

UPDATE

Proposed new saleyards: Central Victoria Livestock Exchange Newsletter 6, SEPTEMBER 2015

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE SALEYARDS APPLICATION?

This is the sixth newsletter from the City of Ballarat providing information about the proposed new saleyards development, the 'Central Victoria Livestock Exchange' (CVLX). The saleyards are proposed to be located between the Sunraysia Highway and the Western Freeway, to the southwest of Miners Rest.

In late June and early July 2015, the independent Planning Panel Hearing sat for 10 days to hear submissions from Council, submitters and the applicant about the proposed saleyards - Planning Scheme Amendment (C185) and EPA Works Approval Application (Service Order: 1001580). The Panel has now delivered its independent report for Council and EPA consideration.

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The independent Planning Panel has confirmed the suitability of the proposed saleyards site and recommended that Amendment C185 be adopted and the Works Approval Application be granted, both with some changes.

The Panel found:

- There are no credible reasons why this project should not proceed
- There is a strong case to modernize the saleyards that serve this region and a strong case to keep the modernised yards in, or near, Ballarat
- The relevant environmental standards can be addressed, ultimately still requiring EPA approval
- Traffic created won't be unreasonable
- Acknowledged the anxiety felt by some community members but found that there are no discernible social impacts that would flow from the proposal apart from some sections of the community simply not wanting the proposal to go ahead.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The Panel report will be presented to the City of Ballarat Councillors who will consider the recommendations of the Panel and vote on what to do next. The Councillors will either agree in part or full with the Panel recommendations, OR, disagree with the Panel and abandon the process.

When will Council make its decision?

The Panel report is due to be considered by Council at 7pm on **14 October, 2015**. NB: if deferred, the alternate meeting date will be advertised in the Courier newspaper through Council's Saturday noticeboard section.

What happens if Council agrees with the Panel?

Amendment C185 to the Ballarat Planning Scheme, making provisions for the new saleyards, will then be lodged with the Minister for Planning, who will make the ultimate decision as to whether to approve or abandon the Amendment. This process can take several months. There is no ability for submitters to challenge Council's decision through VCAT, as this is not a permit process.

What happens if Council disagrees with the Panel?

If Council abandon the Amendment the applicant may then choose to:

- a) Lodge a planning permit application to develop the saleyards on the proposed site, as the use can be permitted under the current zone.
- b) Apply to the Minister for Planning to take another course and directly rezone the proposed site to allow for the saleyards (based on the extremely positive findings of the Panel report), with no Council involvement
- c) Review their options which may include leaving Ballarat

Where can I see the Panel report?

The Panel report and details of what is proposed can be viewed on the following websites:

www.ballarat.vic.gov.au

www.epa.vic.gov.au/Ballaratsaleyards

Or, in person, during office hours at City of Ballarat, The Phoenix Building, 25 Armstrong Street South, Ballarat

Your Questions Answered

Will the saleyards have a negative impact on Miners Rest?

The Panel has found that the proposal does not create any social or environmental issues that are considered to have unreasonable impacts on Miners Rest. The Panel stated that the site is far enough from adjoining properties that it can meet all relevant environmental standards. What is not clear from looking at the maps is the significant road infrastructure barrier between the proposed saleyards and Miners Rest.

Is there an increased risk of getting Q Fever?

The current saleyards are closer to both houses and a primary school than the proposed saleyards. An expert witness reported the current saleyards proposed more of a threat to the transmission of Q Fever than would a new State of the Art facility at the proposed site. Since there is more Q Fever risk at the current site than the proposed site, and since there has been only one reported case of Q Fever in Ballarat in the past two years, Q-Fever is not considered to be a concern in relation to the proposed saleyards.

What happens with the EPA Works Approval Application?

The Works Approval Application (WAA) can only be approved if the Minister for Planning provides the ultimate approval for the proposal. The WAA will then only be approved by the EPA if set environmental standards are met (including for odour and noise).

What has the Panel Hearing process cost Council and the applicant?

Council and the applicant have both invested significant resources in identifying a new site for the saleyards. Legal costs for the preparation and undertaking of the Panel Hearing of \$125,000 have been incurred by Council (this does not include officer expenses). These are standard costs incurred by any Council when undertaking a Panel Hearing of this size. Costs incurred by the applicant for the preparation and undertaking of the Panel Hearing were in the order of \$500,000, which include the fees for holding the Panel Hearing (from Planning Panels Victoria) of approximately \$50,000.

If the proposed saleyards are not approved, will they be built somewhere else in the municipality?

If Council abandon the Amendment and refuse to allow the saleyards proposal, it is unlikely that Council will receive another application to build a new saleyards, especially given the very supportive Panel report indicating the proposed site is ideal for a saleyards. With the current saleyard facility and site unfit to continue operating, there is a real possibility that Ballarat will no longer have a saleyards.

What are the economic impacts to our City if the saleyards are not developed?

Without a saleyards, the revenue and jobs that could have been created would be lost. It is difficult to anticipate the true loss to the community as Ballarat is intrinsically linked to the agricultural industry, but it has been estimated that the current saleyards generate revenue of between \$160-\$190 million annually with the knock on benefits to the community in the vicinity of \$86-\$103 million.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Estimated timeframe	Stage in the process
Early Sept 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•The independent Planning Panel delivered its report to Council for consideration - report is now being circulated
14 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Council considers the final Panel report and lodges adoption or abandonment documentation with the Minister for Planning (this process ends here if abandoned by Council)
Late 2015 / Early 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•If adopted by Council and lodged with the Minister for Planning, he then advises Council of his final decision
Early 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•If the Minister approves Amendment C185, the EPA then need to determine the Works Approval Application•The applicant needs to complete the Development Plan required under the zone to the satisfaction of Council and other government bodies, before development can begin

NEED MORE INFO? Contact the City of Ballarat's Strategic Land Use Planning Coordinator Jessie Keating on 5320 5580 or email jessiekeating@ballarat.vic.gov.au