



AGENDA

Special Council Meeting

To be held in Council Chambers
13 Cottrell Street, Dowerin WA 6461
Monday 19 October 2026
Commencing 4:30pm





NOTICE OF MEETING

Dear Councillors,

A Special Council Meeting will be held on Monday 19 October 2026, in the Shire of Dowerin Council Chambers, 13 Cottrell Street, Dowerin, commencing at 4.30pm.

The purpose of this meeting is to consider and determine two applications for RAV increases to roads within the Shire of Dowerin from Sparks Transport and Couper Bros.

Darrel Hudson
SHIRE PRESIDENT
15 October 2026

DISCLAIMER

Statements or decisions made at this meeting should not be relied or acted on by an applicant or any other person until they have received written notification from the Shire. Notice of all approvals, including planning and building approvals, will be given to applicants in writing. The Shire of Dowerin expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damages suffered by a person who relies or acts on statements or decisions made at a Council or Committee meeting before receiving written notification from the Shire.

The advice and information contained herein is given by and to Council without liability or responsibility for its accuracy. Before placing any reliance on this advice or information, a written inquiry should be made to Council giving entire reasons for seeking the advice or information and how it is proposed to be used.

It should be noted that the Attachment hyperlinks may not be functional from this document when sourced from the Shire of Dowerin's website. Attachment copies follow on from the end of the agenda.

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Shire of Dowerin Special Council Meeting 4:30pm Monday 19 October 2026

1. Official Opening

The President welcomes those in attendance and declares the meeting open at 4:30pm.

2. Record of Attendance / Apologies / Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr DP Hudson	President
Cr RI Trepp	Deputy President
Cr JA Graffin	
Cr AR Jones	
Cr CJ Meakins	
Cr JC Sewell	

Staff

Ms M Barthakur	Chief Executive Officer
Ms K Rose	Manager of Governance and Community Services

Members of the Public:

Apologies:

Mr B Forbes	Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
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Approved Leave of Absence:

3. Public Question Time

4. Disclosure of Interest

Councillors are to complete a Disclosure of Interest Form for each item they are required to disclose an interest in. The Form should be given to the Presiding Member before the meeting commences. After the meeting, the Form is to be provided to the Manager of Governance and Community Services for inclusion in the Disclosures Register.

5. OFFICER'S REPORTS – WORKS AND ASSETS

5.1 RAV Amendment Request - Couper Bros - Various Roads

Works & Assets

Date:	15 October 2026
Location:	
Responsible Officer:	Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Author:	Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Legislation:	Road Traffic Act 1974; Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014
Sharepoint Reference:	Technical / Roads
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 5.1A - Revised HVS RAV 7 Route Determination - Couper Bros (15 October 2026) Attachment 5.1B – Revised Request Email Attachment 5.1C – Route map (purple-current, yellow-Couper)

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

The Shire has received a revised request from Main Roads Western Australia Heavy Vehicle Services (HVS) seeking the Shire's road-manager input on a Couper Bros application to upgrade selected local road sections from Tandem Drive Network 4 to Tandem Drive Network 7. No increase to the approved mass level is requested.

The revised network follows an onsite meeting between Shire Officers and Couper Bros representatives Steven Couper and Mathew Couper, together with further discussions between the applicant and HVS. The revised request is more targeted and is intended to create feeder routes that connect agricultural transport tasks to the higher-order sealed road network while still meeting the operational requirements of the business.

The Officer does not support the RAV 7 upgrade of Twine Road or Hollins Road due to their narrow local-access standard and concerns identified during visual inspection regarding intersection geometry and available swept paths. For the remaining requested roads, the Officer considers that HVS should undertake detailed onsite technical assessment before a final access determination is made. Particular attention is required at the Sanders Road / Rifle Range Road and Hagboom Road / Dowerin-Meckering Road intersections, together with school bus operations, road condition and the cumulative growth of the Shire's RAV network.

Background

HVS initially referred a broader Couper Bros application to the Shire. Following the Shire's preliminary review and an onsite meeting with the applicant, the proposed network was revised to better focus on feeder-road connections and to remove parts of the earlier proposal that could create unnecessary through-routes across the local road network.

The revised HVS dimension-assessment table seeks RAV 7 consideration for the following road sections: Hagboom Road from Ucarty South Road to Dowerin-Meckering Road; Hindmarsh Road from Windsor Road to Dowerin-Meckering Road; Hollins Road from Thornett Road to Twine Road; Nambling South Road to Sanders Road; Rifle Range Road to Sanders Road; the limited section of Sanders Road between Nambling South Road and Rifle Range Road; Thornett Road; Twine Road; Windsor Road; and Ucarty South Road between Nambling South Road and Hagboom Road.

The revised application has been considered having regard to the function of each road as a feeder route, current road condition, school bus operations, intersection geometry, swept-path requirements, road safety and the desirability of keeping through-freight movements on the higher-standard road network wherever practical.

Comment

The revised proposal is an improvement on the original request because the full Sanders Road connection through to Dowerin-Meckering Road has been removed and the requested Hindmarsh Road section has been reduced. This better reflects a feeder-road approach rather than a broad local-road shortcut network. However, the proposal still involves a significant expansion of RAV 7 access across the Shire and several sections and intersections require technical assessment before their suitability can be determined.

Officer assessment of requested roads

Road	Officer position	Reason
Hagboom Road	HVS assessment required	School bus route and feeder connection to Dowerin-Meckering Road. The Hagboom Road / Dowerin-Meckering Road intersection is a significant concern and should be assessed by HVS for swept path, sight distance, turning path and safe intersection geometry.
Hindmarsh Road	Council / HVS consideration	The revised request is limited to Windsor Road - Dowerin-Meckering Road. This reduces the earlier shortcut concern, although the Officer remains cautious that the link may attract additional cut-through traffic. Final suitability should be considered by HVS following onsite assessment.
Hollins Road	Do not support	Minor access road. Visual inspection identified narrow formation and intersection geometry that does not appear suitable for RAV 7 swept paths.
Nambling South Road	HVS assessment required	Logical southern feeder toward Dowerin CBH and planned for full reconstruction in 2027. It is also a school bus route. HVS should assess current condition, geometry and the interaction with the Sanders / Rifle Range connection.
Rifle Range Road	HVS assessment required	Pivotal connection for the southern feeder into Dowerin CBH. The Sanders Road / Rifle Range Road intersection must be demonstrated by HVS to provide a safe RAV 7 swept path and suitable intersection geometry.
Sanders Road	HVS assessment required	The revised request is limited to the section between Nambling South Road and Rifle Range Road; the former through connection to Dowerin-Meckering Road has been removed. HVS assessment of the Sanders / Rifle Range intersection is critical.
Thornett Road	HVS assessment required	Logical feeder connection to Dowerin-Meckering Road. Most of the route has been upgraded, although the eastern section remains in poorer condition and should be assessed by HVS.
Twine Road	Do not support	Minor access road with narrow formation and poor intersection/swept-path conditions identified during visual inspection.
Windsor Road	HVS assessment required	Upgraded direct feeder to Goomalling-Wyalkatchem Road with a logical feeder-road function. Final suitability remains subject to HVS onsite assessment.
Ucarty South Road	HVS assessment required	School bus route and currently in poor condition. Its proposed RAV 7 function relies on connection through Hagboom Road, making the Hagboom / Dowerin-Meckering intersection assessment particularly important.

Revised feeder-road approach and network growth

The onsite discussion with Couper Bros has resulted in a more targeted network than the original application. In particular, the full Sanders Road connection to Dowerin-Meckering Road has been removed, which addresses one of the Officer's principal concerns regarding the creation of a through-route to the Dowerin CBH receival site.

The Officer supports the general principle of feeder-road access where it provides a genuine connection from agricultural properties to a higher-order route. At the same time, the Shire's RAV network is increasing quickly and each additional road should be assessed on its actual physical standard, intersection geometry and road-safety implications. Except for Twine Road and Hollins Road, the Officer does not seek to make the final technical determination through this report and considers that the remaining roads should be subject to HVS onsite assessment before access is approved or declined.

Nambling South Road / Sanders Road / Rifle Range Road

The revised southern route comprises Nambling South Road, the limited section of Sanders Road between Nambling South Road and Rifle Range Road, and Rifle Range Road into the Dowerin CBH area. Nambling South Road is planned for full reconstruction in 2027 and has a logical future role as a feeder road for farms in the southern part of the Shire. Nambling South Road is also a school bus route and any approved access would require appropriate operating controls.

Rifle Range Road is pivotal to making this feeder network function; however, the Sanders Road / Rifle Range Road intersection is a key safety concern. The Officer does not consider that Council should assume this intersection is suitable for RAV 7. HVS should undertake an onsite swept-path, turning-path, sight-distance and intersection-geometry assessment and make the technical determination as part of its route-assessment process.

Windsor Road / Thornett Road / Hindmarsh Road

Windsor Road is an upgraded direct feeder onto Goomalling-Wyalkatchem Road and appears to have a logical network function. Thornett Road also provides a feeder connection onto Dowerin-Meckering Road and most of the road has been upgraded, although a section toward the eastern end remains in poorer condition and requires assessment. The revised Hindmarsh Road request is limited to Windsor Road through to Dowerin-Meckering Road. While this is a reduction from the earlier proposal, the Officer remains cautious about whether opening the section may attract additional cut-through traffic. These matters are identified for Council consideration and HVS technical assessment rather than being presented as a final Officer support or refusal position.

Hagboom Road / Ucarty South Road / Hollins Road / Twine Road

Hagboom Road, Ucarty South Road and Nambling South Road are school bus routes and school-bus interaction must be a key consideration in any approval. Ucarty South Road is currently in poor condition and requires careful assessment of formation width, pavement condition and safe passing opportunities. Hagboom Road provides the connection from Ucarty South Road to Dowerin-Meckering Road; however, the Hagboom Road / Dowerin-Meckering Road intersection is a significant concern and should be specifically assessed by HVS for RAV 7 swept path, sight distance, turning path and safe intersection geometry. Twine Road and Hollins Road remain the two roads the Officer does not support: both are minor local-access roads with narrow formation and intersection/swept-path constraints identified through visual inspection.

Policy Implications

Request to Access Roads

Where a road is not classified on the required RAV Network, the applicant applies to MRWA Heavy Vehicle Services. Upon referral from HVS, the Shire assesses the request against the applicable route-assessment requirements and, if supported, provides its road-manager position and any requested operating conditions to HVS.

The Shire may withdraw support for an approved route where the route becomes unsafe or unsuitable for RAV use or where approval conditions are not complied with.

Statutory Implications

The Road Traffic Act 1974 and Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014 provide the legislative framework for Restricted Access Vehicles operating within Western Australia.

The Local Government Act 1995 and Land Administration Act 1997 place responsibility for the care, control and management of local government roads upon the Shire. HVS remains the authority responsible for the final determination of RAV network access and applicable conditions.

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Economy
Objective:	Ensure the road network is safe and capable of the freight task
Outcome:	Enhance and maintain the road transport network
Reference:	2.1d

Asset Management Plan

The whole-of-life estimates for affected roads may be altered by increased RAV traffic. A cautious approach that relies on HVS technical assessment of road and intersection suitability, while keeping clearly unsuitable minor-access roads out of the RAV 7 network, provides a balanced approach to freight access and asset management.

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Asset Management Practices
Risk Category	Compliance / Road Safety
Risk Description	Road-safety, network-management and asset impacts arising from unsuitable RAV 7 routes, unsafe intersection swept paths or unnecessary diversion of heavy freight onto local roads.
Consequence Rating	Major (4)
Likelihood Rating	Likely (4)
Risk Matrix Rating	High (16)
Key Controls (in place)	HVS technical assessment; regular Shire inspections; operating conditions
Action (Treatment)	HVS onsite technical assessment; decline clearly unsuitable minor-access roads; require swept-path and intersection assessment at critical locations; apply school bus and operating conditions where access is approved.
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Effective

Financial Implications

There are no immediate financial implications arising from Council's decision and no increase in approved mass is requested.

Increasing the RAV 7 network may nevertheless increase maintenance demand and accelerate wear on lower-standard roads. This is particularly relevant where roads are currently in poor condition or are yet to receive planned upgrades. The HVS assessment should therefore consider whether each road and intersection can safely and practically support the requested vehicle configuration before access is determined.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That, by Simple Majority, in accordance with the Road Traffic Act 1974 and the Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014, Council advises Main Roads Western Australia Heavy Vehicle Services that it:

1. DOES NOT SUPPORT the proposed upgrade from Tandem Drive Network 4 to Tandem Drive Network 7 on Twine Road and Hollins Road, on the basis that both are minor local-access roads with narrow formation and intersection/swept-path constraints identified through visual inspection.
2. RAISES NO OBJECTION to HVS progressing its detailed onsite technical assessment of the remaining revised road sections - Hagboom Road, Hindmarsh Road, Nambling South Road, Rifle Range Road, the limited section of Sanders Road between Nambling South Road and Rifle Range Road, Thornett Road, Windsor Road and Ucarty South Road - and requests that HVS determine their suitability for RAV 7 following those inspections.
3. REQUESTS that HVS give particular attention to the Sanders Road / Rifle Range Road intersection and the Hagboom Road / Dowerin-Meckering Road intersection, including RAV 7 swept paths, turning paths, sight distance, available road width and safe intersection geometry, before any access determination is made.
4. REQUESTS that the HVS assessment also specifically consider the current poor condition of Ucarty South Road, the poorer eastern section of Thornett Road, the planned 2027 reconstruction of Nambling South Road, and the potential network effect of the revised Hindmarsh Road connection.
5. REQUESTS that any RAV 7 access approved by HVS on the remaining roads be subject to appropriate Shire operating conditions, including:
 - a) The operator must notify the Road Manager via email of each planned transport task, including estimated tonnages and loaded vehicle movements, with Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services copied into the notification where required.
 - b) Headlights must be switched on at all times.
 - c) No operation is permitted on an unsealed road segment when visibly wet without prior approval from the Road Manager.
 - d) Low Volume (LV) operating conditions apply where appropriate and the maximum operating speed is 60 km/h.
 - e) When travelling at night, vehicles must not exceed 40 km/h and must display an amber flashing warning light on the prime mover.
 - f) Direct radio contact must be maintained with other Restricted Access Vehicles operating on or near the road, with UHF Channel 40 recommended.
 - g) On any approved road that is also a school bus route, including Hagboom Road, Ucarty South Road and Nambling South Road, RAV operation is not permitted while the school bus is operating unless direct coordination arrangements acceptable to the Shire are in place and the school bus driver has confirmed the relevant pick-ups and drop-offs are complete.
6. NOTES that Council's resolution provides the Shire's road-manager comments on the revised request and that Main Roads WA Heavy Vehicle Services remains responsible for the onsite technical assessment, final approval or refusal of RAV access and the final operating conditions.

5.2 RAV Amendment Request – Spark Transport – Revised Network

Works & Assets

Date:	6 October 2026
Location:	
Responsible Officer:	Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Author:	Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Legislation:	Road Traffic Act 1974; Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014
Sharepoint Reference:	Technical / Roads
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 5.2A - Spark Route Assessment Application Attachment 5.2B - Route map (purple-current, green-Sparks)

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

The Shire has received a revised application from AE & KM Spark seeking to upgrade a reduced number of local road sections from Tandem Drive Network 4 to Tandem Drive Network 7 (36.5 metres). No increase to the approved mass level is requested.

The revised application follows Council's previous decision not to support a much broader Spark Transport network request. Since that decision, Spark Transport has consulted directly with the Shire and reduced the proposal to targeted feeder roads connecting farming operations and customer properties to the higher-order freight network. Council discussed this revised approach at its September 2026 workshop and was generally supportive of the reduced feeder-road concept, subject to technical assessment and appropriate conditions.

The Officer supports the revised application subject to HVS undertaking onsite assessment of the roads and, in particular, confirming that all proposed intersections and property accesses can safely accommodate the swept paths required by RAV 7 combinations.

Background

Main Roads Western Australia Heavy Vehicle Services (HVS) has referred the revised application to the Shire seeking its road-manager position. The applicant advises the task is the cartage of grain and fertiliser for customers, with an estimated annual task of approximately 85,000 tonnes and up to 25 movements per day during active transport periods.

The HVS referral seeks RAV 7 assessment of Uberin Road, Ejanding West Road, McHugh Road, Ejanding East Road, Thomas Road, Spark Road, Wilkins Road, Hindmarsh Back Road and Rabbit Proof Fence Road. HVS lists two separate sections of Wilkins Road in its assessment table.

Kalguddering Road is not part of the current RAV upgrade request and is not being reconsidered through this report. Although the intended transport route also references Koombekine North Road, HVS has not sought a network change to Koombekine North Road in the current dimension-assessment table.

Comment

The revised application is materially different from the earlier network-wide proposal. Rather than seeking widespread RAV 7 access across the local road network, the applicant has identified a smaller number of practical feeder roads to connect with Dowerin-Kalannie Road, Goomalling-Wyalkatchem Road and Cunderdin-Minnivale Road.

The Officer considers this targeted feeder-road approach to be a more appropriate balance between agricultural freight access, road safety and protection of the Shire's road assets.

Roads proposed for support

- Uberin Road and Ejanding West Road provide the principal feeder connection toward Dowerin-Kalannie Road.
- McHugh Road is in good condition following flood-damage reconstruction and provides direct access to Dowerin-Kalannie Road. School bus operations require a specific restriction.
- Ejanding East Road provides a direct feeder connection to Dowerin-Kalannie Road.
- Thomas Road, Spark Road and Wilkins Road form a logical route serving the Spark operation. School bus movements on parts of this route require operating controls.
- Hindmarsh Back Road and Rabbit Proof Fence Road provide connections to the higher-order road network and are supported in principle subject to HVS assessment.

Swept-path and intersection assessment

The main outstanding concern is intersection geometry. Council support for the road sections should not be interpreted as confirmation that every intersection is technically suitable for a 36.5 metre RAV 7 combination. The Officer has concerns that some intersections may not provide the necessary swept path within the existing formation.

It is therefore recommended that HVS specifically assess swept paths at each relevant intersection and property access, together with sight distance, road width, shoulder condition and other safety requirements, before making a final access determination.

Operating conditions

The Officer recommends that the Shire's established RAV operating conditions continue to apply to the lower-standard and unsealed feeder-road sections, including wet-road restrictions, reduced operating speeds, lighting and radio communication requirements and school bus restrictions where applicable.

Policy Implications

Request to Access Roads

Where a road is not classified on the required RAV Network, the applicant applies to MRWA Heavy Vehicle Services. Upon referral from HVS, the Shire assesses the request against the applicable route-assessment requirements and, if supported, provides its road-manager position and any requested operating conditions to HVS.

The Shire may withdraw support for an approved route where the route becomes unsafe or unsuitable for RAV use or where approval conditions are not complied with.

Statutory Implications

The Road Traffic Act 1974 and Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014 provide the legislative framework for Restricted Access Vehicles operating within Western Australia.

The Local Government Act 1995 and Land Administration Act 1997 place responsibility for the care, control and management of local government roads upon the Shire. HVS remains the authority responsible for the final determination of RAV network access and applicable conditions.

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Economy
Objective:	Ensure the road network is safe and capable of the freight task
Outcome:	<i>Enhance and maintain the road transport network</i>
Reference:	2.1d

Asset Management Plan

The whole-of-life estimates for affected roads may be altered by increased use by longer RAV combinations. No increase in approved mass is proposed.

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Asset Management Practices
Risk Category	Compliance / Road Safety
Risk Description	Road-safety or asset damage arising from RAV 7 access where road or intersection geometry is unsuitable for the longer vehicle combinations.
Consequence Rating	Major (4)
Likelihood Rating	Likely (4)
Risk Matrix Rating	High (16)
Key Controls (in place)	HVS technical assessment; regular Shire inspections; operating conditions
Action (Treatment)	HVS onsite assessment including swept paths; route-specific operating conditions; regular Shire inspections; possible amendment or removal of access if a route becomes unsafe or unsuitable.
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Effective

Financial Implications

There are no immediate financial implications arising from Council's decision. The revised application does not seek an increase in the approved mass level.

RAV 7 access may nevertheless increase maintenance demands on affected local roads over time. The proposed operating conditions and the targeted feeder-road approach are intended to limit unnecessary asset impacts while providing reasonable freight access.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation – 5.2

That, by Simple Majority, in accordance with the *Road Traffic Act 1974* and the *Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014*, Council advises Main Roads Western Australia Heavy Vehicle Services that it:

1. SUPPORTS the proposed upgrade from Tandem Drive Network 4 to Tandem Drive Network 7 on Uberin Road, Ejanding West Road, McHugh Road, Ejanding East Road, Thomas Road, Spark Road, Wilkins Road, Hindmarsh Back Road and Rabbit Proof Fence Road, subject to HVS being satisfied that the relevant road sections and intersections meet the applicable technical and safety requirements.
2. NOTES that Kalguddering Road is not included in the revised RAV 7 application and is not being reconsidered through this resolution.
3. REQUESTS that HVS undertake onsite assessment of each proposed route, with specific attention to swept paths at all relevant intersections and property accesses, together with sight distance, road width, shoulder condition and intersection geometry, before any RAV 7 access is approved.
4. REQUESTS that any approved access on the supported roads be subject to the following Shire operating conditions:
 - a. The operator must notify the Road Manager via email of the planned transport task, including estimated tonnages and loaded vehicle movements, with HVS copied into the notification where required.
 - b. Headlights must be switched on at all times.
 - c. No operation is permitted on an unsealed road segment when visibly wet without prior approval from the Road Manager.
 - d. Low Volume (LV) operating conditions apply where appropriate and the maximum operating speed is 60 km/h.
 - e. When travelling at night, vehicles must not exceed 40 km/h and must display an amber flashing warning light on the prime mover.
 - f. Direct radio contact must be maintained with other Restricted Access Vehicles operating on or near the road, with UHF Channel 40 recommended.
 - g. Where a school bus operates on an affected road, RAV operation is not permitted while the school bus is operating unless direct coordination arrangements acceptable to the Shire are in place and the school bus driver has confirmed the relevant pick-ups and drop-offs are complete.
5. NOTES that Council's resolution represents the Shire's road-manager position only and that Main Roads WA Heavy Vehicle Services remains responsible for the final approval or refusal of access and for determining the final operating conditions.

6. Closure

The President thanked those in attendance and closed the meeting at X:XXpm