

9. OFFICER REPORTS

9.1. SURPLUS LAND

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PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council consider commencing the statutory process to dispose of potential surplus land and buildings. The report presents a current summary of land and buildings owned by City of Ballarat and highlight some assets that may be considered surplus to City of Ballarat's requirements.

BACKGROUND

2. City of Ballarat manages a significant property portfolio on behalf of the community, comprising of land and buildings valued at \$621 million.
3. As the municipality and the population continues to grow and demographics in certain suburbs change, so too do the unique land needs of communities. In some areas with substantial population growth, especially on the fringes of current urban sprawl and growth corridors, there may be requirements for new community and recreation infrastructure. In other areas, due to a shift in population demographics, underutilised land and buildings may exist which are surplus to requirements.
4. As part of City of Ballarat's strategic asset management and long-term financial plan, the Property team regularly assess and review the land and buildings owned by City of Ballarat to ensure they are being used by the community, are fit for purpose and not duplicating services that are provided elsewhere. This is to ensure that finite funds and resources are being allocated efficiently to assets being used and enjoyed by the community.
5. Costs associated with maintaining assets continue to grow. These costs include annual safety checks and audits of buildings, utility availability connections, grass slashing, building insurance and exemptions from rate collection.
6. City of Ballarat's property portfolio and its performance can be measured via several key metrics including but not limited to:
 - a. Community benefit obtained;
 - b. Economic benefit to Council; or
 - c. Passive open space and recreational benefit.

KEY MATTERS

Potentially surplus property

7. In 2025, the Property team commenced a review of all freehold land holdings across the municipality and assessed these against the following key criteria:
 - a. Current land use;
 - b. Current community or economic benefit to Council;
 - c. Current zoning and heritage considerations; and
 - d. Proximity to existing open space.
8. Along with internal engagement with other specialist business units including City Design, Engaged Communities, Operations and Development Facilitation, this review helped determine the following 8 freehold land holdings as potentially surplus.

Address	Zone and overlays
2A Ealing Avenue, Wendouree	General residential zone
15 Lake View Court, Ballarat North	General residential zone
102-104 Scott Street, Buninyong	Neighbourhood residential zone
37 Violet Grove, Wendouree West	Mixed use zone
10 Valiant Road, Smythes Creek	Urban growth zone
13 Maddern Street, Black Hill	General residential zone
55 Launchley Drive, Cardigan	Low density residential zone
56 Wicklow Drive, Invermay Park	General residential zone

9. The following provides a summary as to why each property has been identified as potentially surplus to City of Ballarat's requirements. The properties are generally located favourably with potential development uses including capacity to deliver social and affordable housing. Prior to disposal, some of the listed properties may require additional legal processes, such as removal of reserve statuses or transfer of titles. Valuation information is provided as a confidential attachment.

2A Ealing Avenue, Wendouree

10. This land is currently open space with no community infrastructure. This land was identified as potentially surplus when investigation commenced back in 2017. At the 13 December 2017 Council meeting, Council resolved to consult the community regarding its intention to sell (R464/17). The land was subsequently rezoned and the reserve status of the land was removed in 2021.
11. The decision to remove the reserve status of the land triggered a VCAT application against City of Ballarat in 2021. VCAT handed down its order in August 2021 in favour of City of Ballarat. Community consultation occurred however there was no Council decision to determine the use of the land. This land is located just on the fringe of the new Northern Growth Zone.

15 Lake View Court, Ballarat North

12. This land is currently open space with no community infrastructure. Similar to the above, this land was identified as potentially surplus when investigation commenced back in 2017. At the 13 December 2017 Council meeting, Council resolved to consult the community regarding its intention to sell. They did not however at the time declare the property surplus, which this report seeks to do.

102-104 Scott Street, Buninyong

13. This land is currently open space with no community infrastructure. Similar to the above, this land was identified as potentially surplus when investigation commenced back in 2017. At the 13 December 2017 Council meeting, Council resolved to consult the community regarding its intention to sell. Community consultation occurred following the resolution, however given the significant length of time since the consultation, officers recommend further engagement be undertaken.

37 Violet Grove, Wendouree West

14. This site has long been used by the YMCA Ballarat to deliver community and educational programs. However, with the new Wendouree Neighbourhood Centre and Men's Shed being present at the Wendouree West Recreation Reserve, this site has become largely redundant and is vacant.

10 Valiant Road, Smythes Creek

15. This land is currently open space with no community infrastructure and contained within the Delacombe Town Centre commercial precinct.

13 Maddern Street, Black Hill

16. This land is currently open space with no community infrastructure. It is less than 100 metres away from Binney Reserve which has ample open space with walking trails and passive recreation. There is an oversupply of open space in this area.

55 Launchley Drive, Cardigan

17. This land is currently open space with no community infrastructure. While there is no oversupply of open space provision in the area, given the size of the land parcel, it would be possible to subdivide and retain a portion for future open space use. Residential subdivision and development are occurring in close proximity and would present as ideal for sale to a developer.