detailed advice findings

The next sections summarise the Commission's more detailed observations and advice findings regarding the Council's material changes to its 2023-24 plans (compared with the previous year's plans), its financial sustainability (in the context of its long-term operating performance, net financial liabilities, and asset renewals expenditure) and its current and projected rate levels.

In providing this advice, the Commission has followed the approach explained in the Framework and Approach – Final Report (**F&A**). The attachment explores these matters further.¹⁴

2.2.1 Advice on material plan amendments in 2023-24

Key Point:



Projected improvement in operating performance driven by higher rates and grant revenue and reduced level of net financial liabilities.

¹¹ The net financial liabilities ratio is defined as: Net financial liabilities ÷ Total operating income. This ratio measures the extent to which a Council's total operating income covers, or otherwise, its net financial liabilities. The suggested LGA target range is between zero and 100 percent of total operating income, but possibly higher in some circumstances (LGA SA Financial Indicators Paper, pp. 7-8).

¹² City of Playford, *2023-24 2032 long-term financial plan*, June 2023, pp. 18.

¹³ City of Playford's total expenses for 2023-24 are forecast to be \$131,187,342 City of Playford Council, *2024 – 2033 long-term financial plan*, June 2023, p. 35

¹⁴ The attachment will be available on the Commission's website with the Advice.

The Council's 2023-24 LTFP includes an improvement in projected operating performance and increases in projected capital expenditure estimates, compared with the 2022-23 forecasts (for the nine-year overlapping period in both LTFPs: 2023-24 to 2031-32), as follows:

- ▶ An additional improvement of \$145.5 million (11 percent) in total operating income. Most of this increase is due to higher rates revenue, which increased by \$104.5 million (10.3 percent) on the 2022-23 estimates (for the period 2023-24 to 2031-32). Grants, subsidies and contributions have also increased by \$40.6 million (21 percent).
- ▶ An additional \$137.2 million or 11.2 percent in total operating expenses. This includes an additional \$57 million (12.7 percent) for 'materials, contracts and other' expenses, and an additional \$34.1 million (7 percent) in 'employee costs'. Depreciation also increased by \$39.9 million (14 percent).

The table below highlights the Council's 10-year CPI assumptions between the 2022-23 and 2023-24 LTFPs, the Commission has reviewed the nine overlapping years' CPI statistics: 2023-24 to 2031-32.

Consumer Price Index	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32
Deloitte Forecast Economics 2022-23 LTFP	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.30%	2.40%	2.30%
Deloitte Forecast Economics 2023 -24 LTFP	7.90%	2.58%	2.47%	2.51%	2.52%	2.43%	2.29%	2.29%	2.38%

The Council's current inflation forecasts present a risk to its cost and income projections in the current inflationary environment. The RBA currently forecasts the CPI (Australia-wide) to increase by 3.6 percent in the year to the June 2024 quarter and by 3.1 percent in the year to June 2025. Thereafter, it is reasonable to anticipate a return to long-run averages (and growth of 2.5 percent per annum from 2025-26, based on the midpoint of the RBA's 2 to 3 percent target range).¹⁵

The Commission notes that the Council's stated assumptions for indexation in its 2023-24 LTFP are based on its annual review of these forecasts. The Commission considers that annual reviews of assumptions to reflect best practice and supports the Council in continuing to do so through its annual process. For this reason, it would be appropriate for the Council to:

1. **Continue** its good practice of reviewing its inflation forecasts in its budget and forward projections from 2024-25, given the potential for higher short-term inflation outcomes, followed by a return to long-term averages.

2.2.2 Advice on financial sustainability

Operating performance

Key Points:

- ✓ Operating surpluses have been consistently achieved between 2016-17 to 2022-23.
- ✓ The operating surplus ratio is forecast to meet the suggested LGA target range in each year to 2032-33, averaging 3.3 percent.
- ⚠ Operating expenses from 2012-13 to 2022-23 have experienced moderate growth above CPI.

¹⁵ RBA, Forecast Table - August 2023, available at <https://www.rba.gov.au/publications/smp/2023/aug/forecasts.html>

- ✓ Average operating expenses per rateable property are projected to increase by 1.7 percent each year to 2032-33.
- ✓ Continuous improvements have resulted in cost savings of \$16.9 million since 2011.

The Council has consistently recorded operating surpluses¹⁶ since 2016-17 and the operating surplus ratio¹⁷ is forecast to meet the suggested LGA target range in each year to 2032-33. In the 10 years to 2021-22, the average operating surplus ratio performance was 3.5 percent. That is within the lower portion of the suggested LGA target range for the ratio. In the same period, the Council's operating income growth averaged 5.3 percent per annum, higher than the rate of operating expense growth (averaging 3.3 percent per annum).¹⁸

The Council received a combination of additional rates, statutory charges, user charges and 'grants, subsidies and contributions' income over this period to generate its relatively strong operating income growth.

On the cost side, its 'materials, contracts and other' expense increased at a conservative level (averaging 2.6 percent per annum) from 2012-13 to 2021-22, given the average annual CPI growth of 2.0 percent.¹⁹ On the other hand, its 'employee' and depreciation expenses both increased by an average of 3.3 and 5.2 percent per annum.

The estimated increase in the rate of growth in operating expenses (to an average of 4.0 percent per annum to 2032-33, which is above the RBA-based forecast inflation²⁰), combined with operating income growth of 3.7 percent per annum (also above the RBA-based forecast inflation), is expected to slightly reduce the Council's operating performance. The Council has projected smaller operating surpluses to 2032-33, averaging 3.3 percent.

Average operating expenses per rateable property are projected to increase at 1.7 percent (nominally) in the 10 years to 2031-32 (the increase in the 10 years to 2021-22 was also 1.7 percent). At the same time, average operating income per property is forecast to increase by 1.3 percent (nominally), below forecast inflation. These projections highlight the importance of the forecast growth in rateable properties in minimising the impact of rising costs on households. The Council's assumed average growth is 2.3 percent per annum (to 2031-32) in rateable properties, which is higher than historical growth of 1.7 percent per annum (10 years to 2021-22).

If the forecast growth in rateable properties does not occur, and the Council cannot reverse the increases in costs, this could place pressure on rate levels, while simultaneously reducing the speed at which borrowings are drawn down. This could result in the need for further asset sales. Notwithstanding this, the Commission notes the Council's good practice of reviewing its rateable property forecast annually and encourages the Council to:

2. **Continue** its good practice of reviewing the rateable property growth forecasts in its budget projections each year to ensure that they remain current and do not create a need for additional rate increases to generate the same level of projected revenue.

¹⁶ This means the Council's operating income (including rates and other revenue sources but excluding capital grants, subsidies, and contributions) have exceeded operating expenses (including depreciation).

¹⁷ The operating surplus ratio is defined as: Operating Surplus (Deficit) ÷ Total Operating Income. The general target is to achieve, on average over time, an operating surplus ratio of between zero and 10 percent (Local Government Association of South Australia, *Financial Sustainability Information Paper 9 - Financial Indicators Revised*, May 2019 (**LGA SA Financial Indicators Paper**), p. 6).

¹⁸ Based on the compound average annual growth rate formula (which is the adopted approach to calculating average annual growth rates throughout the Commission's advice).

¹⁹ CPI (All groups). Average annual growth in the LGPI published by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies was similar (at 2.0 percent), available at <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/saces/economic-and-social-indicators/local-government-price-index>.

²⁰ The forecast average annual growth in the CPI from 2022-23 to 2031-32 is estimated to be 2.6 percent based on the RBA forecasts for the CPI (Australia-wide) to June 2025 (and the Commission's calculations of average annual percentage growth) and the midpoint of the RBA's target range (2.5 percent) from 2025-26.

The Commission has observed the current good practice of the Council to focus on continuous improvement resulting in savings: over \$16.9 million since 2011.²¹ As an example, it has factored in savings of approximately \$0.6 million to its expense estimates in 2023-24, compared to these items in 2022-23.²² However, the Commission notes that the Council has not set any subsequent year efficiency goals in its LTFP.




To ensure that the Council is positioned to achieve the forecast real term reduction in its cost base and improve its operating performance (without the need for further rate increases above inflation), the Commission encourages it to:

3. **Continue** its good practice of reporting any actual and projected cost savings in its annual budget (and long-term financial plan, as appropriate), to provide evidence of constraining cost growth and achieving efficiency across its operations and service delivery.

4. **Include** efficiency goals and projected cost savings in its long-term financial plan, to provide further evidence of projected cost growth constraint and efficiencies across its operations and service deliveries.

Net financial liabilities

Key Points:

-  The net financial liabilities ratio has been above the LGA target range between 2012-13 to 2021-22.
-  The net financial liabilities ratio in the ten years to 2032-33 is forecast to be an average of 49.9 percent as a result of progressive repayment of debt, asset sales and growth of operating income.
-  Current high level of debt of \$101 million with an average debt of \$105.8 million dollars between 2012-13 to 2021-22.

Over the past 10 years, the Council's net financial liabilities ratio has been above the suggested LGA target range (averaging 121.3 percent from 2012-13 to 2021-22).²³ The Council has consistently used a high level of borrowings to finance (in part) its capital expenditure (the average level of borrowings from 2012-13 to 2021-22 was \$105.8 million).

While the Council's performance is above the LGA target range, the Commission notes the significant outlays on new infrastructure required for a high growth Council. The Commission also notes that, in the 2023-24 budget process, the Council's public consultation report received only two mentions (out of a total of 48) that expressed concerns about how it is planning to reduce debt.²⁴ The Commission also notes that the Council has achieved consistent operating surpluses (seven operating surpluses in the 10 years to 2021-22).

The Council has forecast a reduction in its net financial liabilities ratio from a peak of 88.4 percent in 2023-24 to an average of 49.9 percent in the five years to 2032-33. The reduction in the ratio from 2023-24 to 2032-33 comes from the progressive repayment of total borrowings (of \$33.1 million over the next

²¹ City of Playford, *2024 – 2033 long-term financial plan*, June 2023, pp. 17, available at [City-of-Playford-LTFP-23-24_2023-07-05-033606_mgwd.pdf](https://cdn.playford.sa.gov.au/agendas-minutes/attachments/06-27-June-2023-Attachments-for-Items-14.5-14.7.pdf)

²² City of Playford Council, *2024 – 2033 long-term financial plan*, June 2023, p. 17.

²³ The net financial liabilities ratio is defined as: Net financial liabilities ÷ Total operating income. This ratio measures the extent to which a Council's total operating income covers, or otherwise, its net financial liabilities. The suggested LGA target range is between zero and 100 percent of total operating income, but possibly higher in some circumstances (LGA SA Financial Indicators Paper, pp. 7-8).

²⁴ City of Playford, *Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda -27 June 2023, Item 14.5 Draft 2023/2024 annual business plan, What We Heard Report – Public Consultation*, available at <https://cdn.playford.sa.gov.au/agendas-minutes/attachments/06-27-June-2023-Attachments-for-Items-14.5-14.7.pdf>

ten years to 2032-33), via the sale of assets and operating income growth. In doing so, the Commission supports the Council's strategy to:

5. **Reduce** its level of net financial liabilities as forecast in its latest long-term financial plan and continue to focus on asset sales or disposals as one of its strategies to help reduce debt.

The Council only includes proposed asset sales when there is a high level of certainty associated with the disposal.²⁵ As a result, it is not clear what level of borrowing can be reduced via asset sales in the 10 years to 2032-33 relative to using operating surpluses to repay borrowings. If the Council is unable to fulfill its asset sale strategy, then it risks a greater burden of revenue shifting to its ratepayers in order to achieve operating surpluses that can be used to repay borrowings.





As previously mentioned, these projections (the progressive repayment of borrowings of \$33.1 million to 2032-33) also indicate the importance of the forecast growth in rateable properties and ensuring that the Council undertakes a robust process when forecasting rateable property growth. If the Council overestimates the growth in rateable properties to 2032-33, it also risks a greater burden of revenue shifting to existing ratepayers in order to achieve operating surpluses that can be used to repay borrowings.

In addition, the Council has not fully disclosed the assumptions underpinning its borrowing forecasts in its LTFP (such as loan facilities and/or terms, if applicable). However, the Council has disclosed its interest rate assumptions for its borrowing facilities, along with sensitivity analysis. According to its 2023-24 LTFP, the Council has a \$3.7 million impact to its operating expenditure over 10 years based on a 1 percent interest rate increase each year over its 10-year LTFP. The Commission considers that it would be appropriate for it to:

6. **Improve** transparency on borrowing assumptions, including loan facilities and loan terms, in the Council's long-term financial plan.

Asset renewals expenditure

Key Points:

-  The asset renewal funding ratio averaged 86 percent from 2012-13 to 2021-22 and averaged \$16.3 million per annum.
-  The forecast asset renewal funding ratio until 2032-33 is 100 percent with an average of \$25 million spend per annum.
-  The forecast capital expenditure on new and upgraded assets will average \$19.8 million to 2032-33.
-  Depreciation expenses are growing higher than forecast renewal expenditure, causing the Council to not meet the average rate of asset consumption based on current projected depreciation expenses.

The Council's asset renewal funding ratio²⁶ averaged 86 percent for the 10 years to 2022-23, which is close to but below the lower end of the suggested LGA target range of 90 to 110 percent. The Council is forecast to consistently meet the suggested target for the ratio in the 9 years to 2032-33 (averaging 100 percent).

The Council's spending on the renewal of assets averaged \$16.3 million per annum between 2012-13 to 2021-22. From 2023-24, the Council is adjusting its asset renewals spending profile, with higher

²⁵ City of Playford, 2023-24 2032 long-term financial plan, June 2023, pp. 18.





²⁶ The IAMP-based method is the current industry standard whereby asset renewal/replacement expenditure is divided by the recommended expenditure in the IAMP (or AMP). Ideally, this will show the extent to which a Council's renewal or replacement expenditure matches the need for this expenditure, as recommended by the plan. The suggested LGA target range for the ratio is 90 to 110 percent (LGA SA Financial Indicators Paper, p.9).

projected annual renewal expenditure averaging \$25 million to 2032-33, in nominal terms. This compares to a projected capital spending on new and upgraded assets averaging \$19.8 million to 2032-33, and a projected slight increase in the value of assets per property over this period.

When the asset renewal funding ratio is calculated by the depreciation-based method,²⁷ it is forecast to average 68 percent over the period 2023-24 to 2032-33. The ratio is impacted by the Council's renewal expenditure which is quite low due to its relatively new asset base (average asset age is 21 years).²⁸ Renewal expenditure is expected to increase as the council's average asset age increases. The Commission notes that the Council is of a young age (the council was formed in 1997 through the merger of the City of Elizabeth and City of Munno Parra), in a high growth area with a high number of new assets recently acquired or gifted.²⁹

2.2.3 Advice on current and projected rate levels

Key Points:

-  Rate revenue per property growth has averaged 3.4 percent or \$52 per annum for each property in the period between 2012-13 and 2021-22, which is 1.4 percent above CPI for the same period.
-  The forecast rate increase for 2023-24 is 10.7 percent or \$225 per property.
-  The Council is one of South Australia's fastest growing council areas, with rateable properties forecast to increase by 4.3 percent in 2023-24 and averaging 3 percent until 2032-33.
-  Based on current projected increases in rateable properties of 4.3 percent, between 2023-24 to 2032-33 the average rate across all categories is forecast to increase by 2.2 percent which is below the RBA-based forecast average of inflation of 2.6 percent per annum.

The Council's rate revenue per property growth has averaged 3.4 percent or \$52 per annum for each property in the period between 2012-13 and 2021-22. This has exceeded CPI growth of an average of 2.0 percent per annum over this period, resulting in rates increasing in real terms (but also encompassing 1.5 percent average annual growth in rateable property numbers).³⁰ Current rate levels partially reflect the Council's recent history of spending growth, predominantly on capital expenditure (on renewals, and new and upgraded assets), higher employee-related costs, and its focus to improve its operating performance.

The Council has budgeted for an average rate increase (for general and commercial ratepayers) of 10.7 percent, or \$225, per property for its existing ratepayers in 2023-24.³¹ This was higher than anticipated in its 2022-23 LTFP projections (2.78 percent for existing rateable properties). The rates increase reflects higher short-term inflation (estimated by the Council to be 7.9 percent) along with the Council's target to meet a 1 percent structural surplus.³² As noted earlier, the Council is one of South Australia's fastest growing council areas: in 2022-23, it had 44,407 rateable properties, and it expects this to increase to 46,306 in 2023-24 - a 4.3 percent growth in rateable properties.³³

The Council's general rate revenue, consists of two components: one based on a fixed charge and the other on the value of the land (differential charge).

²⁷ Where asset renewal/replacement expenditure is divided by depreciation expenses as was known as the asset sustainability ratio until 2018.

²⁸ City of Playford, *2023-24 strategic asset management Plan*, June 2023, pp. 19

²⁹ City of Playford, Error of fact check letter, January 2024, pp1.

³⁰ CPI Adelaide (All groups). Average annual growth in the LGPI published by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies was similar (at 2.0 percent). Available at <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/saces/economic-and-social-indicators/local-government-price-index>.

³¹ Based on the Council's 2023-24 annual business plan and its Excel template (with the 2023-24 forecasts) provided to the Commission. The Commission has used \$105.615 million (in 2023-24 budgeted rates revenue) compared to unaudited 2022-23 estimates. Individual rate level changes may be higher or lower depending on the rates category and property value.

³² City of Playford, *2023-24 long-term financial plan*, June 2023, p. 16.

³³ City of Playford, *2023-24 annual business plan*, June 2023, p. 60

After applying rebates, the Council will collect general fixed rate revenue equal to 50 percent of its general rates revenue. This is the maximum amount that it can collect from the fixed charge under the Council's rating structure and LG Act.^{34 35} In 2023-24, the Council's fixed charge will be \$1,111.90 per rateable property, with the remaining 50 percent of general rates (after rebates) to be collected from a differential charge.³⁶

The differential charge payable per property is based on a rate in the dollar that is applied to the capital value of property. The rate in the dollar may vary based on land use and the Council currently has two rate types declared, commercial and general.

The Commission notes that the average differential charge per rateable property for the general type will increase to \$707 in 2023-24 (from \$664 in 2022-23). As such, the average rate per rateable property for the general type will be \$1,818.90, of which \$1,111.90 is the fixed charge applicable to all rateable properties.

The Commission also notes that there is no differentiation in the commercial rate to reflect the type of industry (for example light versus heavy) or type of commercial property (for example office versus retail).

On balance, affordability risk within the community for these further rate increases appears to be high. The current economic environment is likely to be putting more pressure on the communities' capacity to pay for further rate increases. The Council has a relatively low socio-economic index (SEIFA) economic resources ranking³⁷ and already has relatively high average rates (across most ratepayers). In the 2023-24 budget process, the Council's public consultation report received 23 submissions (out of a total of 48) that expressed concerns about further rate increases.³⁸ For these reasons, the Commission suggests that the Council:

7. **Continue** to monitor average rate rises to help reduce cost of living pressure on the community.

2.3 The Commission's next advice and focus areas

In the next cycle of the scheme, the Commission will review and report upon the Council's:

- ▶ progress in reducing its net financial liabilities,
- ▶ ongoing performance against its LTFP estimates (including review of growth assumptions),
- ▶ achievement of cost savings and efficiencies and its continued reporting of these in its plans, and
- ▶ actions to address any misalignment between the capital expenditure and depreciation estimates in its LTFP and various AMPs.

³⁴ City of Playford, *2023-24 annual business plan*, June 2023, p. 59.

³⁵ *Local Government Act 1999 (LG Act)* s151(10).

³⁶ City of Playford, *Rating Policy*, June 2023, p. 1 available at <https://cdn.playford.sa.gov.au/general-downloads/Rating-Policy-23-24.pdf>

³⁷ The City of Playford area is ranked 10 among 71 South Australian 'local government areas' (including Anangu Pitjantjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja Aboriginal community areas and 'unincorporated SA') on the Australian Bureau of Statistics SEIFA Index of Economic Resources (2016), where a lower score (eg, 1) denotes relatively lower access to economic resources in general, compared with other areas, available at <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-australia/2021>.

³⁸ City of Playford, *Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda -27 June 2023, Item 14.5 Draft 2023/2024 annual business plan, What We Heard Report – Public Consultation*, available at <https://cdn.playford.sa.gov.au/agendas-minutes/attachments/06-27-June-2023-Attachments-for-Items-14.5-14.7.pdf>



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