



## Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board

### MINUTES

#### *Acknowledgement of Country*

*The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board acknowledges First Nations people as the first people of the lands and waters where we live and work. We respect the Peramangk, Kurna, and Ngarrindjeri peoples, past and present, who have cared for Yerta/Ruwe for generations, nurturing its life, stories, and landscapes. We recognise their deep knowledge, spiritual belonging and enduring connection to Country.*

*We are committed to walking alongside First Nations, listening, learning, and working together to protect and restore these lands and waters.*

#### Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Meeting #44

**Date:** 10/12/2025

**Start Time:** 9:33 am **Scheduled Finish Time:** 1:00 pm (Lunch followed)

**Location:** Deviation Road Winery, 207 Scott Creek Road, Longwood SA 5153

**Attendees:** Board Members

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

Staff

Michael Garrod (General Manager), Brett Ibbotson (A/Manager Landscape Operations), Michaela Heinson (Manager Planning & Engagement), Renee Clark (Manager Business and Governance), Alison Skinner (Team Leader Planning and MERI), Megan Harper (Team Leader Fleurieu Peninsula), Nicole Bennett (Team Leader (Eastern Hills and Plains), Caroline Dorr (Team Leader Communications and Regional Engagement) and Emilee Heinrich (Executive Officer).

In Gallery

Aleesha Lesiuk (Climate-Smart Agriculture Officer), Bonnie Armour (Carbon Farming Officer), Donna Bartsch (Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator) and Shane Johansen (Grants and Engagement Officer)

#### Apologies:

#### 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:** J Klein **Seconded:** L Muffet

**Carried**

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

- Board Performance Review
- General Manager Performance Review
- Out of Session approval
- Correspondence

**1.5 Minutes from the previous meeting**

The board **confirmed** the minutes of meeting number 43, held on 29 October 2025 as a true and accurate record noting the following amendments:

- D Greenhough noted that in section 2.6 of the draft minutes the dot point reading “*partnership in our Landscape to aid...*” should become “*partnership in our Landscape Plan to aid...*”
- In section 4.1 “Draught Discussion and Presentation” to become “Drought discussion and presentation”, and remove the minute takers note to self.

**Moved:** J Stacey

**Seconded:** A Lowe

**Carried**

**1.6 Actions arising from previous meetings**

- J Klein queried why the Board Committee Membership Schedule remains pending, noting the assumption that is had been completed. M Garrod advised that the WRSC currently has no schedule, and L Muffet added that the CEC also has no schedule.

*The board:*

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

**Moved:** A Lowe

**Seconded:** J Klein

**Carried**

**1.7 Resolution Register**

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

**Carried**

**Items (for noting or decision)**

**2.1 Presentation – Climate Ready Ag Projects Update**

- N Bennett presented to the board on the Climate Ready Ag Projects:
  - Introduced the Climate- Ready Agriculture team; A Lesiuk, B Armour and D Bartsch.
  - Spoke to the Climate Ready Agriculture Program, noting the key outcomes include supporting the agency to become carbon-neutral by 2026 and deliver a regional Net Zero Strategy for Agriculture.
- D Bartsch presented to the board on the Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator (SAF) project, highlighting:
  - The Program is externally funded through Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) in the amount of \$734,740 from January 2024- June 2028.
  - The outcome is to support sustainable agriculture practices and achieve climate smart sustainable agriculture outcomes.
  - The program provides an essential contact for landholders in each region, noting the programs relies upon relationship building in addition to information and resource sharing cross regionally.
  - D Bartsch noted a fact sheet is now available on the agency website.
- A Lesiuk presented to the board on the Farm Action Planning (DAFF) project, highlighting:
  - The program is externally funded through DAFF in the amount of \$871,711 from January 2025 – June 2028.
  - The primary objective of the project is to provide property owners with practical skills to plan for the management of natural assets to increase resilience to climate change.
  - Capturing 170 participants over 8 weeks with a mixture of lifestyle block land managers and primary producers. An EOI has taken place for land holders to host a cattle and sheep optiweigh system which will provide landholders with real time data on stock weight, 23 EOI applications have been received.
- A Lesiuk further presented on the Climate Ready Landscapes project, highlighting:
  - Funded through the 2025-26 Landscape Priority Fund and Future Drought Fund with a total budget of \$265,000.
  - The project will deliver on-farm water security field days, water security masterclasses, soil extension field days, in addition to 25x on-farm water health checks and report.
- B Armour presented to the board on the Carbon Outreach Officer Project, highlighting:
  - Funded through Commonwealth, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.
  - The outcome of the program is to increase knowledge of GHG emissions management, carbon farming, and low-emissions technologies and practices.

- Based on community feedback focus has been shifted to the practical aspect, with 126 land managers engaged, which exceeded the targets set.
- B Armour further presented on the Soil Extension program that finalised in June 2025:
  - Funded through Commonwealth, DCCEEW.
  - The program empowered land managers to take responsibility for their soil health, resulting in improved productivity, profitability and environmental outcomes.
  - It was briefly noted an application for 2026-28 is pending called Mallee Sustainable Farming – Scaling for success: Drought Resilience at scale. With an aim to expand proven drought-resistant soil, salinity and ground cover management practices across southern Australia's low-rainfall areas.
- Discussion followed:
  - J Klein asked how staff monitor practice change and implementation among participants. A Lesiuk explained that participants are offered property visits and follow up with their regional stewardship officer. A Wrap up workshop and six month check in are also provided. Additional data is collected through MERI surveys sent 6-12 months after the workshop.
  - M Garrod noted this approach is applied across all behaviour change programs, and the agency has observed encouraging results.
  - L Muffet question what the impact is other than behaviour, beyond the networking and change on ground. N Bennett noted it is very variable, looking at ground cover index which is looked at monthly by DEW. In addition to 3 yearly health indicators for days of risk for soil erosion across the state. N Bennett noting the need for the agency to set parameters and benchmarks.

## 2.2 Presentation – Action Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities in the Hills and Fleurieu Region

- The draft action plan was provided prior to the meeting, M Harper presented on the action plan, highlighting:
  - This is not an emotive plan; it is intended to convey “this is how we succeed”.
  - Consultation took place with most, if not all ecologists.
  - It was confirmed; 186 threatened plant species (12% of all native species), 158 threatened animal species (30% of all native species) and 12 threatened ecological communities (29% of vegetation communities are part of TEC).
  - A Prioritisation process was used to rank species and ecological communities as high, medium, low or no priority. Only those ranked high are included in the action plan outcomes.
  - Recovery interventions have been applied to create tailored actions for each plant and animal species.
  - Confirmed funding of \$50 million will ensure the plan is completed by 2040.
  - Tracking progress and reporting will include annual review of new listings, actions to be reviewed at years 5 and 10, all threatened species and ecological communities included in the outcomes will be reassessed in 2040 to determine changes to extinction risk, with a report completed in 2040 on overall success.
  - The draft is currently being finalised by the graphic designer, aiming for a final version to support public consultation on the landscape plan.
  - A communication plan will be developed to guide its release.
- Discussion followed:
  - A Lowe queried if staff had considered to render the actions spatially with priority locations noting locations may motivate people. M Harper stated the suggestion will be take this on board
  - J Klein queried if there if the Re:bird the ranges action plan had any correlation, M Harper confirmed there is some alignment but set to a smaller target compared to the 1000 years in the Re:Bird the ranges action plan.
  - J Klein further queried if there is any opportunity for funding through Re:bird for critically needed funding. M Harper is unsure but does believe less ability to call on the public like Re:bird for donations and confirmed the Quickest solution is government funding. D Greenhough noted minister did ask about the threatened species plan and believe will be interested in the plan.

## 2.3 General Managers Report

- M Garrod spoke to the report, highlights:
  - Highlighted the power of work being undertaken in reviewing and planning next landscape plan, the plan is currently with the DEW design unit. Once finalised the plan will be disseminated to board members out of session in the next week.

- Following submission into the Parliamentary Inquiry into Kangaroo and Wallaby populations, staff hosted a field tour for the Natural Resource Committee. This tour highlighted the impacts of unnaturally high kangaroo populations. The Premier has subsequently committed to continue the inquiry post-election.
  - The cabinet submission for the WAP Amendment has been submitted, M Garrod is optimistic in the board securing the required funding.
  - First Nations procurement panel met December 5, confirming 6 finalists with interviews commencing next week. S Day was very impressed by the engagement in the panel meeting and commended S Turner and C Dorr for their work.
- No further Discussion followed

**Action**

- 1) finalised draft Landscape plan to be disseminated to board members out of session.

*Responsible Officer: M Garrod*

*The board:*

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

**Moved: J Klein      Secoded: L Muffet**

**Carried**

**2.4 Draft Net Zero Agriculture for H&F – Feedback and Revision**

- N Bennett presented to the board, highlighting:
  - The plan was drafted prior to the National Land Sector Plan being released, which presented misalignment between our draft and the sector plan.
  - The consultation feedback although critical of the misalignment between the two plans, specifically to targets it was constructive.
  - The boards feedback was requested.
- Discussion followed:
  - The board discussed the political space and the concerns of the agency not aligning with the National Land Sector Plan.
  - The board discussed further consultation with each stakeholder as a first step. Noting that although Agriculture groups will be most affected by this plan, there was no response to the consultation. The board agreed that communication through the chair in the first instance to allow additional time for further engagement and feedback.
  - Engaged discussion suggested the board were supportive of an amended plan which retained the objective of net zero by 2050, but an amended strategy that aligns with national modelling, removing interim regional "targets".
  - An updated engagement strategy is to be presented to the board February board meeting.

**Action**

- 2) Communication through the chair is to be sent to stakeholders that provided feedback. Communication to also be disseminated to board members for noting.

*Responsible Officer: M Garrod*

*The board:*

**2.4.1 noted** the consultation feedback received from industry peak bodies.

**2.4.2 Discussed** options for revising the *Net Zero Agriculture Strategy for the Hills and Fleurieu*.

**Moved: N/A      Secoded: N/A**

**Carried**

**2.5 Levy Income for 2026-27, and proposed business planning process**

- The levy income for 2026-27, and proposed business planning process was taken as read, noting the request to increase the Regional Landscape Levy and Water Levy by 2.4%.
- Discussion followed:
  - A Lowe confirmed his support for the CPI increase, but requested in future data regarding cost of living and what

the mean impact per property is.

- M Garrod noted that the levy cap is set at a regional level. As more properties are developed, the individual share decreases because the cap applies across the region rather than per property.

**Action**

- 3) Mean household impact of the levy increase to be provided to board members out of session.

*Responsible Officer: M Garrod*

*The board:*

**2.5.1 Approved** the Business Plan 2026-27 specifies a total regional landscape levy income based on a CPI increase of 2.4% on that raised in 2025-26.

**Moved: J Stacey      Seconded: J Klein      Carried**

**2.5.2 Approved** the Business Plan 2026-27 specifies the water levy rates be based on a CPI increase of 2.4% on the levy rates raised in 2025-26.

**Moved: C West      Seconded: A Lowe      Carried**

**2.5.3 Noted** the proposed process for developing the 2026-27 Annual Business Plan.

**Moved: J Klein      Seconded: A Lowe      Carried**

**2.6 Community Engagement Update**

- The paper was taken as read, C Dorr noted:
  - The presentation from P Wainwright, K Woodridge from Water Trust on the WAP Planning and Engagement. C Dorr also spoke to the collaboration with First Nations on the WAP amendment.
  - The 2026 meeting dates are not yet finalised but will be disseminated in due course to members.
  - The wording regarding conflict of interest in the ToR has been updated to align with all other HFLB committees, as requested by the board.
- Board discussion followed:
  - L Muffet spoke to the timeline of the communication and engagement planning that was presented to Paul, noting this information provided a lot of context and would be useful for all board members.
  - L Muffet suggested that external CEC members meet the other board members at a workshop in the new year. The board supported this suggestion.

**Action**

- 4) WAP Communication timeline from P Wainwrights presentation at the October CEC meeting to be sent to board members out of session.

*Responsible Officer: E Vidau*

**Action**

- 5) Extend an invitation to external CEC members to attend a board workshop to meet other board members.

*Responsible Officer: E Vidau*

*The board:*

**2.6.1 noted** the minutes from the second CEC meeting.

**Moved: A Lowe      Seconded: S Day      Carried**

**2.6.2 Approved** the updated CEC ToR with updated Conflict of Interest Requirements.

**Moved: C West      Seconded: A Lowe      Carried**

**2.7 Grassroots Grants – Program structure and budget approval**

- The paper was taken as read; C Dorr noted the CPI increase for the grassroots grants budget to \$270,000 for the 2026/27 financial year.
- Discussion followed:
  - S Day asked why application numbers have significantly declined. C Dorr explained that community feedback

highlighted the need for clear criteria to ensure only applications aligned with the program are submitted.

- It was further questioned if feedback had been received in relation to the smarty grants process. S Johansen noted that there is a difference in the application process between the different monetary values. S Johansen noted we capture feedback through acquittal processes but have not received any negative feedback.

*The board, in block:*

**2.7.1 Noted** the program structure for the 2026-27 round of Grassroots Grants.

**Moved:** A Lowe      **Seconded:** J Klein      **Carried**

**2.7.2 Approved** a budget of \$270,000 for the 2026-27 financial year.

**Moved:** L Muffet      **Seconded:** S Day      **Carried**

## 2.8 Policy Position on Retrospective WAA Permit Approvals

- B Ibbotson spoke to the paper and highlighted the following key points:
  - The Landscape Act was silent on its position on retrospective WAA approvals.
  - A universal position across all landscape boards to not allow retrospective approval was agreed amongst the General Managers.
- Discussion followed:
  - D Greenhough noted some of the language around issuing formal cautions to property owners, in section 6.2, and requested it be firmed up to reflect a stance that formal cautions would be routinely issues to offending landholders alerting them to the breach and noting that any subsequent breach would result in compliance action . The board supported this change.
  - M Garrod briefly noted that KI Landscape Board was currently issuing formal cautions to property owners that hold illegal dams.

### Action

6) update the wording of the second paragraph of section 6.2 to reflect a firmer stance on formal cautions.

*Responsible Officer:* B Ibbotson

*The board:*

**2.8.1 endorsed** the policy position of **No Retrospective WAA Approvals**.

**Moved:** A Lowe      **Seconded:** J Klein      **Carried**

**2.8.2 approved** the draft policy with minor amendment to reflect a firmer stance on formal cautions.

**Moved:** C West      **Seconded:** A Lowe      **Carried**

## 2.9 Risk & Performance Committee Update

- The Risk and Performance Committee Update was taken as read, and no further discussion followed.

*The board:*

**2.7.1 noted** the update from the Risk and Performance Committee meeting held on 13 November 2025

**Moved:** L Muffet      **Seconded:** C West      **Carried**

## Standing Items

### 3.1 Work Health and Safety Update

- The paper was provided prior to the meeting was taken as read by the board, with no new incidences. M Garrod noted the agency is receiving great support from the OCPSE particularly in relation to psychosocial wellbeing.
- Discussion followed:
  - S Day noted that the report states board members should have a comprehensive understanding of risk exposure and mitigation strategies but does not feel they currently do. M Garrod confirmed that prior to the onboarding of the new board members in February, board members undertook due diligence training and are due for a refresher. The board supported redoing this training.

**Action**

7) Due Diligence refresher training to be booked for board members. Previous presentation package to be shared with board members.

*Responsible Officer: E Vidau*

*The board:*

**3.1.1 noted** the WHS update as at 1 December 2025.

**Moved: S Day                      Secoded: A Lowe**

**Carried**

**3.2**

**Financial Overview**

- The financial overview was taken as read, S Jenkins noted:
  - A minor amendment to the reporting was noted to ensure a streamlined amount of strategic information is provided to the board
  - The carry-over requested submitted in July for \$70,000 has now been approved.
  - The board is currently on track for a \$40,000 underspend at years end.
  
- Board discussion followed:
  - M Garrod noted that feedback from other boards indicated that very few carryover requests were approved, and that HFLB's success was attributed to strong financial forecasting and planning.

*The board:*

**3.2.1 noted** the Finance update as at 1 December 2025.

**Moved: C West                      Secoded: J Klein**

**Carried**

**3.3 Board Member Activity Register**

The Board Member Activity Register was taken as read.

*The board:*

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

**Moved: A Lowe                      Secoded: L Muffet**

**Carried**

**3.4 Board Forward Agenda**

- The Board Forward Agenda was taken as read. M Garrod noted:
  - The November site visit with K Telfer was cancelled. Staff hope to reschedule in the new year, but no preliminary dates have been provided at this stage.
  - Nature risk assessment workshop had been set for March, but much of the presentation to the board on the *Action Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities in the Hills and Fleurieu Region* has covered a great deal of what otherwise might have been covered in that workshop. Board Performance Review is now likely to take the March 2026 workshop slot.

*The board:*

**3.3.1 noted** the Forward Agenda.

**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**

- 4.1
  - Board Performance review
    - The board performance structure was discussed at the recent Risk and Performance Committee meeting.
    - M Garrod sent an email with a 30-minute confidential online questionnaire for completion by the board members by 19 December 2025.
    - The feedback will be reviewed and presented back to the board at a workshop or meeting in the first quarter of 2026.

**Action**

8) Board members to complete the confidential questionnaire email by 19 December.

*Responsible Officer: Board Members*

- General Manager Performance Review
  - D Greenhough and M Garrod have amended the model of the General Manager performance review. Annually the full performance review will take place with D Greenhough and KPI's will be set, this will then be disseminated to the board for comment prior to sign off and review with B Bruce.
  - A more informal mid-year performance review will then follow.
  - L Muffet queried if the deputy chair was involved in reviews to provide additional insight. D Greenhough confirmed this had not been considered, though M Garrod agreed this could be useful.
- Annual Report – Out of session approval
  - Annual report was sent out of session to board members for approval, confirming we received an appropriate number of responses to gain a quorum. Formal approval in session was carried by the board.

**Moved: C West**

**Seconded: S Day**

**Carried**

- Correspondence
  - A Lowe noted correspondence received from Cox Creek Observatory and requested further information on this correspondence, as they had also received related communication.

**Action**

9) A Lowe to follow up with M Harper on Cox Creek Observatory Correspondence.

*Responsible Officer: A Lowe*

**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 February  
**Venue:** Mount Barker Community Centre – Training Room
- 6.2 **Meeting close** – 12:33pm

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