

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

David HODGETT: Okay. I think that you mentioned a team within AgVic that helps councils with some extraordinary –

Dougal PURCELL: Sorry, that is the Agriculture Victoria Planning and Advisory Service.

David HODGETT: Yes, it is a great initiative. I just wonder how many councils are aware of that, or if they all are, and if they use it, recognising that these things do not pop up all the time. Certainly when I talk to a lot of councils, not only about agricultural pursuits but some big developments, they do not have the resources or the capacity or the expertise to deal with them and would welcome that support. But sometimes I do not know if councils are aware that they can access that.

Dougal PURCELL: I will take that on board. Can I take that question on notice, Sir –

David HODGETT: Yes, sure.

Dougal PURCELL: because we have got some data around the number of councils that we have supported and the significance of the economic infrastructure we have supported to be developed. Can I take that on notice and get back to you?

Response from Agriculture Victoria

The Agriculture Victoria Planning and Advisory Service (the Advisory Service) was piloted between July 2021 and June 2023 and its purpose was to provide agricultural planning assistance to regional and rural council planners during the assessment of agricultural planning permit applications in rural zones. During the two year pilot the Advisory Service provided 392 responses to planning permit applications received via Section 52 Notice from 38 of the 48 regional and rural councils (see attachment 1).

During this time, the Advisory Service had 841 engagements with Council planning staff as part of assessing and providing the 392 written responses. The majority of engagements were with the council planner managing the application, but also included other members of the Council including the Planning Executive, Environmental Health and Planning compliance.

To support the promotion and ongoing awareness of the Advisory Service, Agriculture Victoria initiated and/or presented at various in-person and online events where the target audience was rural and regional council planners including:

- Central Highlands Region of Councils on 8 June 2022: 23 participants
- DELWP Regional Planners Forum on 12 October 2022: >50 participants
- Central Highlands Group of Councils on 3 April 2023: 37 participants
- Gippsland Planners Forum on 16 June 2023: 46 participants
- Advisory Service met with 15 unique council planning departments across Victoria
- Municipal Association of Victoria Rural and Regional Planning conferences in 2022 and 2023: 350 attendees
- An agricultural planning hub with targeted resources for council planners
[Ag Vic Planning and Advisory Service | Planning and farm development | Farm management | Agriculture Victoria](#)

The investment value of the 392 planning applications reviewed by the Advisory Service totalled \$176 million dollars (inclusive of buildings, equipment and additional livestock). The largest investment proposals focusing on agriculture land uses were for a broiler farm (\$33 million), cattle feedlot (\$23.5 million) and pig farm (\$7.5 million). Please note that these figures relate to the proposed investment at the time of application and are

not a measure of actual investment which may be subject to change based on the application process and approvals by the responsible authority.

Attachment 1

