

# Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board

## MINUTES

### *Acknowledgement of Country*

*We acknowledge the lands of the Hills and Fleurieu region are the traditional lands for the Kurna, Peramangk and Ngarrindjeri Nations. We respect the Kurna, Peramangk and Ngarrindjeri people as the custodians of these lands, and that their cultural and heritage beliefs, and spiritual relationships with Country, are still important to their people today.*

#### Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Meeting #40

**Date:** 16/04/2025

**Start Time:** 9:37 am

**Scheduled Finish Time:** 1:00 pm (Lunch followed)

**Location:** Mt Barker Football Club – 2 Howard Lane, Mount Barker 5251

**Attendees:** Board Members

David Greenhough (Chair), Janet Klein, Chris West, Jock Harvey, Leanne Muffet, James Stacey, Amelia Graham and Sarah Day.

Staff

Michael Garrod (General Manager), Ben Della Torre (Manager – Landscape Operations), Wendy Telfer (Nature Partnerships and Finance Lead), Cathy Lewis (Manager – Business and Governance) Alison Skinner (Team Leader – Planning and MERI), Brett Ibbotson (Program Manager – Dam Compliance), Caroline Dorr (Team Leader – Communications and Regional Engagement), Paul Wainwright (Team Leader – Water) and Emilee Vidau (Executive Officer).

In Gallery

Marty Bower (Senior Stewardship Officer) and Tom Kloeden (Regional Coordinator Grazing Pressure Management)

**Apologies:** Andy Lowe and Janet Klein

#### Meeting Items

##### Preliminary and Procedural Matters

**1.1 Welcome and apologies**

The Chair acknowledged Country and welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

**1.2 Conflict of Interest Disclosure (arising from agenda items)**

Nil conflicts of Interest disclosures arising from the agenda declared.

**1.3 Consent Schedule**

*The board* **approved** and **agreed** the items on the Consent Schedule be adopted.

**Moved:** C West

**Seconded:** J Stacey

**Carried**

**1.4 Any Other Business (to be covered in item 4)**

- Native Vegetation Council – Blue Gum Seedlings on Kangaroo Island.

**1.5 Minutes from the previous meeting**

The board **confirmed** the minutes of meeting number 39, held on 26 February 2025 as a true and accurate record.

**Moved:** L Muffet

**Seconded:** J Stacey

**Carried**

## 1.6 Actions arising from previous meetings

M Garrod provided a brief update on the proposed joint workshop with Peramangk, noting it may take a little while to come to fruition given the significant changes underway with the Peramangk community.

*The board:*

**noted** the status of actions arising from the previous minutes.

**Moved:** S Day

**Seconded:** L Muffet

**Carried**

## 1.7 Resolution Register

*The board* **noted** the Resolution Register.

**Carried**

## Items (for noting or decision)

### 2.1 General Manager's Report

- M Garrod provided a summary of the General Manager's Report, highlighting:
  - W Telfer has been directly appointed into the Nature Partnerships and Finance position.
  - Grassroots Grant applications closed on 15 April 2025. A total of 36 Tier 1 and 27 Tier 2 applications were received. The CEC will commence reviewing the applications shortly.
  - The success of the Dam compliance program to date was highlighted. Program Manager, Brett Ibbotson will provide an update at a future board meeting.
  - The \$55m drought assistance package recently announced by the SA Government includes \$2 million to support the feral deer eradication program over the next 4 years.
  - The package also includes \$760k for enhanced rabbit control effort across SA, noting K5 has not been as effective as previous seasons, and 1080 baits are being investigated as a potential replacement. The potential for free baits to be available to land holders is also being explored.
- M Garrod further raised an item not in the General Manager's Report, noting:
  - A member of the public walking in the Onkaparinga National Park discovered three deer carcasses, with some showing signs of material having been harvested from them. M Garrod confirmed that a contract shooter employed through the Regional Grazing Pressure Program was responsible. The operation has been suspended while an investigation is carried out.
  - While the incident attracted media attention, it was effectively managed by the communications team.
  - While the investigation is currently underway, there is no doubt that it was our contractor that removed material, and it is likely that some sanction will be warranted, and operational arrangements will be further tightened. This includes stricter protocols around the removal of material from carcasses and ensuring that carcasses are moved from any position in which the public are likely to encounter them.
  - M Garrod met with MP Erin Thompson to provide an overview of our deer eradication efforts, and to address concerns around animal welfare.
- Discussion ensued regarding the above incident:
  - The current onboarding process for contractors was discussed, with emphasis on the limited pool of qualified contract shooters. It was noted that the program will proceed with a nationwide procurement to broaden the field of potential contractors.
  - J Stacey queried if signage is displayed on public land when operations are underway, staff confirmed that the appropriate signage is displayed and during aerial operations staff are stationed at entry points to ensure public safety.
  - The board briefly discussed the cost associated with deer shooting and carcass removal.
  - It was noted the board had seen a noticeable shift in public sentiment regarding the deer control program.

*The board:*

**2.1.1 noted** the General Manager's report.

**Moved:** J Harvey

**Seconded:** C West

**Carried**

## 2.2 Quarterly Project Report – outputs and project management

- The Quarterly project report was taken as read; discussion followed:
  - D Greenhough queried if there was significant risk to the board in time delays to the WAP amendment process. P Wainwright spoke to the work between the board and DEW, and that finalising science requirements to underpin WAP amendments is still underway. P Wainwright remained confident that it is manageable.
  - W Telfer advised the upcoming May Water Resources Steering Committee would be significant as the committee will be looking at the project plan for WAP amendment process.
  - M Garrod further spoke to the pressures on the Department as many WAPs are currently in the amendment phase. M Garrod further noted that the Steering Committee will need to consider resourcing.
  - L Muffet queried the reason the carbon planting project is noted under “water planning”, it was confirmed by staff that this issue relates to the current policy issue that undertaking biodiverse carbon plantings trigger the commercial forestry definition in the WAP and we are working on a minor WAP amendment relating to this issue. The board agreed noting this connection in the report would be useful.

### Action

- 3) Note the policy issue relating to carbon plantings and the WAPs in future quarterly reports under the the water planning project

*Responsible Officer: A Skinner*

*The board:*

**2.2.1 noted** the Quarterly Project Report.

**Moved: C West**

**Seconded: J Stacey**

**Carried**

## 2.3 Landscape plan Review – Partnering and project management

- A Skinner spoke to the paper and highlighted:
  - The significant input from the board members at the March board workshop.
  - Feedback was received from key partner and stakeholders as part of Landscape Plan the review about the effectiveness of the board’s partnering.
  - Overall, the review was positive, although some concerns were raised by a couple councils in relation to the resourcing for pest and weed management. These concerns are known to the board.
- Discussion followed:
  - The board noted it was encouraging there were no major red flags.
  - S Day queried if there needed to be additional communications on the Coastal Action Plan. B Della Torre noted that the draft plan is in its final stages, and stakeholders have been involved in drafting. The launch of the plan at the start of summer will have a communications campaign to raise awareness of the plan

*The board:*

**2.3.1 noted** the results of the LHF Partnering and Engagement Survey

**Moved: L Muffet**

**Seconded: J Harvey**

**Carried**

## 2.4 Draft Business Plan 2025-2026

- A Skinner presented to the board noting the following key items:
  - Noting the levy income was approved by the board at the December meeting.
  - The business plan maintains similar layout and design to the previous year, reflecting its status as the final year of the current 5 year Landscape Plan.
- Discussion followed:
  - The board queried timeframes of the Business Plan approval and gazette process, with staff confirming that the board’s approval of the plan enables the water levies to be gazette by 30 June. The 2025-26 Business Plan will be provided to the Minister for noting and will be on the website by 1 July 2025.

- W Telfer noted that after discussions with Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board and DEW, HFLB has a part of the River Murray water resource, which will provide an additional \$150,000 in funding from the water levy.
- D Greenhough identified a few typographical errors and will provide these to the team in an email shortly.
- S Day queried the figures on page 8, noting the way it is laid out suggests this is what the board will be paying the individual. The board agreed that changing the wording from “Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator” to “Facilitation” or “facilitation Program”.

**Action**

- 3) Update the wording on Page 8 from “Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator” to “Facilitation” or “facilitation Program”.

*Responsible Officer: A Skinner*

*The board, in block:*

**2.4.1 approved** the draft Business Plan 2025-26 subject to minor correction.

**2.4.2 Noted** the Business Plan will be provided to the Minister for noting.

**Moved: A Graham      Seconded: J Harvey**

**Carried**

**2.5 Board Authorisations under s107 and s207 of the LSA Act**

- B Della Torre spoke to the paper and highlighted the following points:
  - Confirmed the current delegation authority resides with the Executive Leadership Team and the General Manager.
  - Recommended that the delegation should be extended to the Compliance Team, given their direct involvement, in depth understanding of the activities, and their responsibility for drafting the relevant conditions.
  - The full suite of board delegations will be presented to the board for approval at the June meeting via the Risk and Performance Committee. However, due to the current dam compliance activity taking place, these delegations are an immediate priority.
- Discussion followed:
  - The board sought clarification on the distinction between sections 107 and 207.
  - D Greenhough queried what the instrument covered, B Della Torre confirming it covers Pest, Plants and Animals.
  - A discussion relating to the process to apply the Common Seal and who the second signatory on the Instrument of Authorisation ought to be a Board member or the General Manager. Agreed that the Instrument of Authorisation would be updated to align with the ‘use of Common Seal’ as outlined in the Board’s Procedure for Board Meetings and Governance.
  - The board approve the Chair to sign the Instrument of Authorisation under the Common Seal, pending the updated signature block on the instrument of delegation.

**Action**

- 3) Update the signatory block on the Instrument of Authorisation.

*Responsible Officer: M Garrod*

*The board:*

**2.5.1 Approved** the Presiding Member of the board to sign the Instrument of Authorisation for s107 and s207 of the *Landscape SA Act 2019* on its behalf, using the common seal.

**Moved: L Muffet      Seconded: J Harvey**

**Carried**

- 2.6**
- Regarding item 2.5, it was confirmed after review of the board procedure, that the second signatory could either be a board member or the General Manager. The board were happy with this, and the above action item was deemed completed.

### Establishing a Policy Position on Retrospective WAA Permit Approvals

- B Della Torre spoke to the paper and highlighted the following:
  - It was confirmed Crown Solicitor advice was received, which included a recommendation for the board to establish its own policy position.
  - It was noted that currently, no other Landscape Board across the state has a formal policy in place.
  - Of the three options outlined in the paper, it was noted option three “no retrospective WAA approvals, except in exceptional circumstance” was preferred.
  - B Della Torre clarified “exceptional circumstances” would include scenarios such as emergency works required during events like flooding where action is necessary and should not incur penalties.
- Discussion followed:
  - The board agreed that the flexibility of the option was appropriate but queried if there were to be an amnesty within scope of the policy noting most landholders act in good faith. Staff confirmed that while there would be no amnesty for unauthorised dams or inappropriate water activity, amnesty would be considered for works that comply with the regulation.
  - S Day queried the process of obtaining a permit, staff confirmed the process has been streamlined with up to a 3-week week turnaround, confirming all water affecting activities are outlined on the Hills and Fleurieu website.
  - M Garrod was confident the policy would be adopted by the other Landscape Board, making the policy common practice and therefore more enforceable.

*The board:*

**2.6.1 endorsed** a policy position of **No Retrospective WAA Approvals, except in exceptional circumstances**, which will inform the development of a formal Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Policy for consideration at the Boards June Meeting.

**Moved:** J Harvey

**Seconded:** S Day

**Carried**

### 2.7 Water Resources Steering Committee Update, and improving SA Water Engagement

- P Wainwright spoke to the paper and the following key points were highlighted:
  - SA Water has requested a more formal approach to collaboration with the board through membership on both the Water Resources Steering Committee and MLR Water Resources Working Group.
  - The Water Resources Steering Committee has discussed risks around perceptions of conflicts of interest but also the benefits of strengthening collaboration with SA Water.
- Discussion followed:
  - M Garrod further confirmed he believes the risks around conflicts of interest can be effectively managed and the committee is not a decision-making body; it provides advice to the board.
  - It was noted that there are a range of arrangements and no consistent approach for how SA Water is involved in water planning and management with other Landscape Boards, including involvement in some board committees.
  - The board discussed the issue, and it was agreed that it was important for specific provisions about conflict of interest to be incorporated into the Committee’s Terms of Reference to mitigate risks.

#### Action

- 3) Circulate amended Terms of Reference to the board that specify how conflicts of interest will be managed and including SA Water Director / manager as a member of the Water Resources Steering Committee and SA Water staff member as a member of the MLR Water Resources Working Group.

*Responsible Officer:* P Wainwright

*The board:*

**2.7.1 noted** the minutes and issues discussed with the Water Resources Steering Committee meeting on 14 February 2025.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:**

**Carried**

- 2.7.2 approve in principle** the involvement of an SA Water representative being on the Hills and Fleurieu Water Resources Steering Committee and the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Resources Working Group, subject to amended Terms of Reference for the committee being provided to the board for approval.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:**

**Carried**

## **2.8 Community Engagement Committee Membership and Terms of Reference**

- C Dorr provided an overview of the Community Engagement Membership and Terms of Reference, noting the following key points:
  - Community membership was advertised through social media channels in the second two weeks of March.
  - Although three excellent applications were received, they were of a similar demographic and did not attract the diversity originally envisaged by the board.
  - Based on the applications received, the Committee recommend Sue Campbell be appointed.
- *Discussion Followed:*
  - L Muffet confirmed the reference to “Council” in the Terms of Reference was in relation to local government, and noted that membership on the committee was for a 12 month term.
  - The board recommended the Terms of Reference be updated to allow a member to sit for further term, and this was supported.
  - Discussion around recruitment of youth continued, with staff confirming they are looking at multiple channels such as alumni of the Youth Environment Council.

### **Action**

- 3) Update Terms of Reference to reflect that members can sit a further term on the committee, if approved by the board.

*Responsible Officer:* C Dorr

*The board, in block:*

**2.8.1 endorsed** Sue Campbell as a community representative on the board’s Community Engagement Committee.

**2.8.2 endorsed** amended Terms of Reference for the Committee that defines more diverse membership for the committee.

**2.8.3 noted** that staff will directly approach potential members for the committee for 1-2 youth representatives and one council staff member.

**Moved:** J Harvey

**Seconded:** C West

**Carried**

## **2.9 Risk and Performance Committee Minutes**

The board took the paper as read and no further discussion followed.

*The board:*

**2.9.1 noted** the update from the Risk and Performance Committee (the committee) meeting held on 20 March 2025.

**Moved:** L Muffet

**Seconded:** C West

**Carried**

**2.9.2 adopted** the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment’s Fraud and Corruption Control Policy (attachment 1).

**Moved:** J Harvey

**Seconded:** S Day

**Carried**

**2.9.3 noted** the board adopted the Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure (attachment 2).

**Moved:** A Graham

**Seconded:** C West

**Carried**

## **2.10 Proposed Change to Feral Goat Declaration**

- T Kloeden spoke to the paper provided, the following key points were noted:
  - It was confirmed that there is currently fewer than 100 feral goats across the Green Adelaide and HFLB region. However, the presence of domestic goats poses a significant risk of repopulation.
  - The two proposed options outlined in the paper are to mitigate the risk of repopulation, noting staff preferred option of a new class with a declaration that includes section 19(2) which requires land managers to destroy all feral goats on their land.

- *Discussion Followed:*

- In relation to support provided to landholders and a declaration to destroy feral goats, T Kloeden confirmed support would be provided to landholders.
- The board noted that only one option should be provided to the minister, approving the preferred option of staff noting that option 2 also does not completely align with the complexities of our region.
- S Day queried if other regions were affected by feral goats and if this declaration should be applied unilaterally. Staff confirmed that each region is affected to varying degrees, and the letter will be sent as part of a consultation from the minister and other boards will be provided the opportunity to apply the same declaration to their region should they see fit.

**Action**

- 3) Amend letter to Minister to outline the suggested change (Destruction) to the declaration for the chairs review and signature.

*Responsible Officer:* T Kloeden

**Action**

- 3) Finalised and signed letter to the Minister to be circulated to the board out of session.

*Responsible Officer:* E Vidau

*The board, in block:*

**2.10.1 Endorsed** the proposal to seek a change to the declaration for feral goats in the Adelaide Hills and Green Adelaide regions

**2.10.2 Approved the signing** of the amended letter to Deputy Premier Close and sending a copy to Minister Scriven he update from the Risk and Performance Committee (the committee) meeting held on 14 November 2024.

**Moved:** J Harvey      **Seconded:** J Stacey

**Carried**

## Standing Items

### 3.1 Finance Overview

- C Lewis provided the Financial Overview for the year to date as of 31 March 2025 noting the following:
  - Currently trending in the direction of a \$100,000 overspend at end of year.
  - The outcome of the submitted carry-over request is expected in late May 2025.
  - \$377k of the board's \$2.5million water levy income for the year has been received from MyWater, which historically is received in January. Access to the 'working capital' from the Department of Treasury and Finance has provided sufficient cashflow to compensate for the late receipt of income.

*The board:*

**3.1.1 accepted** the financial reports and statistics for the period ending 31 March 2025.

**Moved:** J Harvey      **Seconded:** C West

**Carried**

### 3.2 Work Health and Safety Update

- C Lewis provided a verbal Work Health and Safety Update noting:
  - No incidences and injuries reported.
  - Work Health and Safety Committee due to meet 5 May.
- Discussion followed:
  - In relation to the upcoming aerial deer shooting operations, D Greenhough raised queries of the safety protocols that are undertaken on these operations. Both M Garrod and B Della Torre confirmed public, staff and contractor safety is a priority. The Board agreed a presentation outlining the Policies and Standard Operating Procedures would be beneficial and provide reassurance.

**Action**

- 3) Risk Assessments, SoP's and Policies for aerial deer shooting operations to be presented to the board at the June meeting.

*Responsible Officer:* B Della Torre

**Carried**

### 3.3 Board Member Activity Register

- S Day confirmed her attendance at the March Risk and Performance Committee Meeting was noted in the register.

#### Action

- Board Member Activity Register to be updated to reflect S Day attendance at March 20 2025 Risk and Performance Committee

Responsible Officer: E Vidau

The board:

**3.3.1 noted** the current register of meetings and events attended by the Chair and board members in their capacity as representatives.

**Moved:** J Harvey

**Seconded:** L Muffet

**Carried**

### 3.4 Board Forward Agenda

- M Garrod spoke to the paper, noting the following:
  - The May workshop will be about the next Landscape Plan, an external consultant will be facilitating the session.
  - Discussion around the time period the board would be looking at, S Day noted the 7 generations planning.
  - Due to the intensity of the session, the board suggested a debrief at the end of the session.
  - W Telfer queried the boards stance on extending the invitation to attend the workshop to Team Leaders, the board were supportive of this.
  - M Garrod further noted that a one-hour session from the Office of Public Integrity at the end of the May Workshop.

The board:

**3.4.1 noted** the Forward Agenda.

**Moved:** C West

**Seconded:** A Graham

**Carried**

### 3.5 Register of Interests

The board **noted** the Register of Interests.

**Carried**

### 3.6 Correspondence

The board **noted** the correspondence record provided.

**Carried**

## Other Business

- L Muffet provided a brief update on the site tour on Kangaroo Island with the Native Vegetation Council, highlighting the significant environmental impact of Tasmanian blue gum wildings following the 2019 bushfires. L Muffet noted that the Native Vegetation Council is developing principles to mitigate these impacts. B Della Torre added that there is a policy in places to remove Tasmanian blue gums.

## In Camera / Confidential Papers

*In accordance with the Landscape SA Act 2019, section 23 (5) the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board orders the public be excluded to receive, discuss or consider any prescribed information or matter in confidence*

**5.1 Nil**

## Meeting Closure

**6.1 Next meeting:** Wednesday – 25 June 2025

**Venue:** To be advised

**6.2 Meeting close – 12:58**

Endorsed 	David Greenhough <b>Presiding Member</b> <b>Hills Fleurieu Landscape Board</b>  25 June 2025
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