

Our reference: A40199723
Your reference: PA2604385
Enquiries to: Cat McConkey

18 May 2026

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Lorraine Dowsey
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Email: stephen.leitch@transport.vic.gov.au

Att: Stephen Leitch, Senior Planner (Infrastructure Assessment)

Dear Lorraine,

**Response to Request for Further Information - PA2604385
120 Scenic Road, Highton**

Thank you for your letter dated 15 May 2026 regarding the request for further information under section 54(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* in relation to planning application PA2604385 for 120 Scenic Road, Highton.

Please find below Barwon Water's response to the matters raised.

1. Heritage Overlay (HO1719)

Barwon Water acknowledges the site's Heritage Overlay HO1719.

This land comprises two freshwater storage basins (Basins 1 and 2, with Basin 1 unused), and a third (Basin 3) that has largely been removed, plus associated buried pipelines, communications towers and operational and maintenance buildings and tracks. Since 1900 the site has been critical to providing water supply to the Greater Geelong region. Section 2.2 of the Design Report illustrates the location of these existing and redundant storage basins.

As noted in section 2.1 of the Design Response, lodged with the planning application, an existing maintenance compound and telecommunications towers are located towards the centre of the site, south of Water Catchment 2. A small brick shed (chlorine storage and dosing) and hardstand are immediately adjacent to the proposed building site.

The existing buildings and water infrastructure are located across the site, with relatively poor land utilization overall. The proposal seeks to modernize and consolidate infrastructure by relocating the existing water monitoring building, storage depot and staff toilets to the vicinity of the operational Basin 2.

The Montpellier Service Basins and Water Reserves are listed as being of Local heritage significance, associated with the “further development of Geelong’s water supply between 1900 and 1970”. The listing notes that “the water basins illustrate early 20th century technology employed in a major water supply process that is still extant today. The method of pipeline construction with the use of [an] aerial tramway illustrate[d] a technological process that was creative and advanced for its time.”

It is noted that Basin 2 has, over the years, been extensively reconfigured and enhanced to meet current dam safety and drinking water standard requirements, including with the addition of a polyethylene base and cover, an adjacent chlorine dosing shed and inlet and outlet pipework. The proposal has been developed with regard to the site’s heritage significance, with the intention of ensuring that the works interact appropriately with the heritage values of the site.

The proposal has been designed to:

- integrate with the modern infrastructure associated with Basin 2;
- avoid impact to the disused water distribution pit to the immediate west of the proposed shed;
- complement the historic function and setting of the site. The proposal seeks to construct a new replacement water monitoring building, depot shed and associated car parking to support the ongoing operations of the existing water storage and distribution facility; and
- have no impact on the water infrastructure and technology that contribute to the listed site significance.
- only impacts existing ‘modern’ underground assets (e.g. chlorine dosing pipes, electricity and telecommunication cables).

2. Response to Clause 53.22

Barwon Water confirms that clause 53.22 is applicable to the proposal and that the development has been considered in terms of operational need, feasibility, cost, and the broader public benefit of the proposed works.

In particular:

- by modernizing and consolidating assets within the landholding, the proposal creates an opportunity for better land utilization in line with State Government landholding policy;



- the proposal is required to support Barwon Water's ongoing operational and strategic objectives, including managing and monitoring new water sources from Melbourne and water distribution to Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula;
- the development is considered to be relatively low risk and feasible from a technical and delivery perspective;
- the proposed investment of \$950,000 is proportionate to the intended infrastructure and service outcomes of the proposal; and
- the work is expected to contribute to improved site security and drinking water monitoring and management of water-related functions at the site. These include remote controls for critical water pumps and valves, and monitoring of network flows, basin levels, water quality, and chlorine dosing regime, to ensure the critical delivery of drinking water to service the Greater Geelong region. The proposal also provides accommodation for field maintenance personnel and their equipment.

Monitoring is currently undertaken in an ageing building to the south of Basin 2 that is not fit for purpose. There is currently no lunchroom or women's or disability toilet at the site. A new water monitoring building will accommodate contemporary technology and staff administration facilities to ensure Barwon Water can continue to service the region reliably.

3. Cost of Development and Permit Application Fee

Barwon Water confirms that the estimated cost of development is \$950,000. The proposed shed is to be a proprietary, off-the-shelf, Colorbond product and the water monitoring building has been designed to be the smallest footprint to deliver the functional requirements. No internal fitout of the multi-use rooms is currently proposed. The proposal is likely to be built by a local, qualified, small-scale construction contractor.

Based on this cost estimate, Barwon Water asserts that an adjustment to the planning permit application fee is not required.

Please let us know if any further clarification is required to assist in the assessment of the planning application.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cat McConkey".

Cat McConkey

Strategic Projects Program Manager

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