

\$5 million top up planned for Brown Brothers wine production in Milawa



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Business



BIG PLANS FOR BROWNS: The Milawa home of Brown Brothers may be expanded, if a planning application with Wangaratta Council is approved.

Brown Brothers has big plans to expand its operations out of Milawa, with a \$5 million packaging facility proposed to keep more work in the North East.

The wine giant has submitted an application to Wangaratta Council to build a 6862 square metre plant next-door to the existing dispatch facility.

Plans lodged by Southern Cross Developers business construction manager Brian Sawyer revealed Brown Brothers has been sending 30 per cent of its wine to Mildura to get packaged.

The wine is then trucked back to either Milawa or other sites for distribution.

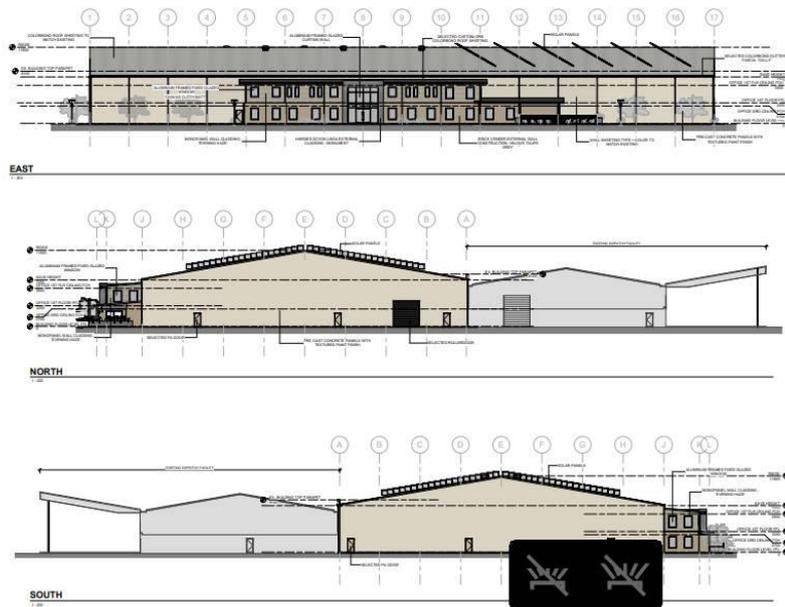
“Once the new packaging facility is operational there will be an increase in dry goods deliveries (bottles, closures, cartons, labels, etc) to Milawa,” the application stated.

“We do not envisage an increase in peak truck movements to and from the site as a result of the new winery packaging facility.

“Peak traffic associated with wine making on site occurs during harvest months, February to April, and this will not change.”

Brown Brothers estimated that overall, the 800 to 1000 truck movements to and from Milawa each year would increase by about 80.

“With regards to traffic management, the need to transport product (via B-doubles) off-site to be bottled elsewhere is removed, as the proposed development is a on-site packaging facility, hence moveable traffic in and out of the facility will be halved,” Mr Sawyer said in an email to the council.



Brown Brothers plans lodged with Wangaratta Council.

But it appears that despite an increase in packaging work, it is unlikely there will be any new jobs created at the winery.

Current packaging operations that take place in Milawa will be moved to the new shed, where the extra 30 per cent of work will be added.

“The project in its current form does not necessitate additional staff,” the planning application stated.

“The intention is that current staff will operate both packaging lines.”

The project will also include a new staff car park outside the new building, which would free up the existing staff car park.

This would provide an extra 68 spaces for use by customers.

Brown Brothers is also forming part of Wangaratta Council’s plans to transform Milawa into what it has called “the place to stop”.

The “Snow Road district plan”, released this year, states a two-kilometre path between the winery and Milawa Cheese factory would be sealed and upgrade within two years.

Wangaratta Council has advertised the Brown Brothers planning application on its website and stated a decision will not be made before January 4.