



Ordinary Council Meeting 25 February 2026

AGENDA

Meeting Notice

To the Shire President and Councillors,

Please be advised that an Ordinary Council Meeting of the Shire of Augusta Margaret River will be held in 41 Wallcliffe Road, Margaret River on 25 February 2026, commencing at 5:30 pm.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea Selvey".

ANDREA SELVEY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River acknowledges we are on Wadandi and Pibelmen Boodja, whose ancestors and their descendants are the traditional owners of this country.

We acknowledge the Wadandi and Pibelmen have been custodians since the land was soft (creation times) and continue to perform age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.

The Shire is committed to Aboriginal Australians sharing fairly and equitably in the region's cultural, social, environmental and economic future.

Our Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Community
- Excellence

Community Vision

One community, standing together with nature.

Focus Areas

Caring for our natural environment

From preserving and restoring biodiversity to acting on climate change, we are committing to undertaking action and partnering with local groups to keep our environment healthy.

Managing our built environment

We're placing a strong focus on ensuring our built environment is functional, sustainable, accessible, safe and sympathetic to the surrounds, and promotes active lifestyles and community connection.

Looking after our growing community

To meet the needs of a growing population, we'll be working hard to support community wellbeing through advocating for better access to healthcare, childcare, aged care and education services, and partnering on community programs, events and cultural connection.

ATTENTION/DISCLAIMER

This agenda has yet to be dealt with by the Council. The Recommendations shown at the foot of each item have yet to be considered by the Council and are not to be interpreted as being the position of the Council. The minutes of the meeting held to discuss this agenda should be read to ascertain the decision of the Council.

Statements or decisions made at Council meetings or briefings should not be relied on (or acted upon) by an applicant or any other person or entity until subsequent written notification has been given by or received from the Shire of Augusta Margaret River. Without derogating from the generality of the above, approval of planning applications and building permits and acceptance of tenders and quotations will only become effective once written notice to that effect has been given to relevant parties. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River expressly disclaims any liability for any loss arising from any person or body relying on any statement or decision made during a Council meeting or briefing.

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

2. ATTENDANCE

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

The *Local Government Act 1995* places specific obligations on both elected members and employees who have financial, proximity or impartiality interest in an item before a meeting. These provisions support the principle that elected members and employees must be open and above reproach.

Where a member has disclosed a financial or proximity interest in any item, they must leave the Chamber for consideration of that item.

Where a member has disclosed an impartiality interest in an item, they may remain in the Chamber. The member is required to bring an independent mind to the item and decide impartially on behalf of the Shire of August Margaret River and its community.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4.1. Response To Previous Public Questions Taken On Notice

4.1.2 Response to Dion Harrington – LPP23

At the 28 January 2026 General Electors Meeting, Mr Dion Harrington asked eight questions in relation to LPP23. The Shire President took three of the questions on notice and the responses are printed below:

Q: How will the Shire ensure that LPP23 explicitly protects existing and future land and water uses, including neighbouring landowners' development rights, from reverse-amenity impacts arising from subsequent industrial-scale renewable development?

There's a reasonably complex interaction between the draft code that's been put out by the state, which infers some potential changes to planning legislation about those reverse sensitivity type impacts and what that means for development rights on other people's land. The LPP23 in itself can't really address the issue in the way that the code and the regulation changes may in the future, however it will be a relevant issue for the code to review in terms of how it deals with development separation requirements in LPP23.

Q: Will the Shire recognise dark-sky values as an environmental, cultural and tourism asset and incorporate explicit night-time and aviation-lighting protections into LPP23?

It is assumed that this question relates to dark sky principles and the lighting of towers. There's some balance there with CASA requirements and impacts on aviation safety and those issues. There is the potential to limit lighting utilising a risk-based evaluation.

Q: How will the Shire ensure that directly impacted landowners are identified, consulted individually and given weighted consideration, rather than being treated the same as general community respondents?

There is an expectation that there is pre-consultation with surrounding landowners undertaken by the proponent for a significant proposal like this. It in this instance, normally we're consulting on a planning application and we're seeking to discover issues. We recognise that in this instance there are scalable impacts on the surrounding community based on location and proximity. and we have to that end recorded the location of where the submissions are coming from because we do think that's an important point.

4.1.2 Response to Scott Baxter - Scott River Windfarm Development

At the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting, Mr Scott Baxter asked the following questions in relation to the Scott River Windfarm Development. The questions were taken on notice and the responses are printed below:

Q1: Will Council commit to meaningful, enforceable setbacks for 250m turbines and acknowledge many Augusta Margaret River blocks are too small to host turbines of this scale without harming neighbours?

The Council's position on setbacks for large scale wind turbines will be formally considered through the Shire's draft Local Planning Policy 23 following submissions, evaluation and reporting to Council in February.

Q2: Will Council obtain and publish clear advice on aerial firefighting constraints around 250m structures in high-risk areas?

The issue of aerial firefighting response is considered in the State's draft Renewable Energy Planning Code. When considering draft Local Planning Policy 23 following consultation it will be considered whether there is any policy content required given the proposed content of the code.

Q3: Will Council ensure the Policy is environment first?

The draft Local Planning Policy 23 contained important environmental considerations. Whether these considerations need additional measures or review following consultation will be considered when further evaluating final policy content.

4.1.3 Response to Erin Hutton - Scott River Windfarm Development

At the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting, Ms Erin Hutton asked the following questions in relation to the Scott River Windfarm Development. The questions were taken on notice and the responses are printed below:

Q1: Can Council clarify how Synergy has assessed the risk that dewatering during construction could lower groundwater levels beyond the immediate turbine footprint?

Synergy have provided a Preliminary Acid Sulfate Soils and Dewatering Management Plan from PTG Consulting as part of the development application.

The consultant has used modelling to predict the extent outwards of drawdown in relation to the depth of the dewatering. There are a few different inputs and assumptions that go into the modelling and is quite technical. Further details of these can be provided if required. The modelling accommodates for drawdown beyond the immediate turbine footprint.

Synergy have outlined the potential risks of dewatering which are probably most clearly outlined in their Referral Supporting Document (RSD) to the EPA (page 72). They have also outlined mitigation strategies to address any impacts on inland waterways and in, Section 8 & 9, groundwater dependent ecosystems.

Here is an extract from their mitigation measures:

Turbine and other mast/tower foundations have been designed to limit dewatering requirements, while achieving the necessary mass and stability. Three foundation options are being considered (Section 2.2.1.1; Figure 2-3). The specific foundation option chosen for each turbine/mast/tower location will be determined based on detailed site investigation and revised modelling to ensure that any proposed dewatering would not result in significant impacts to groundwater or surface water quality. Dewatering will be managed to ensure drawdown does not exceed 2 mbgl at the perimeter of each foundation nor exceed 0.1 m beyond 100 m from any dewatering location. Below ground foundations will only be used where it is confirmed that the proposed turbine/mast/tower location would not require

dewatering. Borrow pits will be excavated above the groundwater level, and so will not require dewatering, and will be backfilled to a level that prevents groundwater seepage and ponding during high rainfall periods (page 73 of the RSD)

An Acid Sulfate Soil and Dewatering Management Plan (ASSDWMP) is proposed by Synergy to be provided as a condition of approval when further site-specific details can be incorporated.

The Shire has formally requested further information from Synergy as of 27 January 2026 (this week) in relation to this issue.

Q2: As the Shire develops its renewable energy policy, can Council clarify where legal and financial responsibility would lie if renewable energy infrastructure causes environmental and groundwater damage?

The allocation of liability will always depend upon the individual facts and circumstances of a particular case, but generally speaking, liability for damage caused by any development will fall on the person who is undertaking the development. This may sometimes extend to sub-contractors of the developer but will rarely extend to passive landowners or approving authorities.

4.1.4 Response to Mark Murray - Weir Trial Closure Community Consultation Report

At the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting, Mr Mark Murray asked the following question in relation to the Weir Trial Closure. The question was taken on notice and the response is printed below:

Q1: During the trial, how will Rangers handle illegal camping on a day to day basis and what is the hierarchy of their core role?

It is a complex challenge, and managing illegal camping and wider pressures in the community resulting from population growth and visitation will be an ongoing process.

Shire officers have been working with a community working group to develop a three-year roadmap, of which some actions have already been delivered for this season. This roadmap is available in Council minutes and will be published on our website in the coming weeks.

The officer's recommendation does take into account the community's views, and we've moved away from recommending the 24/7 vehicle closure to instead implementing a no-parking zone in that area from dusk till dawn. Council voted in favour of this option.

During the summer months Rangers undertake an early morning and evening illegal camping patrol daily, infringing people who are illegally camping. Two other daily activities are patrolling dog exercise areas and firebreak notice inspections. Alongside these daily activities, Rangers manage a wide variety of situations in our community — including abandoned vehicles, dog attacks and other issues relating to public safety and amenity. As Rangers are tasked with upholding public safety and amenity, they do get drawn into managing other events. Ranger deployment is guided by a risk-based approach. Issues that present a higher risk to public safety, such as dog attacks or roaming livestock, are prioritised, with Rangers responding accordingly.

Rangers will be conducting random patrols at the Barrett Street weir throughout the season, as schedules and other priorities permit. They will also respond to community complaints, so we encourage our community members to report concerns through the Shire website so Rangers can respond accordingly.

4.2. Public Question Time

In accordance with Reg. 7(4)(a) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, members of the public in attendance at the meeting may ask a question in relation to any matter over which the municipality of Shire of Augusta Margaret River has jurisdiction or involvement.

A maximum of 30 minutes will be allowed for public question time. To ensure that people are given equal and fair opportunity and time is used efficiently, questions will be limited to two per person if there are a number of people wishing to ask questions.

If a question requires research or cannot be answered at the meeting, it will be taken on notice and a written response will be provided. A summary of the question and response will be printed in the agenda of the next Ordinary Council Meeting.

5. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

6.1. Ordinary Council Meeting Held 28 January 2026

7. DEPUTATIONS

A deputation is a presentation by a member of the public regarding an item on the agenda. A deputation must be requested in advance of the meeting and approved by the Shire President.

Each deputation will have a maximum of five minutes for presentation.

8. PETITIONS

Pursuant to clause 4.6 of the Shire's Standing Orders Local Law, the only motions in respect of a petition are:

- (a) the petition be received;
- (b) a report on the petition be prepared; or
- (c) the petition be referred to a Committee.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDING MEMBER

10. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

11. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND OFFICER REPORTS

11.1

Chief Executive Officer

Nil

11.2

Sustainable Development and Infrastructure

11.2.1. AMENDMENT 1 TO LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY

Location/Address	Lot 31 Kudardup, Lot 32 Kudardup, Lot 200 Bussell Hwy, Kudardup
Applicant/Landowner	Kudardup Village Pty Ltd, Wilf's Ridge Pty Ltd
File Reference	PTY/13320, PTY/13956
Report Author	Matt Cuthbert, Manager Planning and Development Services
Authorising Officer	Nick Logan, Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure
Authority/Discretion	Quasi-Judicial

IN BRIEF

- A proposal has been received which requests that an amendment be made to the Shire's Local Planning Strategy 2036 (LPS2036) in order to provide for the expansion of the Kudardup settlement.
- The proposal is to identify approximately 90ha of additional land on the western side of the Bussell Hwy.
- A change to the local planning strategy is the first step toward the eventual urban development of the site, identify that the site is appropriate for this purpose, enabling subsequent steps in the planning process to be undertaken (scheme amendment, structure planning and subdivision).
- The proponent has put the proposal forward primarily on the basis that it will enable the population expectations of State Planning Policy 6.1 to be met.
- If Council does not initiate the Amendment it will not progress any further and there is no 'right of review'.
- It is recommended that amendments to the Local Planning Strategy be considered in a holistic way, taking a considered approach based on the most up to date Census data and analysis of land supply across the whole Shire rather than for an individual townsite in isolation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Does not progress with an amendment to Local Planning Strategy 2036; and
 2. Notes that further investigations on the need or otherwise to review Local Planning Strategy 2036 will be undertaken in 2027 following the release of the 2026 Census Data.
-

LOCATION PLAN



Figure 1 – Kudardup aerial imagery and approximate area of proposal in red (2025)

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is in essence a request for the Shire to commence a process for amending its Local Planning Strategy, to identify land to the west of the Kudardup hamlet for the purposes of future development. The additional land would be identified as KU4 and would have the potential for 79 rural residential sized lots.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on 11 December 2024, Council resolved to adopt Amendment No. 77 to Local Planning Scheme No. 1 (subject to minor modifications) with respect to a nearby site at Lot 2 Fisher Road, Kudardup. That land is identified by LPS2036 as being suitable for subdivision into 144 lots and unlike the subject land is located on the eastern side of Bussell Highway.

Despite the Shire's desire to maximise the efficient use of this site for housing, advice was provided by the DPLH that due to the recommendations of the Government Sewerage Policy 2019 (GSP2019) lots would need to have a minimum lot size of 1ha. The result is that Lot 2 Fisher Road will have a potential yield of 50 lots meaning that provision of residential lots at Kudardup will be approximately 100 less than had previously been anticipated. As a consequence, the proponent has now sought to account for this 'shortfall' at Lots 31, 32 and 200 (KU4).

In August of 2024, Council considered a similar proposal to increase the size of the Karridale Hamlet by an additional 85 lots. Because of the way the site to which this application relates was designated, it required a Scheme Amendment only (not an Amendment to the Local Planning Strategy). Despite not being supported by Council, the WAPC and Minister approved this amendment.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 (the Regulations)

The Regulations identify that the Shire is the only entity capable of amending the Local Planning Strategy, setting the Strategy apart from Local Planning Scheme amendments which can be proposed by landowners and 'adopted' by Council. It states:

17 (1) A local planning strategy may be amended by an amendment to the strategy prepared by the relevant local government and endorsed by the Commission.

Therefore, in essence the proposal before the Council is a request for the Shire to progress its own amendment to the Strategy.

If Council decide to progress the amendment, it will be subject to the same processes that are required by the Regulations for preparation of a new Strategy, including a consultation period and final determination by the WAPC.

If Council decide not to progress with the Amendment, there is no 'right of review' and neither the WAPC nor the Minister can compel the Shire to do so. In fact, there is no procedural requirement for Council to formally consider the request. This has been done however in the interests of fairness and transparent decision making.

Leeuwin Naturaliste Sub-Regional Strategy (LNSRS)

The LNSRS sets high level strategies for growth within in the subregion. The subregional strategy map identifies the site as rural and landscape protection.

The LNSRS does not prescribe population limits for townsite classifications with Kudardup being identified as a 'village'.

State Planning Policy 6.1 - Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge

SPP6.1 identifies Kudardup as a Hamlet, with a potential population of less than 500 people.

Settlement Type	Settlement	Permanent Population (unless otherwise stated)*	Commercial and Community Services	Infrastructure	Function (see also policies)
Hamlet	Carbump River, Metricup***, Kudardup, Karridale	Less than 500	Convenience services and community focus.	Innovative alternatives to conventional reticulated water, sewerage and power will be considered	Function as rural service centre, focus for rural living and tourist facilities. Kudardup and Karridale also suitable for Enclaves.

Figure 2 – Excerpt from LNRSP 6.1

Kudardup Settlement Strategy

The Kudardup Settlement Strategy, endorsed in 2010 was prepared to guide the development of Kudardup in accordance with the LNRSP. It identifies two lots (KU1 and KU3) as having development potential sufficient to enable a future population of up to 500 persons. It relevantly notes that:

“Review of the Kudardup Strategy will take place in 10-15 years, or following the successful operation of the ‘hamlet’, where it can be demonstrated that there is a clear need for additional expansion lands. Any future development to the west of Bussell Highway must be carefully considered as part of any strategy review.”

As part of the Settlement Strategy, development was confined to a single side of the highway to avoid traffic, connectivity and urban design challenges that come with a townsite being 'split' by the highway.

The Kudardup Settlement Strategy was reviewed as part of the preparation of LPS2036, completed in 2022.

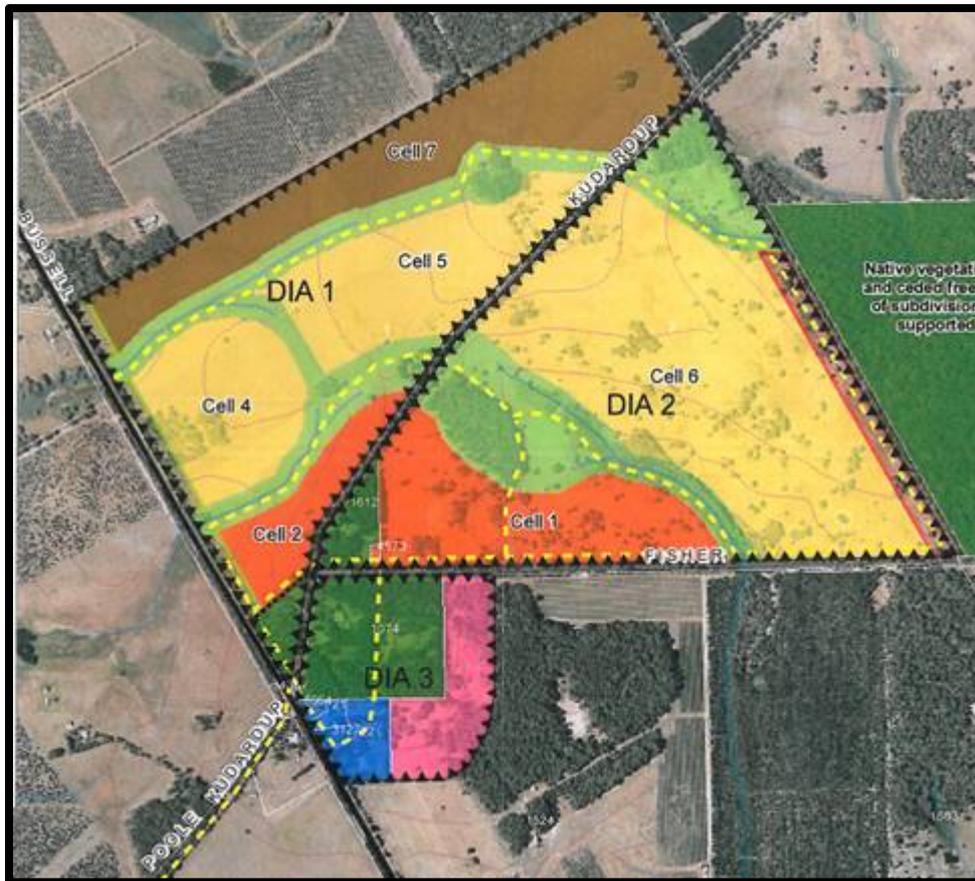


Figure 3 – Kudardup Settlement Strategy Map

Local Planning Strategy 2036 (LPS2036)

The site to which this proposal relates is designated as 'Rural' by LPS2036.

The areas identified for inclusion as part of the subject proposal are identified by the proponent as being within future planning precinct 'KU4'.

SHIRE OF AUGUSTA MARGARET RIVER
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA 25 FEBRUARY 2026

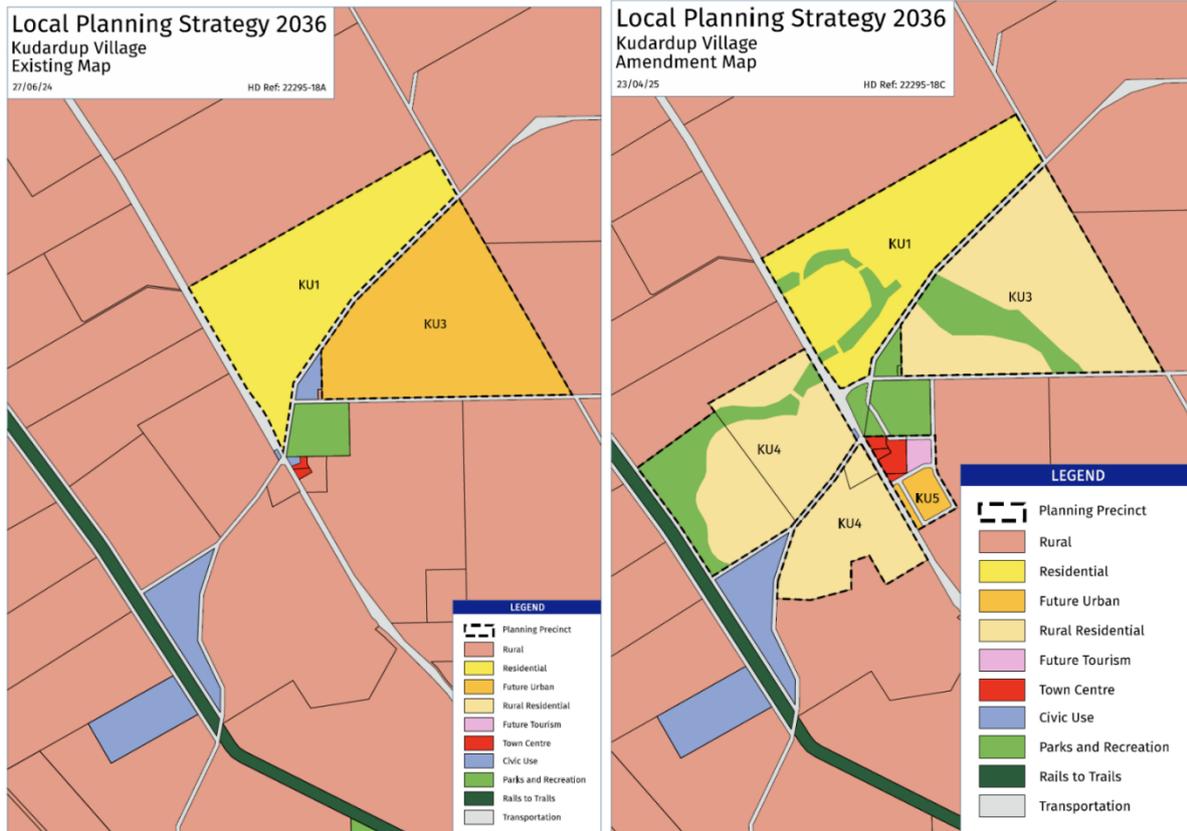


Figure 4 – Existing and proposed LPS2036 map

Without further changes being made, the lot yield across KU1 and KU3 will be 194 which is 96 less than initially anticipated by LPS2036 due to the effects of the GSP2019, on the lot yield from KU3.



Figure 5 – Extent of the Sewerage Sensitive Area designation relative to the Kudardup Townsite

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: Managing our built environment

Outcome Statement B1: Townsites develop in a manner that retains their unique identity and encourages community connection, safety and vibrancy

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

If Council resolves to progress with an amendment, it will be subject to a consultation process lasting 21 days as set out by the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.

The proponent has undertaken 'pre-consultation' with landowners likely to be impacted by the proposal. Two landowners east of the Bussell Hwy are supportive of the changes proposed to the town centre configuration whilst two indicated objections. The owner of Lot 1, West of the Bussell Highway indicated support. Lots 31 and 32 (west of the Hwy.) are understood to be owned by the proponent.

The proposal has been put forward together with reports prepared by suitably qualified consultants relating to:

- Environment
- Bushfire
- Geotechnical characteristics
- Suitability for effluent disposal
- Visual impact

- Noise
- Servicing

These reports have been reviewed by Shire officers, however, would benefit from further review by the relevant State Government agencies. If Council does decide to progress with the amendment, these reports will be referred to government agencies during the consultation period.

In terms of broader consultation, feedback received relating to the Strategic Community Plan has again highlighted the farming community's attitudes towards residential expansion where the result creates an urban/rural interface with agricultural land. Farmers believe that this has the potential to lead to restrictions on agriculture and neighbourly disputes.

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

Consistency with the Planning Framework

The WAPC has produced Guidelines to assist with the preparation and review of Local Planning Strategies. They state that amendments to Local Planning Strategies should ordinarily be progressed at the time which the associated Scheme is subject to its 5-yearly review.

The Guidelines also set out circumstances where an amendment may be warranted in advance of a review being:

- The local planning strategy is required to be updated to implement changed or newly created policy under the State Planning Framework.
- The WAPC or the local government considers that changes to the local planning strategy are required for the purposes of orderly and proper planning (for example consistency with a proposed amendment to the local planning scheme).
- The local planning strategy needs to be updated to address new or emerging local planning issues or opportunities that the local planning strategy had not previously contemplated or addressed through its planning directions and actions, or particular directions or actions have changed or are no longer relevant.
- The local planning strategy needs to be updated to support implementation of the Strategic Community Plan consistent with the state planning framework.
- The local planning strategy needs to include updated information on demographic and development trends.
- The completion of studies and investigations identified as actions in the local planning strategy may require the local planning strategy to be updated to reflect the outcomes of those actions.

The Shire's view is that none of the circumstances listed are applicable, noting that even if they were, the 'Guidelines' would not compel the Shire to make a change to the Strategy.

Is there a 'shortfall'?

The proponent's view is that because the ultimate population of Kudardup is (without further rezoning of land) likely to be less than 500 persons, that the objectives of the LNRSP will not be met. Further, the proponent argues that this in turn will reduce the critical mass of population necessary to support commercial development within the Kudardup townsite.

With regard to the population expectations, the figure of 500 used in the LNRSP is not a 'target'. In fact – it is expressed in a way that acknowledges that the population will be "*less than 500*". A lesser population is not seen by the Shire to fundamentally change the function of Kudardup as a hamlet as was originally intended and does not require additional land to be subdivided to achieve that outcome.

With regard to commercial viability, the proponent has not been able to provide any information to confirm that (if the proposal was supported) it would result in a critical mass of people sufficient enough for convenience type commercial development to become viable. They do however state that a larger population would make this 'more likely'. Notwithstanding their importance as social hubs the feasibility of small commercial centres has been significantly impacted by online shopping and 'big box' type stores. The location of Kudardup relative to larger population centres such as Augusta further diminishes the prospect that convenience shopping opportunities will eventuate. Viewed in the context of these contemporary commercial realities, it would be unrealistic to expect that the hamlet of

Kudardup (at either the existing or proposed scale) would be likely to support a thriving commercial hub and thus expanding the 'footprint' of the town for this reason alone would not be advisable.

Shire's role in the Strategic Planning Process

The land use planning system in Western Australia is highly centralised and becoming ever more so. Most strategic planning tools available to Local Governments are subject to oversight by the State Government and the Western Australian Planning Commissions' interventions can range from a requirement for substantial modifications to plans prepared at the local level through to outright refusal.

The decision as to whether or not to amend a Local Planning Strategy is unique in this regard. This decision rests solely with Council. If the decision is not favorable to the proponent, there is no right of review to SAT. There is no capacity for the WAPC to compel the Local Government to change its Strategy, unless in the context of a formal review. If Council declines to progress with the Amendment, it does not move forward in any respect and does not need to be sent to the WAPC for their consideration.

Unlike a Scheme amendment, which can be sought by a proponent and then 'adopted' by Council, the Shire is the only entity able to progress an amendment to the Local Planning Strategy. This is not to say that groups or individuals cannot seek to motivate the Shire to make amendments although there is no compulsion for the Shire to do so.

It is well understood that the Shire's population continues to grow at pace. It is also noted that in the short to medium term, the land available for subdivision and development in Kudardup could be fully implemented. Projections contained with the Shire's Local Planning Strategy show however that there is ample land available across the Shire to provide for demand until at least 2036, and most likely—well beyond. This highlights the benefit of the Shire maintaining an orderly approach to Local Planning Strategy amendments, which should be undertaken at regular and planned intervals and with a view to land availability across the Shire and not just one location.

Concept Plan

The proponent has prepared a concept plan to give an indication as to how the land within KU4 could be developed (see Figure 5). The design shows larger lots around the periphery graduating to 5,000 sqm lots at the Bussell Highway frontage. Large tracts of land are identified as being public open space and would be ceded free of cost for this purpose.

A new road connection to the Bussell Highway would be required and hence would require the support of Main Roads. It is understood that the proponent has had early consultation with that agency. In order to satisfy bushfire requirements, two emergency access ways (EAW's) are denoted to allow access onto the highway in an emergency situation. Whilst the proponent has conveyed that Main Roads have generally been supportive to this point, the Shire has observed increasing levels of opposition towards new connection points with Bussell Highway and their final view would be sought should Council wish to progress the proposal to the consultation stage.

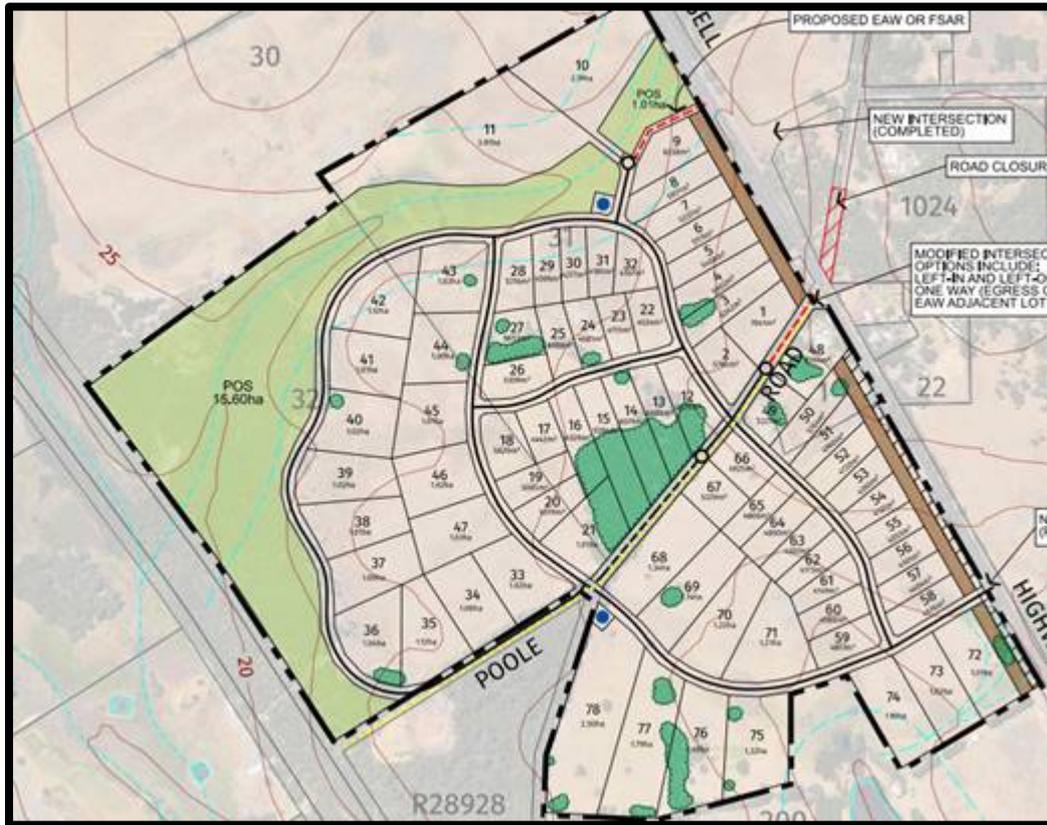


Figure 5 – Draft Concept Plan

It is important that undue importance not be placed on the concept plan, given that even in the event that the amendment did progress, it would not carry any statutory weight. A formal 'Structure Plan' would likely be required either concurrently with, or at some time after, the land was rezoned and this would create an opportunity for the Shire to influence design outcomes, accordingly, noting that the WAPC would be the final decision maker.

Minor Changes to LPS2036

A less significant change to LPS2036 put forward by the proponent is the introduction of KU5 for the purposes of low density residential (2,000m²) lots (see figures 3 and 6). Changes are proposed to the size of land identified for tourism and town centre use as well as suggested road connections with both Fisher Road and Bussel Highway.

The rationale for the changes is understood to be to the creation of a townsite 'core' which would typically accommodate commercial uses and smaller lot sizes. Whilst some of the changes warrant further consideration, this ought to be subject to the same holistic consideration suggested for KU4 which would best be done as part of a review of LPS2036.

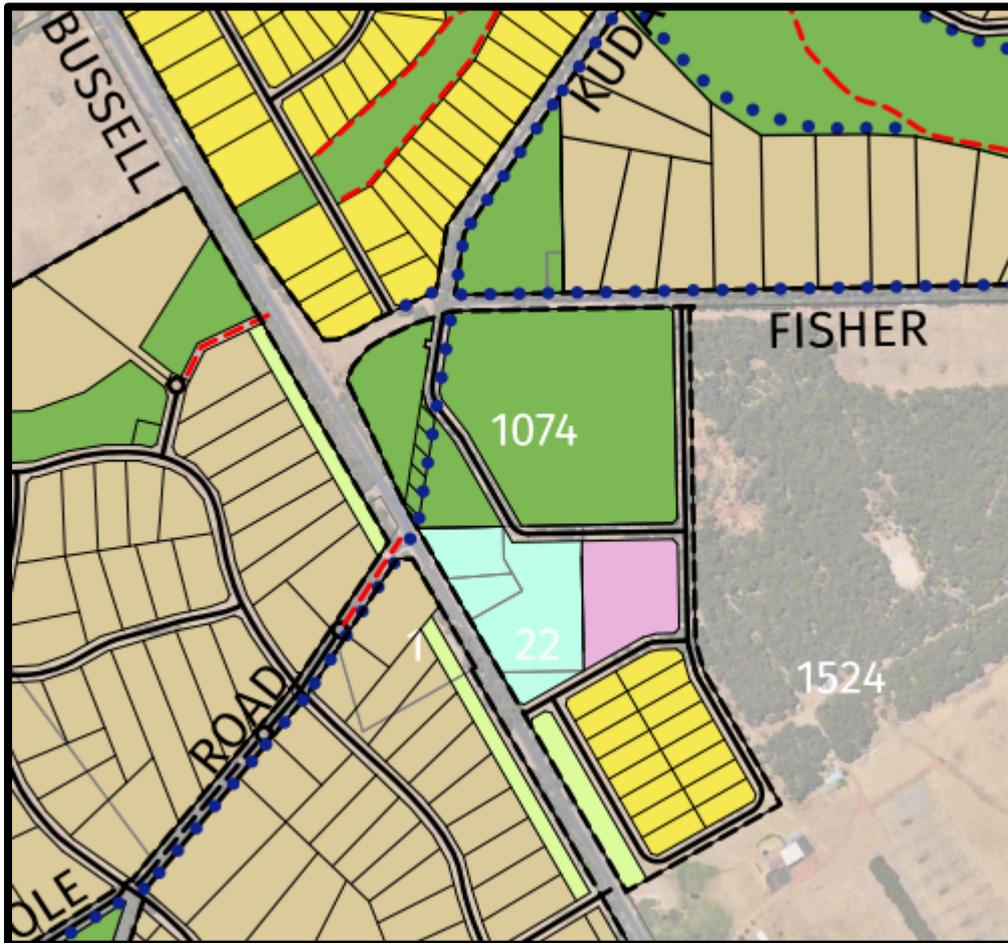


Figure 6 – Changes to townsite 'core'

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

The developer contribution requirements of LPS1 will need to be extended to encompass the 'new' development area if the proposal is approved.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

All growth has environmental consequences. Decisions regarding where further growth should occur are best undertaken at the broadest possible scale to ensure locations with the least significant environmental consequences are prioritised.

ADVOCACY

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Does not progress with an amendment to Local Planning Strategy 2036; and
2. Notes that further investigations on the need or otherwise to review Local Planning Strategy 2036 will be undertaken in 2027 following the release of the 2026 Census Data.

11.2.2. RENEWABLE ENERGY LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Location/Address	Shire Augusta Margaret River
Applicant/Landowner	N/A
File Reference	ENV/71
Report Author	Tessa Ashworth, Planning Officer
Authorising Officer	Nick Logan, Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure
Authority/Discretion	Legislative

IN BRIEF

- Council granted approval to advertise the draft LPP 23 – Large-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities at the November 2025 Council meeting. Public consultation was carried out via YourSay in December 2025.
- Updates to the draft policy have been made in response to community comment, advice from state agencies and to align with the state’s draft Renewable Energy Planning Code.
- The amended Local Planning Policy 23 – Large-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities is presented to Council for final adoption.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Final LP P 23 - Large-scale Renewable Energy Facilities Policy [11.2.2.1 - 8 pages]
2. LPP23 Renewable Energy Facilities Community Engagement Report [11.2.2.2 - 84 pages]

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council pursuant to clause 4 Part 2, Division 2 of the Deemed Provisions of Local Planning Scheme No.1 to adopt with amendments Local Planning Policy 23 – Large-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities (as shown at Attachment 1).

LOCATION PLAN

Nil

BACKGROUND

Alongside the Australian Government’s commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 – and its interim target of a 62–70% emissions reduction by 2035 – the State Government has committed to phasing out state-owned coal-fired power generation by 2030. To support this transition, a plan is underway for the South-West Interconnected System (SWIS), focusing on strengthening grid reliability and increasing renewable energy integration.

Large-scale renewable energy is essential to the transition, providing the generation capacity needed to replace retiring coal, reduce reliance on gas, and meet rising electricity demand. These projects diversify the State’s energy mix, improve long-term system resilience, and support emissions-reduction targets. As a result, construction of large-scale solar, wind, and storage developments are accelerating throughout the State.

Consideration of a local planning policy was instigated by Council in mid-2025 in anticipation of the Shire receiving a development application from SynergyRED for a wind farm at Scott River, noting

that there was an absence of State Government policy to guide the assessment of this application at that time.

An issues and options paper was advertised for community consultation in September 2025 along with a survey. The results showed strong support in developing a local planning policy and indicated the key issues of importance to the community. Subsequently, the Draft Local Planning Policy 23 - Large-scale Renewable Energy Facilities (Draft LPP23) was approved for advertising by Council at the November 2025 council meeting.

The consultation resulted in 63 submissions responding directly to the YourSay online survey and 8 email submissions, including one submission on behalf of 23 people. The results of the consultation are discussed below and can be found within Attachment 2 - Engagement report.

Recent policy development at state level has occurred in the intervening period. In December 2025, the Department Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) released a draft Renewable Energy Planning Code (the draft Code) for public consultation. The consultation period finishes in April 2026. Correspondence with DPLH has indicated that the code is not expected to be finalised and implemented until the end of 2026.

The development application for the SynergyRED Scott River Wind Farm is currently under assessment. The date by which a recommendation must be provided to the Development Assessment Panel (DAP) is likely to be end of March 2026 at the earliest.

Updates to the Development Assessment Panel (DAP) Regulations instead mean that regional DAP applications can no longer be put before council for consideration, recommendations on DAP applications are now delegated to Shire officers. A local planning policy provides some opportunity for Council to have input on the rules that will guide the recommendations on DAP applications.

PROPOSAL

The aim of the policy is to create a contemporary framework against which applicable proposals can be assessed, which is consistent with the Shire's Strategic Community Plan, broader renewable energy planning policy, and is based on scientific evidence. The local planning policy provides scope to implement local level priorities but should be generally consistent with the (currently draft) state policy.

The Draft LPP has been amended in response to feedback from public consultation, advice from state agencies and the release of the State's draft Code. The final policy can be found at Attachment 1 – LPP23 – Large-scale Renewable Energy Facilities. Consistent with the draft LPP, guidance is provided on the following:

- Land Use
- Landscape and visual impacts
- Noise/amenity
- Environmental Impacts
- Emergency Management
- Construction and Decommissioning
- Community engagement and community benefit fund

Particular aspects which warrant changes from the policy as advertised relate to:

- Development envelopes – incorporating micro-siting requirements in response to the draft code and to address concerns raised by community members
- Separation distances – aligning the policy with the draft code and ensuring renewable energy facilities do not unreasonably constrain development potential on adjoining sites
- Landscape impacts – greater clarity provided on visual management considerations
- Noise
- Environment
- Decommissioning guarantees

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

The local planning policy will sit alongside the below considerations in determining an application for large scale renewable energy facilities.

- Shire's Local Planning Scheme No.1 and No.2
- Planning and Development (Local Planning Scheme) Regulations (2015) - Deemed provisions
- DPLH Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code / WAPC Position Statement: Renewable Energy Facilities

Additional legislation that are required to comply with includes:

- EPBC Act 1999 (Federal)
- Environmental Protection Act 1986 (WA)
- Planning and Development Act 2005 (WA)

The release of the State's Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code DPLH released its Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code (the draft Code) for consultation in December whilst the Shire had its draft LPP out for public comment. In brief, the draft Code sets out objectives and development provisions for energy infrastructure development (focused on wind farms) and identifies documentation required to accompany DAs.

It also proposes amendments to the Planning Regulations to allow the Code to be read into local planning schemes and to introduce development approval requirements for new noise-sensitive land uses (dwellings) near wind farms.

Additionally, it proposes amendments to the regulations that will make it mandatory for significant renewable energy projects (valued over \$20 million) to be decided under the State Significant Development pathway.

The draft Code makes clear the status of a local planning policy in relation to the Code:

- Where a local planning policy that was in effect prior to commencement of the Code is inconsistent with this Code, the provisions of the Code prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.
- Local governments must ensure local planning policies are: a. warranted due to a specific need relating to the locality or region; b. consistent with the Code and Element Objectives; and c. consistent with the LPS Regulations.

Weighting of the state draft planning code and the local planning policy in the DAP decision making

Some key points:

- The DAP must give due regard to any local or state planning policy that is relevant at the time of determination, however there is no strict requirement for the DAP to adhere to them.
- State planning policies/instruments will take precedence over local planning policies where there is any inconsistency.
- Draft policies or planning instruments can still be given weight even though they are not operative. Case law provides that weight can be given to a draft-planning instrument once it becomes 'seriously entertained'. In Western Australia, this usually occurs after advertising is completed – the further towards approval the document is, the more 'seriously entertained' it is considered to be.
- How much weight a planning policy has can also depend on things like when it was adopted, whether it was foreshadowed at lodgement and procedural fairness (whether the applicant had an opportunity to respond to the new policy if it materially affects the assessment).

In our case, with the adoption of a final local planning policy it should, in theory, have some considerable weight compared to that of the draft state planning code that is still out for consultation. However, it would be pertinent for the Shire to still give some consideration to the State's draft code given the political environment which is weighted towards state level decision making. Despite efforts for feedback from the DAP, it is essentially unknown how much weight the DAP will give to the final

local planning policy against the draft Code. The draft Code contains provisions that expressly set out the position that once adopted it will be the dominant consideration in large scale renewable policy.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

26 November 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting:

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

CR MUIR, CR D'ATH OM2025/155

That Council grants approval pursuant to clause 5 of the Deemed Provisions of Local Planning Scheme No.1 to adopt draft Local Planning Policy 23 – Large-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities for the purposes of advertising.

CARRIED 7/0

FOR: CRS BELL, BOLAND, D'ATH, FORTE, JEAN-RICE, MUIR, WINTER

AGAINST: NIL

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: Caring for our natural environment

Outcome Statement E1: Natural landscapes are protected and managed to preserve and restore their biodiversity and cultural values

Focus Area: Caring for our natural environment

Outcome Statement E4: The Shire and community are committed to climate action, reducing carbon emissions and achieving net zero

Focus Area: How we work

Outcome Statement W3: We actively listen, engage and collaborate with our whole community to better understand all perspectives to inform our decision-making

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Public consultation for the draft LPP was carried out via YourSay in December 2025 for 21 days. The community was asked whether they support the general direction of the policy and opportunity for further comments as to why/why not and any other comments or feedback. The Shire received 63 responses through this platform. In addition, 8 email submissions were received, including one on behalf of 36 people. Some in this group also made a submission through YourSay.

The sentiment to the draft LPP was somewhat negative, with many in the community feeling that it did not go far enough to protect against amenity and the environmental and landscape impacts of wind farms. 24% of responses agreed with the general direction of the policy, 68% did not, and 8% were unsure.

There was, however, recognition by the community of the need for a policy and therefore a rationale for continuing with a final policy.

Sentiment of the written responses.

Sentiment



Summary of comments received is as follows:

- Around 25% of respondents raised that impacts such as noise, shadow flicker and visual impact should be confined to within the boundaries of a host property.
- The importance of addressing environmental impacts, including risk of acid sulfate soils and protection of waterways were raised by a third of respondents. It was generally thought there should be greater controls on development for environmental protection.
- Noise was raised by 19% respondents, with concern that there is not enough protection from its impacts to neighbouring lots, as well as the need to consider infrasound.
- Importance of protecting agriculture was regularly raised by 16% of respondents.

- Other submissions included that small scale renewable energy should be prioritised over large scale corporate projects, the need to address bushfire risk, the landscape impacts of large-scale renewables and the need for a decommissioning guarantee.
- 49% of submitters were from the local area close to the proposed Scott River Wind Farm (being Augusta, Scott River, Courtney, Warner Glen, Nillup, East Augusta and Molloy Island areas).
- Understandably many of the comments were in response to the Scott River Wind Farm proposal. 24% of respondent directly referred to Synergy's Scott River proposal in their comments

Further details of community responses are incorporated into the discussion below under the relevant section. A list of verbatim responses can be found at **Attachment 2 – Engagement Report**.

In addition, advice was received from state agencies on the draft LPP. This included:

- DPLH planning code policy team
- DPLH visual impact and landscape team
- DWER noise branch

Details of this feedback are incorporated into the discussion below.

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

This discussion deals with the key issues raised during the consultation and how they are responded to in the policy.

Objectives

There have been minor revisions to the objectives of LPP23 to reflect a modified position post-consultation with policy content also amended in a complimentary manner.

Development Envelopes

Consultation identified the need for definitive plans to be provided with an application for a renewable energy facility which identify the siting of each turbine. It is not uncommon for industry to provide only a concept plan at DA stage with a large potential development envelope providing for greater flexibility, with more detailed plans and studies provided following procurement of infrastructure post approval. However, a level of certainty is required to be able to suitably assess impacts of a proposal under the planning system, particularly landscape impacts.

The State's draft Code includes a provision for micro-siting of turbines within a development envelope where a flexibility of 100m can be accommodated. This is considered to be reflective of industry standards and commonly used in approvals in the eastern states and allows for some movement to respond to site specific constraints that may arise prior to construction.

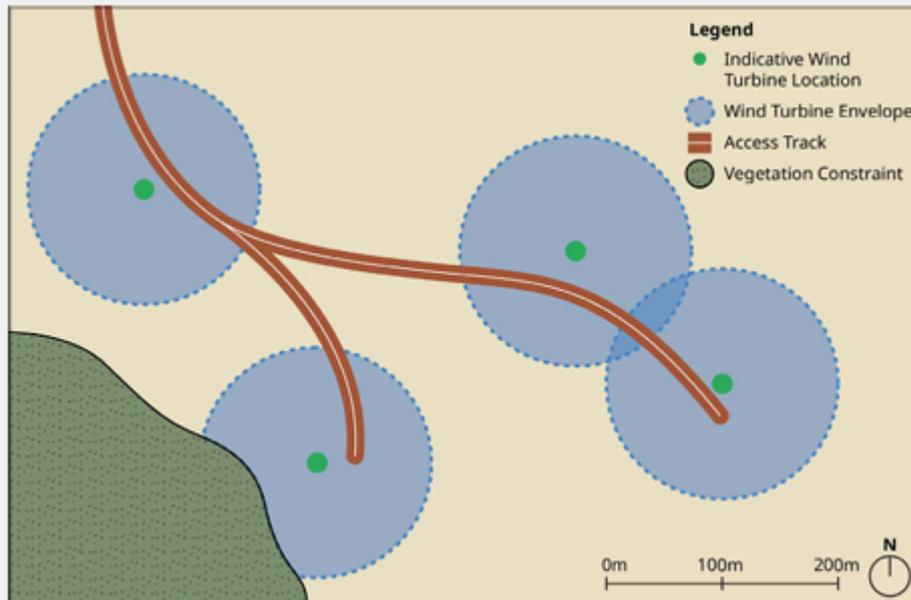


Figure 1: Wind turbine development envelopes and micro-siting

As this was not previously addressed in the draft LPP, in response to this issue raised, the following provision which is consistent with the draft Code has been added:

- Wind turbines shall be sited within development envelopes with a maximum 100m radius measured from the centre of the indicative turbine location, to accommodate for micro-siting.

Agriculture

Concerns raised in regard to protection of agricultural land include the impact of hydrology change, risk of acid sulphate soils, water and food security and impacts on livestock health.

The protection of agricultural land addresses submitter concerns under provisions 1.2 and 1.3 of the amended LPP, and impacts to water through the environmental provisions. No updates to the LPP have been made regarding agriculture.

Setbacks/separation distances

A consistent request by submitters was that all negative impacts should be confined within the host property boundary so that landowners in the area are not affected, calling for increased setbacks. Land holdings in the Shire were said by submitters to be too small to accommodate large-scale wind development. Impacts of concern were noise, shadow flicker, lighting, aviation impacts, construction traffic, visual impact, and constraints on development on neighbouring lots.

The LPP anticipates that some impacts will fall outside a property boundary as is the case for numerous development types across the Shire and is the approach within the State draft Code. The role of the LPP is seen to be one of managing and mitigating those impacts such that they are not an unreasonable imposition on the use of neighbouring properties and the community beyond. For example, noise standards anticipate that a development will create noise but set limits on how much and when noise might be heard by those in the surrounding area.

The State's draft Code is instructive in this regard. It requires that sufficient space be available for the development of a single house outside a wind farm's noise impact area. DPLH are proposing to change the planning regulations to trigger the need for planning approval of a single dwelling where it is in proximity to a wind farm. This mechanism is intended to enable locational oversight of dwellings on adjacent land.

The draft Code has a provision for a minimum setback of 1.1 times the height of a turbine to property boundaries and reserves (including roads) consistent with recommendation from the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner for the purpose of safety. The LPP has been amended to reflect this requirement.

The LPP has been updated with the following changes:

- Developments should be setback to ensure that they do not unreasonably constrain the development potential, including single houses, on non-host lots.
- Wind turbines shall be setback to property boundaries and reserves a minimum of 1.1 times the height of the turbine.

Landscape

Landscape was raised by respondents as needing greater protection under the local planning policy, with reference frequently made to the Scott River Wind Farm proposal.

The State's draft Code defines a 'significant view' or 'significant landscape' where it is formally recognised in any state or federal policy. The draft Code requires that impacts on significant views or landscapes are to be minimised or avoided. Areas which are not defined as significant are not worthy of the same protection in the State's view.

In the case of the Shire, the only recognised area of significance is the Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge as per SPP6.1. DPLH acknowledged that Shire's may have their own areas of significance which could be incorporated into a local planning policy. Therefore, a rewording of the definition of 'landscape significance' from the draft Code which broadens its application by reflecting the controls in the Shire's Planning Strategy has been added to the LPP as follows:

Significant landscape – means a landscape area or feature that holds special importance or value, may be formally recognised in international, national or state legislation or policy and which warrants consideration in planning and development decisions. It may include World Heritage areas, national and state parks and the coastal margin, together with Visual Management Area A and corridors identified in accordance with Appendix 2 of the Shire's Local Planning Strategy.

This definition is then referred to in a provision added to the policy as outlined below.

Regarding other changes to the draft LPP, feedback from DPLH was that the use of the NSW technical supplement (referenced in the Shire's draft Policy) for assessing landscape had limitations and was not supported by landscape architects or the state government. It was recommended that the landscape assessment should be within the requirements of the 'Visual Landscape Planning in Western Australia' manual. The specific principles relating to wind farms were advised as being outdated.

Draft LPP provisions relating to 'Social acceptance' and 'community perception' were considered vague and hard to define terms by some contributors. The requirement has been amended to reference 'social impacts' instead.

Consideration of dark sky principles have been added to the policy, and has addressed the issue that, in some circumstances, wind turbines may require aviation lighting.

The LPP has been updated with the following provisions:

- Where landscape impact is very high or high, and social impacts are identified as significant through submissions on a proposal, consideration will be given the strategic need for the facility in the context of projected demand and alternative energy potential in the SWIS.
- Wind turbines along the Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge will not be supported.
- Impacts to significant views or significant landscapes are to be minimised or avoided.
- Dark sky principles shall be followed, lighting on wind turbines where it results in visual impact is generally not supported.

Noise

The issue of noise was raised by 19% of respondents and included concerns around neighbours needing greater protections against noise impacts, infrasound, and the need for ongoing noise monitoring.

Noise is ordinarily regulated through State Noise Regulations, with decibel (dB(A)) limits in place depending on the time of day. Generally, this ranges from 45 (dB(A) during daylight hours to 35 (dB(A) overnight. Requirements are normally more generous during the day recognising higher levels or background noise and lower sensitivity.

The advertised version of the LPP included minimum noise limits for noise sensitive premises on and off site, with allowance for these limits to increase depending on the amount of background noise.

In addition to concerns surrounding noise raised by the community, specific feedback was also provided by the DWER Noise branch provided advice on the draft LPP, specifically that:

- They do not support the additional requirements in the draft LPP of “background by more than 5 dB(A)” as inconsistent with the Noise Regulations.
- The noise monitoring condition was considered overly onerous, noting that noise monitoring can be quite complex.
- The 40 dB(A) only applies to those dwellings that are included in the project development envelope. Private agreements cannot be used to “alter” prescribed standards.

The LPP has been amended to go above that prescribed in the Noise Regulations for 45dB(A) daytime level, to a consistent maximum of 35dB(A) at all times of day. This reflects the inherent 24 hours operational nature of wind farms but responds to the community concerns around noise.

In regard to noise monitoring, the State draft Code provides some recommendations as to how this should be addressed. Due to the high public interest in ensuring the monitoring is carried out in a transparent and easily accessible way, the amended policy incorporates this into the updated provision.

Infrasound is not addressed in the policy as there is currently no consistent evidence of adverse health effects associated with wind energy and low frequency noise. This includes findings by the National Health and Medical Research council (NHMRC) as Australian Government’s primary health and medical research funding agency. Similarly, the draft Code does not contain provision in respect to infrasound.

The following provisions have been added to the policy:

- In addition to provision 3.1, wind farms shall not exceed a daytime level of 35dB(A) at approved sensitive land uses. A maximum 40dB(A) level applies to dwellings on host lots.
- It is to be demonstrated how noise monitoring is to be carried out during the operation of the development, with noise reports made publicly available in a transparent manner, easily accessible for community members.

Environment

The community submissions demonstrate the very high value put on the environment with a third of submissions wanting the policy to ensure greater environmental protection. Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS) has been raised as a consistent concern in the construction of large-scale wind proposals, as was biodiversity and consideration of cumulative impacts.

Environmental regulation generally falls under the state government agencies (*Environmental Protection Act and Biodiversity Conservation Act*), while the Shire can add some provisions to provide greater protection, it is expected that any proponent will still need to comply with the relevant legislation.

ASS is one of the greatest concerns of the community. Effort has been made to address this in greater detail whilst being consistent with state government guidance. The WAPC has published planning guidelines to manage risk from ASS. A provision has been added to the LPP that reflects the planning guidance in the WAPC document where the location and the design of the proposal shall prioritise avoidance of ASS.

A more specific provision has also been added to the policy to avoid impacts to environmental assets, noting the impacts that groundwater drawdown can have on sensitive ecosystems.

The provision relating to greenhouse gas emissions has been updated to be less onerous and will be valid for community information on the emissions in the construction of the project as well as what is generated over its lifetime. This can help inform community.

Cumulative environmental impacts are inherently addressed in provision 4.1 where proposals must demonstrate that environmental values are protected. Provision 4.9 from the draft LPP has been removed as it was unclear in its intent.

The following provisions have been added to the policy:

- Proposals shall identify, manage and mitigate impacts on surface and groundwater with sufficient setback from areas of high ecological value including ESAs, ground water dependent ecosystems and waterways, to avoid impacts from drawdown or alteration to the hydrological regime.
- An acid sulphate soils investigation is required for soil disturbance or dewatering in areas where acid sulphate soils may be present. The results of the acid sulphate soils investigation should be taken into account in the design of the proposal, and disturbance of acid sulphate soils should be avoided wherever practicable.
- A greenhouse gas assessment showing embodied emissions in the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposal.

Bushfire

Calls for the policy to more strongly address bushfire risk was raised by some respondents.

The current draft LPP requires a proponent to reference both the WA Bushfire Guidelines and the Victorian Country Fire Associations document - *Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities* (CFA guidelines) which is considered industry best practice nationally. Renewable energy infrastructure is not explicitly covered by the WA Bushfire Guidelines.

The model requirements of the CFA guidelines are fairly prescriptive and set several standards including the need for spacing between turbines for aerial firefighting and between the different infrastructure components.

With the reference to the CFA guidelines in the policy, it is not considered necessary to apply extra provisions that reiterate what is required within this document. The state's draft Code also reflects the requirements of these guidelines.

However, in line with community concerns around environmental protection, the final policy has been updated to ensure infrastructure is located to avoid any clearing of native vegetation for the APZ.

To confirm, provision 5.1 inherently includes an expectation that Bushfire Risk Assessment is included with any proposal in consultation with DFES and local bushfire brigades.

The policy has been updated with the following changes:

- Renewable energy facility infrastructure shall be sited as to achieve an asset protection zone of BAL-29 while avoiding clearing of native vegetation.

Decommissioning guarantee

Many respondents called for greater certainty around a decommissioning guarantee.

The State's draft code provides guidance on decommissioning guarantees but has no specific provision as it generally does not fall within the remit of a planning policy. The guidance states that *proponents are expected to have appropriate financial arrangements (for example, bank guarantees or bonds) in place with host-land owners to meet their decommissioning obligations and ensure that infrastructure is responsibly removed or managed at the end of its operational life.*

The existing provision in the policy generally reflects state level guidance on this topic. Essentially, the Shire would want to ensure:

- a. That there is a mechanism for funds to be set aside for decommissioning
- b. That there is a legal agreement in place with a host lot owner for removal of the infrastructure at the end of life.

The policy provision has been amended to clarify that both of the above should be demonstrated by a proponent. While there have been calls by some in the community for greater detail in the policy in regard to decommissioning, this can be applied as a condition of approval.

A couple of provisions have been combined for clarity as they were repetitive and the following new provisions have been added to the policy:

- Renewable energy facilities shall be decommissioned and the site rehabilitated within 18 months of ceasing operation.
- Applicants should outline how funds will be directed into future decommissioning or refurbishment costs and provide evidence of a perpetual legal mechanism to secure the decommissioning at end of life.
- Decommissioning will ensure that infrastructure will be removed at the end of the project life, and the site rehabilitated to its pre-development condition or an agreed alternative suitable under the relevant zoning.

Inclusion of medium sized wind turbines in the policy

There has been some consideration as to whether medium sized wind turbines could be incorporated into the policy due to projected advancements in this space. For example, where a single turbine is used to power agricultural operations.

The definition of large-scale renewable energy facility under the LPP means where electricity is primarily generated for export to the grid, and excludes where energy produced principally provides a domestic, rural, business or community premises, and any on-selling to the grid is secondary. Meaning the example mentioned above is not covered by the LPP.

While the benefit of this scale of renewable energy development is acknowledged, it will generally be of lower impact due to the singular nature of a turbine, and it is recommended that this be addressed under the current local planning scheme. The Shire's planning scheme prescribes that medium sized wind turbines will require development approval due to being over the maximum height limits and can be assessed against the deemed provisions (standard planning considerations).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

Nil

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

Environmental

Greater clarity on key environmental standards in line with state and federal legislation which will enhance the integrity of environmental assessment process.

Social

There are significant social impacts associated with large scale renewable proposals. The preparation of policy gives those that will potentially experience those impacts to participate in the decision-making process.

Economic

The policy is intended to set guidance to address the effects of large-scale renewable development, enabling the economic implications for the local community to be addressed in the process. This includes setting an expectation around localising broader benefit through the community benefit component expectations.

ADVOCACY

The principal advocacy opportunities related to the proposed LPP are in:

- Making a submission to the State's Draft renewable Energy Planning Code (closing 10 April 2026).
- Requesting further action on developing a broader level strategy to guide the transition of the energy sector in WA.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The principal risk in supporting the officer's recommendation is that the local planning policy may, in future, be overridden by state policy with the finalisation of the state's Renewable Energy Planning Code.

The principal risk in not supporting the officer's recommendation is that the Council and local community have limited ability to contribute to the evaluation of large-scale renewable proposals.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council pursuant to clause 4 Part 2, Division 2 of the Deemed Provisions of Local Planning Scheme No.1 to adopt with amendments Local Planning Policy 23 – Large-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities (as shown at Attachment 1).

11.2.3. TURNER STREET JETTY – DETAILED DESIGN OUTCOMES AND PROCUREMENT DECISION

Location/Address	Albany Terrace / Turner Street, Augusta
Applicant/Landowner	Shire Augusta Margaret River
File Reference	TPT/9
Report Author	Nick Logan, Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure
Authorising Officer	Nick Logan, Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure
Authority/Discretion	Executive/Strategic

IN BRIEF

- The Turner Street Jetty has been closed to the public since March 2025 due to structural deterioration associated with aging marine infrastructure.
- Council has previously decided to progress through firstly concept design, and secondly detailed design, in concert with an extensive community engagement exercise.
- Following conceptual design and community engagement a strong preference for a like-for-like replacement evolved.
- Recognising significant cost and risk at the concept stage, detailed design options were progressed, together with seeking feedback on funding the project through deferral of the Turner Street foreshore wall replacement project from the 2025/26 budget.
- This report presents the survey results and design considerations for Council's consideration and includes an officer's recommendation to progress to procurement.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Turner Street Jetty Engagement Report and Your Say Report 13.02.2026 [11.2.3.1 - 35 pages]
2. Draft Design Drawings [11.2.3.2 - 6 pages]

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Supports progressing the replacement of the Turner Street Jetty through procurement for a suitable supplier based on the documented detailed design outcomes and opinion of probable cost.
 2. Considers the required budget amendment to the 2025-26 budget as part of the mid-year budget review.
-

LOCATION PLAN



Figure 1 – Turner Street Jetty

The Turner Street jetty is iconic infrastructure located in the Blackwood River at the confluence of Albany Terrace and Turner Street, Augusta. The jetty is partially outside of the Shire's jurisdiction but has been historically licensed to the Shire and for all purposes remains infrastructure under the Shire's care and control. The current license for the jetty in favour of the Shire is 0620.

Unlike the majority of other marine infrastructure in Augusta the jetty serves a limited transport/marine function but is highly regarded for the other recreational and amenity benefits it offers. While marine structures have been in the vicinity of the jetty for decades, the current jetty dates from 1982 and has no formal historical status. It is understood that:

- The previous jetty in this location was transferred from private ownership to the Shire in 1973.
- The jetty was rebuilt in 1982, so is around 43 years old.

BACKGROUND

Jetty Closure

The Turner Street jetty was closed to members of the public on Wednesday 19 March 2025 following observations of accelerated deterioration of the Jetty, which prompted a structural re-assessment. The assessment, undertaken by a specialist marine engineer, found structural elements had declined and the jetty could not be safely used by the public without significant renewal.

The closure resulted in significant community concern being raised regarding lack of prior notification of closure, whether the deterioration was caused by lack of maintenance that contributed to failure, and uncertainty over the future actions to be taken for the facility.

Further detailed background on this matter can be found in the previous reports provided to Council on 26 March 2025 and 23 July 2025.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

As the likely cost of the option of replacing the jetty exceeds \$250,000, *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996* mandate procurement through a formal tender process.

There are a number of statutory approval requirements and standards that apply to jetty works in this location, including:

- Approval under the Aboriginal Heritage Act for works in a designated Aboriginal Heritage site.
- Reapplication of a jetty licence through the DTMI.
- A bed and banks approval through DWER.

There are also key policy positions that are relevant, including Point 12 of the Shire's Infrastructure Policy 1 – Asset Management, which provides that *preference will be given to renewing infrastructure assets before acquisition of new assets is considered.*

A draft Asset Disposal Policy has been prepared but not considered formally by Council.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

On 26 March 2025 Council decided:

MOTION / COUNCIL DECISION

CR MUIR, CR BINKS OM2025/25

That Council:

1. *Notes the intent to concurrently investigate two primary options for the future of the Turner Street Jetty, being renewal of failed components of the existing structure or alternatively, replacement of the existing structure.*
2. *Notes that in consultation with a dedicated community reference group, the two options of significant renewal or replacement will be explored with the community prior to procurement of the preferred option.*
3. *Endorses an amendment to the 2024-25 Annual Budget allowing for design and costing of options to renew or replace the Turner Street Jetty, with funding of up to \$100,000 being made available for these works from the Asset Renewal Reserve.*

Reason: The Council decision differed from the officer's recommendation to enable consideration of this important matter to come back before Council for a formal decision on how to proceed.

*CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 5/0
FOR: CRS BINKS, BOLAND, D'ATH, MELDRUM, MUIR
AGAINST: NIL*

Following detailed community engagement, preparation of concept plans and an opinion of probable cost, Council then decided on 23 July 2025:

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

CR D'ATH, CR MUIR OM2025/85

That Council:

1. *Notes that consultation with the community reference group showed support for the replacement of the existing structure with a fixed timber decked jetty.*
2. *Notes the intent to utilise the current budget allocation to progress detailed design and tender documentation.*
3. *Undertakes further community consultation regarding the costs associated with community's preferred option, and the impacts of dedicating the necessary funds to the replacement of the jetty on other marine projects budgeted for 2025/26.*

*CARRIED 7/0
FOR: CRS BINKS, BOLAND, D'ATH, EARL, KENNAUGH, MELDRUM, MUIR
AGAINST: NIL*

The reference to other marine projects in point 3 of the decision refers to the potential use of resources allocated towards the Turner Foreshore Wall replacement project in the current 2025/26 budget.

Informed by the input of the Community Reference Group, the Council decision of July 2025 on the outcomes of the concept design phase was based on progressing design for a like-for-like jetty replacement. Through the conceptual design phase, the following options were discounted:

- Replacement with a floating jetty, which was discounted due to the utility of the option with the water generally not deep enough to float the jetty and the floating type inconsistent with the predominant use for amenity and passive recreation.
- Remediation of the existing structure, which showed poor return on investment due to significant cost and achieving only minor deferral of full failure of the structure.

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: Managing our built environment

Outcome Statement B6: Our built environment is functional, sustainable, accessible, safe, and sympathetic to the surrounds

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Due to the firm advice around closure of the jetty from an independent expert, advance notification to the community of closure of the facility wasn't possible as this outcome required immediate action to address consequential risk.

Following the Council decision of 25 March 2025 a community reference group (CRG) was formed to test and explore these options and in part be a conduit for information. The CRG has been invaluable in performing this function through respectful and engaged dialogue.

Subject to Council's decision, and in line with the request of the Community Reference Group, Shire officers will continue to work closely with the CRG throughout the life of the project. This ongoing relationship will remain invaluable, supporting clear two-way communication and helping to maintain a constructive and collaborative approach as the project progresses.

Following the further Council decision in July of 2025 to progress detailed design and a further consultation, the CRG has again been engaged in that process. Broader consultation was also undertaken with the wider community that canvassed issues of:

- Community perception on the importance of renewal.
- Funding the jetty from existing project budgets and the consequential impacts.
- An opportunity to provide further comment on the future of the jetty.

A summary of the community engagement process is included as Attachment 1. The survey resulted in:

- 1,085 community members read and/or reviewed the content on the Your Say project page.
- 240 people downloaded the relevant documents to read further information.
- 558 community members contributed feedback on the online feedback submission form on the Your Say project page.

Of the 558 submissions received, 50.7% of the respondents self-identified as residents from Augusta. There were also 95 respondents from Margaret River together with the balance from other areas of the Shire.

There were, in addition to a number of comments provided, several key questions that were answered as follows:

- *Do you support the like-for-like replacement of the Turner Street Jetty?* This question was mandatory. 92.11% (514 of the 558) of submitters were supportive of the like-for-like replacement of the Turner Street Jetty.
- *Do you support the like-for-like restoration on the Turner Street Jetty, given its replacement cost is around \$660 000?* 87.27% (487 of the 558) of submitters were supportive of the like-for-like replacement of the Turner Street Jetty, given its estimated replacement cost is around \$660 000.

- *Do you support the funding for the Turner Street Jetty being reallocated from the Turner Street Sea Wall, delaying the replacement of the Sea Wall?* 55% (305 of the 558) of submitters were supportive of the like-for-like replacement being reallocated from the Turner Street Sea Wall. 25.9% (145) submitters were not supportive of the funding reallocation, and 17% (95) were unsure.

There were also a number of themes that were prevalent in comments made through the consultation process. These are addressed in the summary of submissions included as Attachment 1 and a summarised response provided below. These themes are broadly categorised as follows:

Theme 1 – Maintenance Failure: A theme that has recurred since the closure of the jetty is commentary that the jetty was not properly maintained, leading to failure and aspirations for greater maintenance in any replacement. While addressed factually through both consultation information and previous reporting to Council this theme remains resilient. The Council report of March 2025 documented the maintenance history of the structure and the clear fact that the jetty had reached the end of its design life that could not be remedied by further maintenance.

Theme 2 – Cost Concerns and Transparency: Comments here were broadly centred around a perceived lack of scrutiny of costs provided, opinions that work could be done more cost effectively and some descriptions of an uncompetitive pricing process leading to inflated costs. These issues are largely addressed by the fact that pricing is a pre-tender estimate and actual costs would be discovered through the competitive, open tender process and subsequent public reporting to Council. Projected cost *may* be able to be reduced through procurement and market.

Theme 3 – Heritage and Iconic Value: There was feedback that echoed earlier commentary from the community around the iconic nature of the jetty and its value to the community for aesthetic, recreational and historical value. These points have been noted through the design process and informed an outcome where the replacement design seeks to provide a very similar structure as an outcome.

Theme 4 – Community Importance/Social Value: It was impressed through response to consultation that the jetty was an important part of the social fabric of the community and as with its iconic value, elevated importance to the community above its utility as a marine structure. This value of community significance has assisted in informing the recommendation to Council to progress.

Theme 5 – Speed/Urgency: Comments in this respect were focused on a preference to proceed as quickly as possible. The report to Council, design and approval obtained to date position the project to progress as soon as possible, pending Council decision, procurement, cost certainty and contractor availability.

Theme 6 – Augusta Investment Equity: A repetitive theme in consultation feedback has been the perception of inequity in investment in the Augusta community when balanced against investment in the balance of the Shire. While this is statistically incorrect on a per capita basis, and has been for several years, it remains an enduring perception.

Theme 7 – Design Preferences: Within these responses there was some preference for alternative forms of a jetty in replacement, such as a floating structure. However, the majority reflected earlier feedback supporting a like-for-like replacement. This preference has shaped the design development to date.

Theme 8 – Foreshore Wall Deferral: Several comments were made that largely supported deferral of the foreshore wall project, with a small number of comments preferencing the foreshore wall project. The officer recommendation is that the foreshore wall be deferred to allow further design development and cost optimisation.

Theme 9 – Process and Consultation Issues: Comments in this theme were predominantly around the delay in resolution and perception of consultation on expenditure being unnecessary. Given the scale of the proposed investment and the requirement to reallocate funds from another project, consultation has provided valuable insight into community views and helped validate the proposed prioritisation.

Theme 10 – Complete Both Projects: A portion of respondents expressed a desire for both the Turner Street Jetty refurbishment and the Turner Street Foreshore Wall project to proceed concurrently. These comments generally reflected a view that both assets are important, and that community members should not have to choose between them. While this sentiment is understandable, the Shire’s capital program operates within finite financial and resourcing constraints. Delivering both projects at the same time would require significant additional investment not currently available in the budget and would likely impact delivery of other capital works. The officer recommendation to defer the foreshore wall project reflects both its lower immediate risk profile and the value of progressing further design work to ensure best outcomes and cost certainty before construction.

Theme 11 – Support Jetty Refurbishment: A strong theme throughout the consultation was clear and consistent support for refurbishing the Turner Street Jetty. Respondents highlighted its recreational, social, cultural and symbolic significance, as well as its role in community identity and daily life. Many emphasised the importance of reinstating the jetty as soon as possible and supported proceeding with a like-for-like design. This widespread support aligns with earlier engagement undertaken through the Community Reference Group and has reinforced the officer recommendation to proceed with the jetty refurbishment as the community’s preferred outcome.

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

The current state of design can be described by the considerations that were included in design development and the outcomes that resulted from the design process.

Design Considerations

Consultation Outcomes - have in part driven the design considerations and resulted in the incorporation of the following:

- Reusing and retaining the aesthetic timber surface of the jetty and maintaining the existing dimensions, alignment and configuration.
- Providing safe and stable access for children and elderly members of the public.
- Prioritising use of the jetty for pedestrians, but not to exclude berthing for small vessels.
- Ensuring that reconstruction is done prioritising ease of maintenance and a long design life (50 years).

Coastal Process and Sea Level Rise – utilising the DOT (now DTMI) adopted parameters for sea level rise over a 50-year design life an allowance of 0.41m has been made for sea level rise over the life of the structure. Allowances are also required for flood levels and wave conditions. Highlighted in the design considerations is the dynamic nature of the sediment movement in the area and the potential for accretion over the life of the structure to impact functionality, as has occurred with the timber boardwalk further to the east nearer the mouth of the Blackwood River.

Berthing – Consultation outcomes highlighted a preference for continuing to facilitate occasional berthing at the jetty. An allowance would be required for occasional berthing of small craft without optimising design for this purpose.

Compliance with standards – There are numerous design standards that apply to this type of structure and setting, which dictate certain design outcomes. Of particular note is AS4997-2005 which was not in place when the current jetty was constructed and which states:

“Where access to water or vessel is not required and where a person falling from the structure is likely to fall more than 1.5 m to strike a hard surface or the seabed, a guardrail (handrail) in accordance with AS1657 should be provided”.

The fall from the non-berthing components of the jetty to the seabed at low tide can exceed 1.5m (under the existing scenario and design outcomes for the jetty). Accordingly an operational risk assessment is required to determine whether deviation from this requirement is acceptable and if so, what risk mitigation measures are required. It should be noted that this aspect would be at odds with the desire for the community to pursue a like-for-like replacement of the structure that is of a similar aesthetic.

Durability – Achievement of a 50-year design life and the conditions for achievable preventative maintenance guides the use of particular types of materials. In some instances these structural materials would vary from the hardwood construction of the current structure.

Accessibility – The Shire is committed to achieving and fostering accessible design outcomes in capital projects. The response from the detailed design process is limited in that the access to the jetty and surrounding infrastructure is not compliant from a universal access perspective.

Geotechnical conditions – Variable geotechnical conditions necessitate flexibility in pile design and implementation methods together with contingency in the cost estimate to accommodate the proposed design.

Design Outcomes

Detailed design drawings are included as Attachment 2 with the plan view and elevation shown as figures 2 and 3 below. These drawings document the outcomes of the design process that include the following.

Material Selection – The proposed structure incorporates a combination of steel, Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) and hardwood timber elements combined as:

- Steel piles and headstocks, with piles located centrally to the jetty deck which varies from the existing structure.
- FRP joists with steel headstocks.
- Timber deck planks fixed to the FRP joists with a timber toe rail to provide a similar aesthetic to the current structure.

Structural Considerations – The jetty design provides for occasional berthing of vessels and pedestrian crowd load. The design provides for anticipated weather conditions including storm surge. To accommodate projected sea level rise over the design life of the jetty the deck height has been lifted by 0.2m from the current structure. This doesn't accommodate the entire sea level rise projection, but provides a more resilient structure and allows for better and more accessible tie in the existing embankment.

Amenity and Appearance – The design seeks to provide a like-for-like structure in appearance, while utilising more durable materials below the deck surface and a more efficient and durable piling arrangement central to the jetty deck. The reuse of decking material has been included with the specification for procurement, however it is likely that additional timber would be required to complete the project.

Compliance with Standards – The design facilitates express compliance with applicable standards for construction, with the exception of the operational decision over the inclusion of handrails on the structure. This was not preferred by the community for aesthetic and historic reasons. A risk assessment has been undertaken by staff that will be considered at an operational level. While the handrail will be included in procurement for pricing, it is likely that alternative risk mitigation measures such as signage and the inclusion of a physical delineation at (toe rail) the jetty edge will set aside the handrail being included in the final outcome. The designer was able to supply several notable instances of this approach being undertaken recently in the Swan River.

Following commitments and expenditure for detailed design, an additional \$325,000 is required to meet the anticipated cost for the project. This can be drawn from deferral of the \$500,000 allocation for the Turner Foreshore Wall. \$35,000 can be retained in the Turner Foreshore Wall project to progress design options and consultation to inform future budget decision for that project. The net result of this deferral and expenditure will be an adjustment to the Marine Structures expenditure in the Forward Capital Works Plan, which is currently under review.

The mid-year budget review will be presented to Council as a separate item on this agenda. The amendment has been included in the mid-year review to present an outcome with potential expenditure validated against other commitments. Should the Council decide not to proceed, amendment to the mid-year budget review item will be required to remove this allocation.

Comparative financial implications of the different options for the future of the jetty have been canvassed in earlier reports to Council. One of the key aspects discussed in that process was the issue also raised again through consultation, of not drawing from the Foreshore Wall project and funding the project outright. The rationale for drawing from the Marine Structures financial allocation is to reprioritise within the asset class and so, not unduly impact the needs of other assets such as roads and buildings.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

Environmental

The environmental implications of either proceeding with procurement or not are limited. Disturbance to the river environment from works will be limited and temporary in nature.

Social

Allocation of funding to continue to provide the level of service and amenity from the Turner Street Jetty will have positive social implications.

Economic

The jetty project has the potential to improve the standard of the facility for all members of the community which will have ongoing positive implications on the local economy. The jetty is a key component of the attraction of both local and visitors to the area.

ADVOCACY

Through the process developing the two distinct options and determining the preferred outcome, external funding sources can be canvassed.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk	Existing	Treatment	Residual Risk
Cost	There is a risk that total cost could be higher than the allocated budget amount.	Cost has been assumed based on similar recent projects. Procurement will enable market testing and discover of the actual price the market will offer. Alternative responses will be encouraged through procurement which may see efficiencies in the project reduce cost. A reasonable contingency has also been included in estimates.	Failure to meet budget may see a time delay in sourcing further funding and commitment to further costs.
Design feature – Handrail	The proposed handrail identified in design drawings is required to	The handrail component of the jetty will be subject to a separate operational	It is likely that with alternative risk mitigation measures the residual risk will remain high.

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	meet the applicable standard to address fall heights. This handrail is at odds with the community desire to pursue a like-for-like replacement.	risk assessment. While priced through procurement, the handrail may be removed to meet the community's objectives subject to alternative risk mitigation strategies.	
Dynamic coastal environment	There has been significant sediment movement closer to the Blackwood Rivermouth and near the jetty location. It is possible that accretion could impact the functionality of the jetty in the medium term.	The functionality of the jetty has been directed to pedestrian and passive use rather than berthing of vessels. In addition, the Shire's draft CHRMAP updates recommend monitoring and response to coastal process over time.	There remains a risk of the full function of the jetty being compromised in the medium term.
Foreshore wall deferral	The existing Turner Foreshore Wall has known defects and periodic failure in service with erosion behind the wall. The wall is also at risk of failure.	The consequence of failure of the wall is unlikely to be unable to be remediated in the short term. Further design development and progressing this project will ideally see the most cost effective and appropriate solution.	While a moderate risk remains, it is considered likely that resolution will be achieved in a sufficient timeframe.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Supports progressing the replacement of the Turner Street Jetty through procurement for a suitable supplier based on the documented detailed design outcomes and opinion of probable cost.
2. Considers the required budget amendment to the 2025-26 budget as part of the mid-year budget review.

11.3

Corporate and Customer Services

11.3.1. OUTCOMES OF GENERAL ELECTORS MEETING

Location/Address	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Applicant/Landowner	N/A
File Reference	GRL/14
Report Author	Claire Schiller, Senior Governance and Risk Officer
Authorising Officer	Melanie Stevens, Director Corporate and Customer Services
Authority/Discretion	Legislative

IN BRIEF

The minutes of the General Electors Meeting (GEM) held on 28 January 2026 are to be considered in accordance with section 5.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (LG Act), and any decisions that were made at the Meeting of Electors are to be considered by Council at this meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. GEM Minutes and Attachments 28 January 2026 [11.3.1.1 - 133 pages]

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives the minutes of the 28 January 2026 General Meeting of Electors (Attachment 1);
2. Notes the acceptance of the 2024/25 Annual Report and 2024/25 Audited Financial Statements.
3. Considers electors' decision 1 and adopts the officer recommendation and reason below:

MOTION / GEM DECISION 1

MOVED: DECLAN MCGILL SECONDED: WINSOME LANE

That Council formally acknowledges the growing road safety and congestion issues in Cowaramup, and commits to addressing them as a matter of priority.

CARRIED

Officer Recommendation:

That Council acknowledges the significance of the growing road safety and congestion issues in Cowaramup, and the evaluation of solutions through the Cowaramup Precinct Plan process that will enable prioritisation and implementation of the outcomes.

Reason:

Referencing the Cowaramup Precinct Plan ensures a clear and established process for evaluating and prioritising solutions.

4. Notes that electors' decision 2 was actioned at the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting;

MOTION / GEM DECISION 2

MOVED: EMMA PINNICK SECONDED: SCOTT BAXTER

That Council consider the petition at the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

5. Considers electors' decision 3 and adopts the officer recommendation and reason below:

MOTION / GEM DECISION 3

MOVED: CATHERINE WOOD SECONDED: PHIL CHRISTIAN GEM2025/4
That Council consider the urgency for providing safe, overflow camping for transient workers.
CARRIED

Officer Recommendation:

- a) Notes the General Electors Motion requesting that Council consider the urgency of providing safe overflow camping for transient workers.
- a) Confirms that investigation of an overflow camping facility is already scheduled as a Year Two (2025–26) action within the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap, received by Council on 12 November 2025 SCM, and that officers are progressing this work in accordance with the adopted timeline.

Reason:

Officers recommend completing the planned feasibility investigation before committing to a trial, to ensure any overflow facility model is evidence-based, financially sustainable, and does not produce unintended consequences that outweigh its intended community benefit.

LOCATION PLAN

Nil

BACKGROUND

The GEM was held in Council Chambers, Margaret River, on Wednesday 28 January 2026 in accordance with the LG Act and was held within the prescribed 56 days following Council's acceptance of the audited Annual Financial Statement.

Section 5.33(1) of the LG Act requires all decisions made at a GEM to be considered at the next Ordinary Council Meeting (OCM or, if that is not practicable, at the next scheduled OCM or at a Special Council Meeting called for that purpose.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

Local Government Act 1995, s5.27 (3), 5.31, s5.32 & s5.33

5.32. Minutes of electors' meetings

The CEO is to —

- (a) cause minutes of the proceedings at an electors' meeting to be kept and preserved; and*
- (b) ensure that copies of the minutes are made available for inspection by members of the public before the council meeting at which decisions made at the electors' meeting are first considered.*

5.33. Decisions made at electors' meetings

(1) All decisions made at an electors' meeting are to be considered at the next ordinary council meeting or, if that is not practicable —

- (a) at the first ordinary council meeting after that meeting; or*
- (b) at a special meeting called for that purpose,*
whichever happens first.

(2) If at a meeting of the council a local government makes a decision in response to a decision made at an electors' meeting, the reasons for the decision are to be recorded in the minutes of the council meeting.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2040

Performance

Outcome PF.2: Community and customer focus

Strategy PF.2.2: Regulate the Shire's performance and monitor the community's satisfaction with Shire services, regularly communicating these results

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Nil

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

There was a total of 20 electors present at the GEM. Three electors asked questions during Public Question Time in relation to the following topics:

1. Community Grants; and
2. Local Planning Policy 23 – Renewable Energy Systems (LPP23)

Two questions were taken on notice at the meeting and the responses subsequently provided to the author and published within the 25 February 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda.

Electors voted to accept the 2024/25 Annual Report and Audited Financial Statement as per motion below.

RECOMMENDATION / GEM DECISION

MOVER: JULIE KIRBY SECONDER: RYAN WHITE GEM2025/1

That the General Meeting of Electors receives the 2024-25 Annual Report for the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

CARRIED

A further three decisions were made during item 5, General Business. For the purpose of this report, officer comments have been provided in response to each motion.

Each decision is to be considered by Council at this Ordinary Council Meeting.

DECISION 1 –Cowaramup Road Safety and Congestion Issues

MOTION / GEM DECISION 1

MOVED: DECLAN MCGILL SECONDED: WINSOME LANE

That Council formally acknowledges the growing road safety and congestion issues in Cowaramup, and commits to addressing them as a matter of priority.

CARRIED

Background

The Cowaramup Townsite has seen rapid population growth over the last decade with a period of sustained growth well above the Shire and State average. While this growth rate has now moderated to be less than that of the Shire average, it has occurred in conjunction with significant growth in the district driven by regional migration. This has led to substantial increases in traffic volumes exacerbating issues with the transport network in Cowaramup that includes a major highway through the centre of town.

Changes and improvements to the transport network can result from a variety of actions from the State Government, Local Government and private sector funding associated with development. The realisation of this funding is subject to government prioritisation and the specific areas of growth undertaken by the private sector. To guide future improvements the Shire has undertaken actions to progress improvements to the transport network, including:

- Undertaking preparation of an Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) for Cowaramup, including technical evaluation of constraints, solutions and consultation to guide future decisions.
- The formation of a community reference group, including members of local residents groups, business owners, Main Roads WA and the Shire to act as a conduit for information and to represent the community in decision making.
- Conceptual planning for road safety improvements through the preparation of the Cowaramup Precinct Plan, in conjunction with engagement through the community reference group. The

Cowaramup Precinct Plan will come before Council shortly for a decision and, as known by the community reference group members, act as the guide to future prioritisation and investment in transport improvements.

The Council, by ensuring resources are dedicated towards the ITS and Precinct Plan, have formally recognised the issues with the transport network in Cowaramup, including the Council decision to adopt and progress the ITS outcomes.

Statutory and Policy Requirements Relevant to Decision

There are a variety of statutory and policy implications that are relevant to the broader issue but none specific to the 'acknowledgement of road safety and congestion issues'.

Officer Comment

There is no particular issue with adopting the GEM decision noted above, however in the absence of reference to the Precinct Plan and established consultative process to evaluate these issues it gives a false impression of context given:

- The Council has adopted the Cowaramup ITS and is currently preparing a Precinct Plan to guide a decision on concepts for improvements and their prioritisation.
- Addressing these issues is recognised as a priority, which needs to be considered with all other priorities that the Shire has for the commitment of financial resources.
- Some of the potential transport solutions are outside of the ability for the Council to address them, in that they are outside of the Shire's ability to fund them or are subject to implementation by MRWA.

As such, a more accurate reflection of the intent could be:

That Council acknowledges the significance of the growing road safety and congestion issues in Cowaramup, and the evaluation of solutions through the Cowaramup Precinct Plan process that will enable prioritisation and implementation of the outcomes.

DECISION 2 – Petition Save Scott River from Wind Turbines

MOTION / GEM DECISION 2

MOVED: EMMA PINNICK SECONDED: SCOTT BAXTER

That Council consider the petition at the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

Background

Council received a petition 'objection to proposed wind farm', on 24 September 2025 containing 1,377 signatures (OM2025/123):

'Action sought:

Objection to the proposed wind farm in Scott River, Western Australia for the following reasons:

1. The Scott River district is known for its high ecological value and its protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Scott River Ironstone Association – Endangered Category) there is a high risk to endangered flora and fauna from wind turbine construction and operation. There are 26 fauna species listed as threatened, priority or under protection that occur with the Scott River catchment.
2. Industrial wind turbines will increase fire risk to the local community, with no aerial and limited ground support around the site.
3. There is a very high risk of Acid Sulphate Soils being created during and after the construction of the enormous wind turbines and what this will present to the sensitive waterways of the Scott and Blackwood River, neighbouring farmland and Flinders Bay.
4. Neighbouring landowners have valid health concerns living under 250m high wind turbines and will be exposed to the noise, disturbance and shadow flicker.

We ask you to consider the rare and endangered wildlife, nearby residents and our unique and sensitive environment when considering industrialised development at the Scott River and our strong objection to the proposed wind farm in such an unsuitable location.'

Statutory and Policy Requirements Relevant to Decision

Standing Orders Local Law, clause 4.6

- 4.6 *Petitions*
- (1) *A petition received by a member or the CEO is to be presented to the next ordinary Council meeting.*
 - (2) *A petition to the Council is -*
 - (a) *as far as practicable to be prepared in the form prescribed in Schedule 1;*
 - (b) *to be addressed to the Council and forwarded to a member or the CEO;*
 - (c) *to state the name and address of the person to whom correspondence in respect of the petition may be served; and*
 - (d) *to be respectful and temperate in its language.*
 - (3) *The presentation of a petition is to be confined to the reading of the petition.*
 - (4) *The only motions in respect of a petition that are in order are that -*
 - (a) *the petition be received;*
 - (b) *a report on the petition be prepared; or*
 - (c) *the petition be referred to a Committee.*

Officer Comment

The motion requested Council receive the petition a second time, noting an additional 840 signatures. Council formally received the petition at the Ordinary Council Meeting following the GEM, as such no further action is required.

DECISION 3 –

MOTION / GEM DECISION 3

MOVED: CATHERINE WOOD SECONDED: PHIL CHRISTIAN GEM2025/4
That Council consider the urgency for providing safe, overflow camping for transient workers.

CARRIED

Background

The concept of an overflow campsite within the Augusta Margaret River region is not new, with the community raising this as a potential solution to illegal camping on multiple occasions. Illegal camping throughout the region has been a persistent concern, and Council has previously directed officers to investigate the feasibility of an overflow camp facility in April 2024 (OC2024/69).

In recognition of both the community's desire for action and the risks associated with significant investment in an unproven solution, the Shire has committed to investigating an overflow facility while approaching the matter with appropriate caution to avoid directing ratepayer funds toward an initiative that may not deliver the intended community benefit.

Operationally, the feasibility of an overflow campsite is being investigated as part of the Holiday Parks strategy development. This was reinforced in 2025 through collaboration with the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Community Working Group, who identified and prioritised an overflow campsite for investigation during the 2026 calendar year. The action was included in the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap, received by Council at the 12 January 2025 SCM.

The overflow campsite is one action within the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap, which currently acts as a de facto Shire management plan. The Roadmap received by Council included an action to pilot an overflow facility by enabling surge capacity at existing holiday parks in the region, and to report back to Council in April 2026. This remains an option being explored by officers; however, it has been delayed following further consultation with the community working group, who indicated that this should coincide with strengthening enforcement against illegal camping (e.g. infringements), which is being reviewed in 2026.

Based on learnings from the 2024/25 season and advice from the community working group, officers will review and refine the roadmap ahead of the 2026/27 annual budget. Council will be briefed on the priorities of the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap as part of the budget process.

Statutory and Policy Requirements Relevant to Decision
Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997

Officer Comment

Investigation of an overflow camping facility is identified as a Year Two (2025–26) action within the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap, received by Council at the 12 November 2025 SCM. Officers have undertaken initial preliminary work toward this commitment, mostly focusing on identifying available sites and operating model options.

While officers are progressing investigations into an overflow facility for the Shire, it is important that any facility is a considered solution rather than a reactive one. It remains unclear whether an overflow facility will meaningfully reduce illegal camping activity, or whether it may generate unintended consequences such as an increase in budget tourism to the region, displacement of trade from registered accommodation providers, or negative impacts on recently introduced legislation enabling worker accommodation on private property.

It is equally important to distinguish between illegal camping associated with transient visitors and workers, and the separate issue of homelessness. While the urgency of homelessness in the region is acknowledged, an overflow camping facility is not necessarily an appropriate response to the needs of people experiencing homelessness, which require different support pathways and service models.

Notwithstanding the need for careful consideration, a number of factors have led members of the community to elevate the urgency of this investigation to the current season. Reports of vigilante violence directed at individuals sleeping in vehicles underscore the safety risks facing people who are unable to secure accommodation, regardless of the legality of their camping behaviour. The upcoming temporary closure of a local backpacker accommodation provider for renovations is anticipated to exacerbate this pressure for those visiting and working in the community. Consultation feedback obtained from the elector who raised the motion suggests that a portion of those who are illegally camping in the region are doing so because they have been displaced from affordable accommodation during peak periods.

Officers acknowledge the community's concern and the safety risks outlined above. However, having regard to the balance of considerations, officers recommend that Council not proceed with an emergency overflow facility this season and instead remain committed to completing the full feasibility investigation through the 2025–26 calendar year as originally planned.

The feasibility work is designed to ensure that any facility model is evidence-based, financially sustainable, and does not produce unintended consequences that outweigh its benefits. Proceeding to a trial before this work is complete carries risk, including the risk that a poorly calibrated facility entrenches expectations or establishes precedents that are difficult to unwind.

Feedback from the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Community Working Group felt that an overflow facility should be implemented alongside enhanced illegal camping deterrents, including increased infringements and Ranger presence, and these complementary measures require their own lead time and resourcing to implement. Establishing and operating an emergency facility at short notice would also require a significant diversion of officer time and resources away from already established priorities, including the feasibility investigation itself and other actions within the Roadmap. On balance, officers consider the stronger governance position to be allowing the feasibility process to run its course before committing resources to a trial.

Overflow camping facilities and similar schemes, such as RV-friendly designations, have been implemented by other local governments across Western Australia and Australia with varying degrees of success. Their effectiveness is largely contingent on the specific behaviours and motivations of visitors in each region. In areas where accommodation is genuinely scarce, such facilities are an appropriate intervention. However, where visitors are primarily seeking free, nature-based camping

experiences, overflow facilities risk attracting additional budget-sensitive visitors without meaningfully reducing illegal camping activity.

Overflow facilities also represent a significant financial commitment for local government, both in initial capital investment and ongoing operational costs, with the scale of this commitment varying depending on the model adopted.

Should Council wish to consider an emergency overflow facility for the April 2026 period notwithstanding the officers recommendation, a number of matters would need to be resolved. Further conversations with business stakeholders, including backpacker and caravan park operators, would be needed to explore whether alternative or complementary solutions exist, such as surge capacity at existing facilities or other providers absorbing additional clientele.

Engagement with the target user group would be required to determine whether an emergency facility would meet their needs and whether they would be willing to pay fees to stay — a question central to understanding whether the facility would address the problem it is intended to solve. Site selection would need to account for avoiding conflict with existing private holiday park businesses, other community uses of overflow sites, proximity to town, and the ability to designate a manageable area as a temporary solution. The operational model, including management arrangements, eligibility criteria and enforcement, and length of stay provisions, would also require resolution.

Community feedback received through both social media and the Barrett Street Weir consultation process demonstrates that an overflow facility will continue to be raised by the community as a solution until it is tested, and a tightly defined, short-term trial — if feasible — would allow Council to test assumptions, collect real-world data on demand and behavioral response, and assess impacts on compliance, safety and local accommodation providers, without committing to a long-term model.

Officers remain of the view that completing the feasibility investigation as planned represents the most responsible use of ratepayer resources and provides the strongest foundation for any future decision on an overflow facility. Officer recommendation is:

That Council:

1. Notes the General Electors Motion requesting that Council consider the urgency of providing safe overflow camping for transient workers.
2. Confirms that investigation of an overflow camping facility is already scheduled as a Year Two (2025–26) action within the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap, received by Council on 12 November 2025 and that officers are progressing this work in accordance with the adopted timeline.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

Nil

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

Nil

ADVOCACY

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives the minutes of the 28 January 2026 General Meeting of Electors (Attachment 1);
2. Notes the acceptance of the 2024/25 Annual Report and 2024/25 Audited Financial Statements.
3. Considers electors' decision 1 and adopts the officer recommendation and reason below:

MOTION / GEM DECISION 1

MOVED: DECLAN MCGILL SECONDED: WINSOME LANE

That Council formally acknowledges the growing road safety and congestion issues in Cowaramup, and commits to addressing them as a matter of priority.

CARRIED

Officer Recommendation:

That Council acknowledges the significance of the growing road safety and congestion issues in Cowaramup, and the evaluation of solutions through the Cowaramup Precinct Plan process that will enable prioritisation and implementation of the outcomes.

Reason:

Referencing the Cowaramup Precinct Plan ensures a clear and established process for evaluating and prioritising solutions.

4. Notes that electors' decision 2 was actioned at the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting;

MOTION / GEM DECISION 2

MOVED: EMMA PINNICK SECONDED: SCOTT BAXTER

That Council consider the petition at the 28 January 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

5. Considers electors' decision 3 and adopts the officer recommendation and reason below:

MOTION / GEM DECISION 3

MOVED: CATHERINE WOOD SECONDED: PHIL CHRISTIAN GEM2025/4

That Council consider the urgency for providing safe, overflow camping for transient workers.

CARRIED

Officer Recommendation:

- a) Notes the General Electors Motion requesting that Council consider the urgency of providing safe overflow camping for transient workers.
- b) Confirms that investigation of an overflow camping facility is already scheduled as a Year Two (2025–26) action within the Illegal Camping and Peak Season Pressures Roadmap, received by Council on 12 November 2025 SCM, and that officers are progressing this work in accordance with the adopted timeline.

Reason:

Officers recommend completing the planned feasibility investigation before committing to a trial, to ensure any overflow facility model is evidence-based, financially sustainable, and does not produce unintended consequences that outweigh its intended community benefit.

11.3.2. 2025-26 BUDGET REVIEW

Location/Address	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Applicant/Landowner	N/A
File Reference	FIN/14
Report Author	Melanie Stevens, Director Corporate and Customer Services
Authorising Officer	Andrea Selvey, Chief Executive Officer
Authority/Discretion	Legislative

IN BRIEF

- A statutory mid-year review of the 2025-26 Annual Budget has been completed in accordance with regulation 33A of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.
- The review of the 2025-26 adopted annual budget has identified forecast increases to operating revenue of \$0.162 million and decreases to operating expenditure of \$1.115 million.
- Capital expenditure is expected to decrease by \$3.716 million, with capital income also forecast to decrease by \$0.228 million.
- Transfers to reserves have increased by \$0.090 million and transfers from reserves have decreased by \$4.771 million.
- In summary, the completed review has resulted in a forecast balanced position at 30 June 2026.
- The 2025-26 budget review is now presented to Council for adoption.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-26 Mid-year budget review [**11.3.2.1** - 6 pages]
2. 2025-26 MYBR Capital Works Program [**11.3.2.2** - 6 pages]

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Absolute Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the 2025-26 budget review in accordance with regulation 33A of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*; and
 2. Approves the resulting amendments to the 2025-26 Annual Budget as detailed in Attachment 1.
-

LOCATION PLAN

Nil

BACKGROUND

The budget review has been prepared to include information required by the *Local Government Act 1995*, *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* and Australian Accounting Standards.

The budget review consists of actual results for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025 and forecasts for 1 January 2026 to 30 June 2026 based on known and expected variations, for Council's consideration.

Consideration of the status of various projects and programs was undertaken to ensure any anticipated variances were captured within the review document where possible.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

Regulation 33A of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* requires:

- (1) Between 1 January and the last day of February in each financial year a local government is to carry out a review of its annual budget for that year.
- (2A) The review of an annual budget for a financial year must —
 - a. consider the local government's financial performance in the period beginning on 1 July and ending no earlier than 31 December in that financial year; and
 - b. consider the local government's financial position as at the date of the review; and
 - c. review the outcomes for the end of that financial year that are forecast in the budget; and
 - d. include the following —
 - i. the annual budget adopted by the local government;
 - ii. an update of each of the estimates included in the annual budget;
 - iii. the actual amounts of expenditure, revenue and income as at the date of the review;
 - iv. adjacent to each item in the annual budget adopted by the local government that states an amount, the estimated end of year amount for the item.
- (2) The review of an annual budget for a financial year must be submitted to the council on or before 31 March in that financial year.
- (3) A council is to consider a review submitted to it and is to determine* whether or not to adopt the review, any parts of the review or any recommendations made in the review.
- (4) Within 14 days after a council has made a determination, a copy of the review and determination is to be provided to the Department.

*Absolute majority required.

Section 6.8(1) of the Local Government Act 1995 provides that expenditure can be incurred when not included in the budget provided it is authorised in advance by resolution (absolute majority required).

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: How we work

Outcome Statement W4: We demonstrate ethical leadership at all levels in our organisation, making decisions in an open, transparent and accountable way

Focus Area: How we work

Outcome Statement W6: We manage our finances responsibly, investing in services and assets that deliver sustainable, long-term value for now and the future

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Business unit managers and coordinators were required to review their year-to-date financial results as at 31 December 2025 in conjunction with approved budgets to identify amendment required.

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

Summary of budget review variations

This report addresses changes in the forward estimates of revenue and expenditure to 30 June 2026, identified at 31 December 2025. Overall, the review identifies underspends in capital projects and operating costs, partly offset by reduced capital income. Operationally, the Shire remains on track to achieve a balanced result, with material variations driven primarily by the ERP project and timing of the Davis Road Waste Management Facility project.

The below table gives a summary of the Statement of Financial Activity as budgeted compared to the budget review estimates (note: rounding differences apply):

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	Adopted budget (\$ millions)	Budget amendment (\$ millions)	Amended budget (\$ millions)
Operating revenue	\$50.153	\$0.163	\$50.316
Operating expenditure	(\$59.481)	\$1.115	(\$58.366)
Add back: non-cash amounts	\$15.550	\$-	\$15.550
Net amount attributable to operating activities	\$6.222	\$1.278	\$7.500
Capital grants and contributions	\$9.000	(\$0.228)	\$8.772
Proceeds from disposal of assets	\$0.490	\$-	\$0.490
Proceeds from sale of investments	\$-	\$-	\$-
Movement in interest-free loans	(\$0.008)	\$-	(\$0.008)
Capital expenditure	(\$25.913)	\$3.670	(\$22.243)
Net amount attributable to investing activities	(\$16.431)	\$3.442	(\$12.989)
Transfers from reserves	\$15.401	(\$4.771)	\$10.630
Transfers to reserves	(\$7.065)	(\$0.045)	(\$7.110)
Repayment of borrowings and leases	(\$1.157)	\$-	(\$1.157)
Net amount attributable to financing activities	\$7.179	(\$4.816)	\$2.363
Opening net current assets	\$3.030	\$0.096	\$3.126
Closing net current assets	\$-	\$-	\$-

Below is a summary of the main circumstances that have resulted in changes to the Shire's budgeted position:

Operating revenue

Grants, subsidies and contributions: the 2025-26 Annual Budget included an estimate of the Financial Assistance Grant (FA Grant) allocation for 2025-26, based on previous years' allocations and the quantum of the advance FA Grant payment received in June 2025. The final FA Grant allocation eventuated to be approximately \$0.090 million lower than the pre-budget estimate and has been adjusted for in this mid-year review.

Fees and charges: a number of unders and overs are anticipated in fee and charge income at this point in the year and, where considered material in nature by Shire officers, have been adjusted for. Adjustments include:

- Outside School Hours Care income – reduced budgeted income of \$0.134 million, with vacation care and after-school enrolments being lower than expected. Whilst the service has a capacity of up to 95 children, vacation care has been attracting approximately two-thirds of capacity. Due to staff ratios and compliance requirements, this does not automatically lead to linear decreases in employee costs.
- Margaret River Recreation Centre income – increased budgeted income of \$0.127 million, with aquatic and fitness centre membership uptake being higher than expected. A change of the fee structure introduced in the 2025-26 Schedule of Fees and Charges has lent itself to this increase, e.g. inclusion of sauna access. This increase in revenue is offset by increases in employee costs.
- Subdivision supervision income – increased budgeted income of \$0.080 million due to continued high levels of activity in subdivision, for which the Shire charges an engineering supervision fee equal to a % of the cost of the works.

Operating expenditure

Employee expenditure: overall, employee costs are budgeted to land under the original budgeted amount by \$0.134 million. Adjustments include:

- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project – reduced budgeted expenditure of \$0.325 million in fixed-term staffing required to undertake this project. The project team onboarded in October, being later than originally budgeted, which has contributed to the decreased budget. In addition, more detailed project planning undertaken post-procurement identified less personnel required to complete the project scope. It should be noted that the ERP Project is fully funded from reserves in 2025-26. Hence this change in expenditure is reflected in reserve movements and does not impact utilisation of current year rate revenue.

- Maintenance – increased budget of \$0.250 million due to significantly higher-than-budgeted post-storm cleanup activities. It should be noted that this cleanup activity is proposed to be funded from the Storm Damage Reserve and does not impact utilisation of current year rate revenue.
- Margaret River Recreation Centre – increased budget of \$0.127 million to resource increased aquatic centre demand (see notes on increased revenue above).

Materials and contracts: overall, materials and contract costs are budgeted to land under the original budgeted amount by \$0.994 million.

- ERP project – materials and contracts being adjusted downward by \$0.919 million, accounting for the majority of the mid-year budget variation amount. The reasons for this adjustment are (i) phasing of the project, which commenced partway through the financial year rather than at the start, and (ii) adjustments to scope. It should be noted that the ERP Project is fully funded from reserves in 2025-26. Hence this change in expenditure is reflected in reserve movements and does not impact utilisation of current year rate revenue.
- Sustainable Economy Strategy – on 27 August 2025, Council resolved to allocate \$0.050 million for a review of the Shire's Sustainable Economy Strategy (2025/120). This allocation has been included in the mid-year review.
- Beach bus – on 12 November 2025, Council resolved to provide a beach bus service for the month of January 2026 (SM2025/3). This allocation of \$0.025 million has been included in the mid-year budget review.
- Peak season pressures – at the same meeting in November 2025, Council resolved to allocate \$0.030 million to progress 'quick-win' actions to address illegal camping and peak season pressures for the 2025-26 summer season (SM2025/4). This allocation has been included in the mid-year review.
- Townsite activation – an allocation of \$0.060 million has been made towards the procurement of Christmas decorations for the townsites of Margaret River, Augusta and Cowaramup in 2026, with funding required to be allocated in the 2025-26 budget to allow sufficient time for procurement.

Insurance: a small adjustment to increase the cost of insurance by \$0.034 million has been made to reconcile the budget to actual insurance premiums charged.

Other expenditure: this category of expenditure includes grants issued under Council's Community, Economic, Environmental and Events Funding Policy. One such grant was made to the Karridale Circus Festival, who later returned this grant since they were unable to run their planned circus event. This has resulted in an adjustment of \$0.020 million to the budget.

Capital income

Overall, capital income is budgeted to fall \$0.228 million short of the amount originally budgeted due to the following predominant factors:

- Wallcliffe Road works – additional grant funding of \$0.121 million will be received to install audible edge and centre line marking on Wallcliffe Road. This project is fully funded by the grant.
- Scott River Road bridge – the annual budget included \$0.100 million for structural repairs to the Scott River Road bridge, fully funded by Main Roads WA. Main Roads WA have confirmed this work will now be funded in 2026-27 rather than 2025-26.
- Witchcliffe Ecovillage playground contribution - \$0.085 million included in the annual budget to be contributed by the developers towards installation of a playground. The developers have not provided this contribution, and the project has been removed from the works program as a result.
- Crellin Place subsoil reticulation – a grant of \$0.100 million from Department of Water and Environmental Regulation was anticipated to be used towards a subsoil reticulation project on Crellin Place with a total cost of \$0.140 million. This project is being rescope, and it has been confirmed that the DWER grant will be used to fund a different project in 2026-27.

Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure is forecast to be underspent by \$3.670 million. Some adjustments to capital projects are outlined in the 'Capital income' section above, and other adjustments shift with further adjustments including:

- Davis Road Waste Maintenance Facility – the original 2025-26 budget included \$4.000 million for the commencement of capping and closure of this facility in preparation for development of a replacement transfer station. Due to the required clearing permit application still sitting with the relevant authority for approval, procurement for this major project has been delayed. It should be noted that the Davis Road project is fully funded from the Waste Maintenance Facility Reserve. Hence this change in expenditure is reflected in reserve movements and does not impact utilisation of current year rate revenue.
- Turner Street Jetty replacement – the original budget included \$0.380 million for the replacement of the Turner Street Jetty, inclusive of \$0.080 million carryover from 2024-25 for design. Following community consultation, Council is being asked – via a separate report brought to the 25 February Ordinary Council Meeting – to allocate additional funds of \$0.325 million to this project, based on more recent cost estimates for completion of the required works.
- Cape Leeuwin Trail – an adjustment of \$0.150 million is required to cover the cost of variations and additional work required to support completion of this project.
- Turner Holiday Park foreshore wall project – an adjustment of \$0.465 million is required to remove this project from the 2025-26 annual budget. Council are being asked to make a decision on whether the Turner Street Jetty should be replaced with a like-for-like structure as noted above, with some of the funds from the Turner Holiday Park foreshore wall project being earmarked to cover the additional costs involved in the jetty replacement.
- HEART – addition of \$0.150 million project to install fire curtain at the Margaret River HEART.

A full schedule of proposed changes to the capital works program is included as an attachment to this report.

Reserves and borrowings

No borrowings were anticipated to be required during 2025-26, and this position remains true at mid-year review.

As a result of the mid-year budget review, the year-end balance of reserve funds is expected to be \$4.816 million higher than budgeted. The main adjustments resulting in this revised position have been noted earlier in this report but are reiterated below, along with other notable adjustments:

- Waste Management Reserve – transfers from reserves have decreased by \$3.630 million, predominantly due to delays encountered with the Davis Road Waste Maintenance Facility capping and closure project.
- ICT Reserve – transfers from reserves have decreased by \$1.244 million due to the revised cost forecast for this project in 2025-26, made up of anticipated underspends in both employee costs and materials and contracts.
- Storm Damage Reserve - \$0.250 million to be drawn from this reserve to cover the higher-than-expected cost of storm damage cleanup incurred during the first half of 2025-26.
- Asset Renewal Reserve – various adjustments have been made to increase or decrease amounts taken from this reserve based on latest cost estimates for various projects. In addition, a transfer from reserve of \$0.140 million has been made based on Council's decision on 23 July 2025 (OM2025/083) to allocate \$0.140 million from the Asset Renewal Reserve to undertake repairs to the Old Goods Shed.

Opening and closing surplus position

The 2025-26 Annual Budget estimated an opening position of 1 July 2025 of \$3.030 million. Following completion of the statutory audit of the Shire's annual financial report for 2024-25, the opening position was confirmed as being \$3.126 million.

The amendment of \$0.096 million required to align the budget opening surplus position with the audited actual opening position has been made as part of this budget review. This amendment, plus

the other changes proposed through the budget review as outlined in this report, result in a balanced closing position.

In closing, the mid-year review ensures that Council remains informed of the Shire's evolving financial position and can make evidence-based decisions for the remainder of the financial year. It should be noted that this report only provides an indicative estimate of the financial position in relation to budgeted activities across the full financial year to 30 June 2026 however. Other savings and shortfalls may eventuate during the remaining financial year, therefore affecting the estimates shown.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

Financial implications of the budget review and outlined within the Discussion/Officer Comments section of this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

The budget review supports responsible financial management and long-term sustainability by ensuring that expenditure aligns with updated forecasts and project timing.

ADVOCACY

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

While no high-level organisational risks arise from the review, timing uncertainties for major capital projects and variability in grant funding schedules present operational risks that will continue to be monitored as is usual practice.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the 2025-26 budget review in accordance with regulation 33A of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996; and
2. Approves the resulting amendments to the 2025-26 Annual Budget as detailed in Attachment 1.

11.3.3. 2026-27 TO 2040-41 LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Location/Address	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Applicant/Landowner	N/A
File Reference	COR/134
Report Author	Melanie Stevens, Director Corporate and Customer Services
Authorising Officer	Andrea Selvey, Chief Executive Officer
Authority/Discretion	Executive/Strategic

IN BRIEF

- The Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2026–2041 (LTFP) has been prepared in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.
- The LTFP outlines the Shire’s long-term financial capacity to deliver the Strategic Community Plan 2025-2035, adopted by Council in July 2025.
- The Plan proposes rate revenue increases of 6.5% per annum and forecasts \$330 million in capital works, primarily for renewal of existing infrastructure.
- Council endorsement is sought to guide future budget development and resource planning.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2026-2041 [**11.3.3.1** - 35 pages]

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Long-Term Financial Plan 2026-41 as provided at Attachment 1 as a strategic guiding document for future planning.

LOCATION PLAN

Nil

BACKGROUND

The Shire’s LTFP forms a core component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and provides the financial underpinning for the delivery of the Strategic Community Plan 2025-35 and Corporate Business Plan.

The Draft LTFP 2026-2041 has been prepared by Moore Australia alongside an Asset Management Plan (AMP) for the same period and is designed to demonstrate the Shire’s financial capacity to resource its identified strategic outcomes and priority actions, including its ability to resource its AMP obligations and projected workforce growth requirements.

The document outlines the key financial assumptions, projected operating and capital income and expenditure, asset renewal requirements, and long-term financial ratio outlooks.-term financial ratios.

The LTFP is a strategic forecasting tool and is not a budget; however, it establishes the financial parameters and sustainability settings within which future budgets will be developed.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

Section 5.56 (1) *Local Government Act 1995* requires local governments to have in place a plan for the future.

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 regulation 19DA specifies the requirements for a Corporate Business Plan and section 3 reads as follows:

A corporate business plan for a district is to —

- a) set out, consistently with any relevant priorities set out in the strategic community plan for the district, a local government's priorities for dealing with the objectives and aspirations of the community in the district; and
- b) govern a local government's internal business planning by expressing a local government's priorities by reference to operations that are within the capacity of the local government's resources; and
- c) develop and integrate matters relating to resources, including asset management, workforce planning and long-term financial planning.

DLGIRS has issued guidelines for the preparation of long-term financial plans in line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and recommends a minimum 10-year strategic financial plan aligned with asset and workforce planning.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

Yes

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

CR D'ATH, CR MUIR OM2025/86

That Council endorses the Strategic Community Plan 2025-35 and authorises the CEO to approve any minor amendments and design requirements that may be needed before the document is finalised for printing and publication.

CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 7/0

*FOR: CRS BINKS, BOLAND, D'ATH, EARL, KENNAUGH, MELDRUM, MUIR
AGAINST: NIL*

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: How we work

Outcome Statement W6: We manage our finances responsibly, investing in services and assets that deliver sustainable, long-term value for now and the future

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Moore Australia were engaged to facilitate preparation of the LTFP and engaged with both the Executive Leadership Team and Assets team as part of this process. Feedback from officers has informed adjustments to the underlying assumptions and capital program included in the LTFP.

A workshop was further held with Elected Members and the Executive Leadership Team in February 2026.

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

Draft LTFP Overview

The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) 2026–2041 provides a consolidated view of the Shire's long-term financial capacity to deliver services, renew and expand infrastructure, and achieve the strategic objectives set out in the Strategic Community Plan 2025–2035. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and is intended to inform decision-making at both a strategic and operational level.

Overall, the LTFP demonstrates that the Shire is financially sustainable over the long term, provided key assumptions are realised and current funding strategies are maintained. The Plan reflects a growing community, increasing service expectations, and a substantial and ageing asset base that requires ongoing investment to maintain service levels.

Long term maintenance and renewal of the Shire's infrastructure remains a significant challenge and is highly reliance on the receipt of external funding to ensure the economic and social benefits of the

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Shire's infrastructure to the broader region and Western Australia are not impacted. Associated with the road network is the maintenance and renewal of drainage infrastructure.

While the Plan indicates a stable long-term financial position, it also highlights areas of risk and sensitivity, particularly in relation to grant funding, inflation, growth in demand for services, and asset renewal costs. These risks reinforce the importance of ongoing monitoring, regular review of assumptions, and alignment between financial planning, asset management, and service delivery decisions.

Key assumptions

The Draft LTFP uses the 2025-26 adopted annual budget as the base year and applies various assumptions to these base figures to derive a financial forecast over the 15-year period from 2026-27 through to 2040-41.

The table below outlines the key assumptions applied throughout the plan to assist with forecasting revenue and expenditure:

Nature or type	Assumption	Commentary
Population	3% growth p.a.	Census data showed population growth between 2016 and 2021 of 3.32% compared against the state average of 1.46%. Growth is anticipated to continue at a high rate over the timeframe of the LTFP.
Consumer price index (CPI) / Local Government Cost index (LGCI)	2.5% growth p.a.	The global underlying assumption used to underpin all other revenue and expenditure assumptions used in the LTFP is that inflation will fall in line with the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA's) target rate.
Rates	6.5% growth p.a.	Rate revenue accounts for 70% of the Shire's operating revenue over the term of the LTFP. Growth in total rate yield of 6.5% per annum consists in an increase due to population growth of 3.0%, plus 2.5% to account for the cost of covering inflation, and a further 1% to cover growth in services.
Grants, subsidies and contribution	2.5% growth p.a.	Relates to external funds received which are used for ongoing operating expenditure, and which is relatively consistent each year.
Fees and charges	2.5% growth p.a.	Growth in fee and charge income has been forecast in line with inflation. It is noted that 9% of the Shire's current fee and charge income is set by legislation and does not increase year-on-year.
Interest earnings	2.5% growth p.a.	Assumed interest earnings will reduce as interest rates fall in line with RBA targets, and are forecast in line with inflation
Other revenue	2.5% growth p.a.	Assumed to grow in line with inflation
Employee costs	5.25% in Year 1, 3.5% growth thereafter	Growth in Year 1 based on Industrial Agreement wage increase plus allowance for 1% increase in staff numbers, future years assume employee cost growth is in line with inflation plus 1% for increase in staff numbers
Materials and contracts – impacted by population growth	5.0% growth p.a.	Assumed costs to grow in line with inflation, plus additional 2.5% growth in costs for services impacted by population growth e.g. community infrastructure maintenance
Materials and contracts –	2.5% growth p.a.	Assumed costs to grow in line with inflation

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other		
Utilities	2.5% growth p.a.	Assumed costs to grow in line with inflation
Insurances	3.0% growth p.a.	Assumed costs to grow in line with inflation plus an additional 0.5% based on historical premium increases exceeding inflation.
Other expenditure	2.5% growth p.a.	Assumed costs to grow in line with inflation

Financial sustainability and rating levels

The LTFP proposes that rate revenue increases at an average of 6.5% per annum, comprising:

- 2.5% inflation
- 3.0% population-driven growth in rateable properties -driven growth in rateable properties
- 1.0% additional service growth

This approach reflects strong historical and forecast population growth, continued demand for services, and the need to restore revenue capacity following several years of low or zero rate increases during and following the COVID-19 period.-

Expenditure and service levels

Operating expenditure is forecast to grow at 3.4% on average over the LTFP term. This increase reflects not only the impact of inflation – forecast at a rate of 2.5% over the LTFP – but also increased service volume due to population growth, and increased depreciation from new assets.

The LTFP assumes that existing service levels are maintained, with efficiency measures to be continually explored.

Asset management and capital works

The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) incorporates a capital works program valued at approximately \$330 million over its 15-year horizon. Consistent with Council's Asset Management Policy, the program places a strong emphasis on the renewal of existing infrastructure – particularly roads, bridges, parks, drainage systems, and buildings – rather than the creation of new assets.

For the purposes of the LTFP, it is assumed that any new assets required to support future growth will be fully funded through developer contributions and are therefore not reflected in the capital works forecasts. It is important to note, however, that in practice developer contributions do not cover the full cost of delivering the new infrastructure and community facilities required to meet the demands of a growing population. Any additional assets beyond those identified in the LTFP would therefore necessitate new or increased revenue sources to ensure their delivery and ongoing sustainability.

Renewal expenditure for infrastructure is forecast to slightly exceed depreciation across the 15-year period, demonstrating a focus on maintaining asset condition and service levels.-year period, demonstrating a focus on maintaining asset condition and service levels.

The forward capital works program is heavily reliant on external grants, particularly for major road and bridge works.

Cash Reserves

Reserve funds fluctuate over the term of the LTFP as they are used for planned renewals and rebuilt ahead of future renewal spikes. Over the life of the plan \$50.3 million is being transferred to reserves, with \$49.4 million being transferred from reserves.

The use of reserves to accommodate asset renewal and other funding fluctuations over time forms a major part of the Shire's strategy to minimise the impact on ratepayers caused by sporadic rate spikes.

Borrowings

The Shire's most recent major borrowing was \$8.0 million to fund the refurbishment of the Margaret River Aquatic Centre. This borrowing placed the Shire close to its maximum borrowing capacity.

No additional borrowings are proposed over the period of the LTFP, with all existing borrowings forecast to be fully repaid by 30 June 2042.

This approach forms part of the Shire's financial strategy to maintain flexibility to respond to unforeseen or emerging expenditure pressures. It also preserves the capacity to leverage future grant funding opportunities, should they arise.

Summary

The LTFP identifies several key risks, including:

- Potential reductions in State and Federal capital grant funding
- Higher-than-forecast inflation
- Population variability
- Climate-related impacts on assets and services-related impacts on assets and services

Sensitivity modelling indicates that variations in these assumptions could significantly impact the LTFP's projections. Officers will monitor and update the Plan annually.

Overall the Draft LTFP provides a sound framework that will allow the Council to consider future priorities within its resourcing capabilities, and to sustainably deliver the services including new infrastructure required by the community. It is now presented for the Council's consideration and is recommended for adoption as a guide for future planning.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

The LTFP is a forecasting document and does not commit Council to specific expenditures. However, it provides an indication of long-term funding requirements and financial capacity, including:-

- Sustained rate increases averaging 6.5% to support service and asset needs.
- Capital works totalling approximately \$330 million, funded through a combination of rates, reserves, and significant grant funding and with a strong focus on renewal.
- No allowance for new infrastructure or community facilities that may be required due to growth.
- No additional borrowings, with existing debt reducing to nil by 2042.
- Operating deficits in the early years due primarily to depreciation exceeding revenue capacity, improving over time as revenues grow and asset renewal aligns more closely with depreciation.

Future annual budgets will be required to reflect the financial parameters set by the LTFP.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

The LTFP considers how the Shire will financially resource the delivery of community outcomes as contained in the Strategic Community Plan 2025-35, which include outcomes around environmental, social and economic sustainability.

ADVOCACY

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

The LTFP identifies several risks in the forecasting assumptions made and other factors that might impact on the long-term financial sustainability of the Shire. The LTFP is updated on a regular basis to incorporate the latest available information.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Long-Term Financial Plan 2026-41 as provided at Attachment 1 as a strategic guiding document for future planning.

11.3.4. LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR JANUARY 2026

Location/Address	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Applicant/Landowner	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
File Reference	FIN/42
Report Author	Angela Hickman, Finance Coordinator
Authorising Officer	Melanie Stevens, Director Corporate and Customer Services
Authority/Discretion	Legislative

IN BRIEF

It is a requirement of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* that payments made under delegated authority by the CEO are reported to Council on a monthly basis showing details of each account paid since the last such list was prepared.

ATTACHMENTS

{attachments-list}

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the January 2026 List of Payments for \$4,927,392.02 as certified correct by the Chief Executive Officer.

LOCATION PLAN

Nil

BACKGROUND

Where Council has delegated authority to the CEO to make payments from the Shire's bank accounts then under regulation 13(1) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* a list of such payments is to be prepared each month for noting by Council. The list of payments for January 2026 was prepared on 5 February 2026.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

Local Government Act 1995, s 6.10

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 r.13

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: How we work

Outcome Statement W6: We manage our finances responsibly, investing in services and assets that deliver sustainable, long-term value for now and the future

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Nil

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

Table 1 below provides a summary of the payments made and Table 2 makes comparison between payments for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years.

The List of Payments attachment provides further details as required under Regulation 13(1). These details are as follows:

- (a) The payee's name;
- (b) The amount of the payment;
- (c) The date of the payment; and
- (d) Sufficient information to identify the transaction.

In order to improve operational efficiency and reduce costs, the Shire's Finance team continually liaise with creditors paid by cheque to encourage them to switch to EFT.

TABLE 1 – SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS MADE IN THE MONTH JANUARY 2026

MODE OF PAYMENT	CHEQUE / EFT NUMBES	AMOUNT
Cheques		nil
EFT	107925 - 108377	\$ 3,310,308.40
Direct Debits		\$ 1,617,083.62
TOTAL		\$ 4,927,392.02

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TABLE 2 – COMPARISON WITH PRIOR YEAR OF PAYMENTS

MONTH	2024-25				2025-26			
	CHEQUES	EFT/DD	TOTAL PAYMENTS	CUMULATIVE PAYMENTS	CHEQUES	EFT/DD	TOTAL PAYMENTS	CUMULATIVE PAYMENTS
July	Nil	\$ 5,524,178.15	\$ 5,524,178.15	\$ 5,524,178.15		\$ 4,105,745.15	\$ 4,105,745.15	\$ 4,105,745.15
August	Nil	\$ 2,154,102.51	\$ 2,154,102.51	\$ 7,678,280.66		\$ 5,335,877.15	\$ 5,335,877.15	\$ 9,441,622.30
September	Nil	\$ 3,861,331.53	\$ 3,861,331.53	\$ 11,539,612.19		\$ 4,971,770.96	\$ 4,971,770.96	\$ 14,413,393.26
October	Nil	\$ 17,330,030.90	\$ 17,330,030.90	\$ 28,869,643.09		\$ 9,964,965.62	\$ 9,964,965.62	\$ 24,378,358.88
November	\$ 486.00	\$ 4,298,085.40	\$ 4,298,571.40	\$ 33,168,214.49		\$ 6,765,385.33	\$ 6,765,385.33	\$ 31,143,744.21
December	Nil	\$ 4,552,994.70	\$ 4,552,994.70	\$ 37,721,209.19	\$ 383.90	\$ 18,122,531.70	\$ 18,122,915.60	\$ 49,266,659.81
January	Nil	\$ 4,171,551.29	\$ 4,171,551.29	\$ 41,892,760.48		\$ 4,927,392.02	\$ 4,927,392.02	\$ 54,194,051.83
February	Nil	\$ 3,963,331.09	\$ 3,963,331.09	\$ 45,856,091.57			\$ -	
March	\$ 452.95	\$ 7,195,496.78	\$ 7,195,949.73	\$ 53,052,041.30			\$ -	
April	Nil	\$ 4,874,918.51	\$ 4,874,918.51	\$ 57,926,959.81			\$ -	
May	Nil	\$ 5,142,580.45	\$ 5,142,580.45	\$ 63,069,540.26			\$ -	
June	\$ 165.75	\$ 5,550,921.07	\$ 5,551,086.82	\$ 68,620,627.08			\$ -	
	\$ 1,104.70	\$ 68,619,522.38	\$ 68,620,627.08		\$ 383.90	\$ 54,193,667.93	\$ 54,194,051.83	

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

Nil

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

Nil

ADVOCACY

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the January 2026 List of Payments for \$4,927,392.02 as certified correct by the Chief Executive Officer.

11.3.5. FINANCIAL ACTIVITY STATEMENT FOR DECEMBER 2025

Location/Address	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Applicant/Landowner	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
File Reference	FIN/14
Report Author	Angela Hickman, Finance Coordinator
Authorising Officer	Melanie Stevens, Director Corporate and Customer Services
Authority/Discretion	Legislative

IN BRIEF

- The monthly financial activity statement report is a standard financial reporting item prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* (FM Regs).
- Council is to consider the financial results for the period ending 31 December 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

1. December 2025 -Monthly Financial Report [**11.3.5.1** - 23 pages]
2. December 2025 - Monthly Business Unit Budgets [**11.3.5.2** - 39 pages]
3. December 2025 - Capital Works Budget [**11.3.5.3** - 7 pages]

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Monthly Financial Report for December 2025 in accordance with section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulations 34 and 35 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

LOCATION PLAN

Nil

BACKGROUND

The Shire is required to prepare a monthly Statement of Financial Activity, reporting on the sources and applications of funds as set out in the annual budget for that month with the following details:

1. annual budget estimates;
2. budget estimates to the end of the month to which the statement relates;
3. actual amounts of expenditure, revenue and income to the end of the month to which the statement relates;
4. material variances between the comparable amounts referred to in (b) and (c); and
5. net current assets at the end of the month to which the statement relates.

In addition, the Shire is required to prepare a monthly Statement of Financial Position, showing the financial position as at:

1. The last day of the previous month; and
2. The last day of the previous financial year.

Under Regulation 34(5) of the FM Regs Council are to adopt a material variance threshold every year. At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 23 July 2025 (OM2025/90) Council adopted a monthly variance for reporting of material variances, where financial activity is greater than 10% and \$10,000.

STATUTORY AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO DECISION

Regulation 34 of the FM Regs requires a local government to prepare each month a Statement of Financial Activity reporting on the sources and applications of funds, as set out in the annual budget under Regulation 22(1) (d) of the FM Regs.

Regulation 35 of the FM Regulations was introduced from 1 July 2023, requiring the monthly financial report to include a Statement of Financial Position showing the financial position of the local government as at the last day of the previous month, and of the previous financial year.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2035

Focus Area: How we work

Outcome Statement W6: We manage our finances responsibly, investing in services and assets that deliver sustainable, long-term value for now and the future.

CONSULTATION AND ADVICE

Business unit managers were provided the draft monthly financial reports for their business units and have provided their comments on variances greater than 10% and \$10,000.

DISCUSSION / OFFICER COMMENTS

The commentary contained in the body of this report is in line with *Financial Management Regulations* r34(2)(b) that requires commentary on material variances to the Statement of Financial Activity at the nature/type level.

The Statement of Financial Activity included in the monthly financial report shows an opening position on 1 July 2025 of \$3.126 million, being the true opening position as confirmed by the Office of the Auditor General, who have finalised their audit of the Shire's 2024-25 Annual Financial Report.

Operating revenue for the year to date is \$43.134 million, which is \$0.265 million above budget, due mainly to higher-than-expected fees for the Margaret River Recreation Centre and Engineering Works Supervision Fees.

Operating expenditure for the year to date is \$26.857 million, which is \$3.007 million (10.28%) below the budgeted spend for this period. Part of the underspend is due to employee costs, and also due to changes in the scoping of the ERP project and timing of the other activities.

Actual employee expenses for the year to date were \$11.258 million, being \$0.953million (7.81%) under budget. This underspent position has been reviewed as part of the mid-year budget review. A major component of the underspend relates to changes in staffing requirements for the ERP Project, which is fully funded by the ICT Reserve.

The table below provides a breakdown of employee expenses at 31 December 2025.

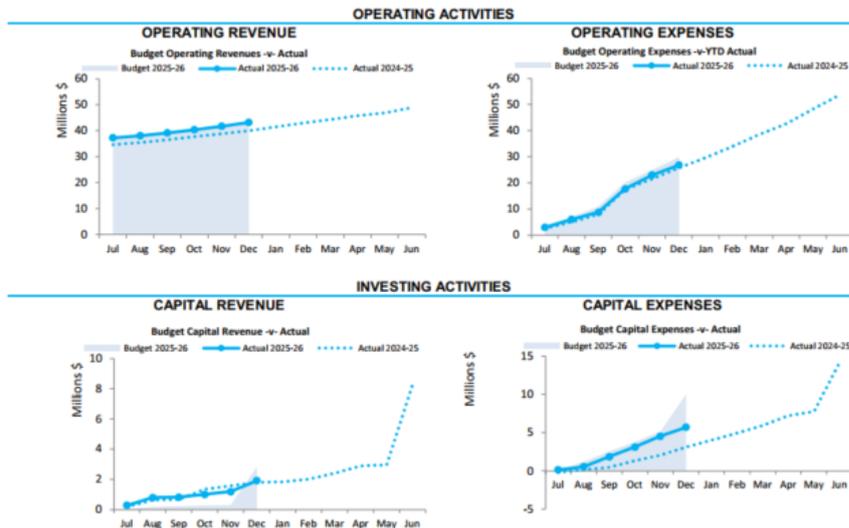
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Category	Adopted Budget (\$ millions)	YTD Budget (\$ millions)	YTD Actual (\$ millions)	YTD Variance (\$ millions)
Salaries & Wages	\$ 18.673	\$ 9.337	\$ 8.594	\$ 0.743
Employee provisions	\$ 1.910	\$ 0.955	\$ 0.888	\$ 0.067
Superannuation	\$ 2.716	\$ 1.358	\$ 1.307	\$ 0.051
Workers compensation	\$ 0.234	\$ 0.234	\$ 0.236	\$ (0.001)
Fringe benefits tax	\$ 0.046	\$ 0.029	\$ 0.022	\$ 0.007
Professional memberships	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.002	\$ (0.002)
Recruitment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.031	\$ (0.031)
Training, education & conferences	\$ 0.477	\$ 0.251	\$ 0.131	\$ 0.120
Uniforms & protective clothing	\$ 0.090	\$ 0.047	\$ 0.048	\$ (0.001)
Total	\$ 24.147	\$ 12.211	\$ 11.257	\$ 0.954

Capital grants, subsidies, and contributions recognised to 31 December 2025 total \$1.907 million, which is \$0.917 million below the forecasted year-to-date position. This variance is due to budget phasing, with the budget assuming the receipt of fire vehicles from DFES totalling \$2.500 million in value which have not yet arrived.

\$5.707 million of capital expenditure has been incurred year to date, which is \$4.308 million lower than budget. This includes a reported underspend of \$2.103 million on roads and \$0.195 million on road bridges. A number of capital jobs are in progress, and amendments to the capital works program will be considered as part of the mid-year budget review.

Financial performance against budget is shown in the following charts:



Following is the Statement of Financial Activity for the period ending 31 December 2025:

SHIRE OF AUGUSTA MARGARET RIVER
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AUGUSTA MARGARET RIVER SHIRE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Supplementary Information	Budget Estimates (a) \$	YTD Budget Estimates (b) \$	YTD Actual (c) \$	Variance* \$ (c) - (b)	Variance* % ((c) - (b))/(b)	Var.
OPERATING ACTIVITIES							
Revenue from operating activities							
General rates		31,160,675	30,910,675	30,692,920	(217,755)	(0.70%)	▼
Grants, subsidies and contributions	13	2,399,697	1,348,234	872,351	(475,883)	(35.30%)	▼
Fees and charges		14,480,861	9,518,812	10,302,422	783,610	8.23%	▲
Interest revenue		1,932,066	1,077,427	1,248,682	171,255	15.89%	▲
Other revenue		93,783	13,355	17,693	4,338	32.48%	▲
Profit on asset disposals	6	86,502	0	0	0	0.00%	
		50,153,584	42,868,503	43,134,068	265,565	0.62%	
Expenditure from operating activities							
Employee costs		(24,146,663)	(12,211,090)	(11,257,296)	953,794	7.81%	▲
Materials and contracts		(15,086,548)	(7,141,308)	(5,393,521)	1,747,787	24.47%	▲
Utility charges		(1,492,364)	(678,650)	(455,710)	222,940	32.85%	▲
Depreciation		(15,455,195)	(7,791,112)	(7,841,711)	(50,599)	(0.65%)	▼
Finance costs		(508,036)	(259,996)	(217,778)	42,218	16.24%	▲
Insurance		(962,114)	(962,114)	(948,071)	14,043	1.46%	▲
Other expenditure		(1,649,324)	(890,794)	(743,529)	147,265	16.53%	▲
Loss on asset disposals	6	(181,085)	0	0	0	0.00%	
		(59,481,329)	(29,935,064)	(26,857,616)	3,077,448	10.28%	
Non-cash amounts excluded from operating activities	Note 2(b)	15,549,778	7,791,112	7,841,711	50,599	0.65%	▲
Amount attributable to operating activities		6,222,033	20,724,551	24,118,163	3,393,612	16.37%	
INVESTING ACTIVITIES							
Inflows from investing activities							
Proceeds from capital grants, subsidies and contributions	14	9,000,112	2,825,000	1,907,262	(917,738)	(32.49%)	▼
Proceeds from disposal of assets	6	490,127	0	200,755	200,755	0.00%	▲
Proceeds from financial assets at amortised cost - self supporting loans		11,500	11,500	6,500	(5,000)	(43.48%)	▼
		9,501,739	2,836,500	2,114,517	(721,983)	(25.45%)	
Outflows from investing activities							
Payments for financial assets at amortised cost - self supporting loans		(20,000)	0	0	0	0.00%	
Payments for property, plant and equipment	5	(7,144,920)	(3,665,555)	(949,514)	2,716,041	74.10%	▲
Payments for construction of infrastructure	5	(18,908,064)	(6,349,674)	(4,757,002)	1,592,672	25.08%	▲
		(26,072,984)	(10,015,229)	(5,706,516)	4,308,713	43.02%	
Amount attributable to investing activities		(16,571,245)	(7,178,729)	(3,591,999)	3,586,730	49.96%	
FINANCING ACTIVITIES							
Inflows from financing activities							
Transfer from reserves	4	15,541,186	996,865	996,865	0	0.00%	
		15,541,186	996,865	996,865	0	0.00%	
Outflows from financing activities							
Repayment of borrowings	10	(1,084,015)	(536,425)	(537,020)	(595)	(0.11%)	▼
Payments for principal portion of lease liabilities	11	(73,097)	(39,584)	(51,142)	(11,558)	(29.20%)	▼
Transfer to reserves	4	(7,065,137)	(542,964)	(593,536)	(50,572)	(9.31%)	▼
		(8,222,249)	(1,118,973)	(1,181,698)	(62,725)	(5.61%)	
Amount attributable to financing activities		7,318,937	(122,108)	(184,833)	(62,725)	(51.37%)	
MOVEMENT IN SURPLUS OR DEFICIT							
Surplus or deficit at the start of the financial year		3,030,276	3,030,276	3,126,371	96,095	3.17%	▲
Amount attributable to operating activities		6,222,033	20,724,551	24,118,163	3,393,612	16.37%	▲
Amount attributable to investing activities		(16,571,245)	(7,178,729)	(3,591,999)	3,586,730	49.96%	▲
Amount attributable to financing activities		7,318,937	(122,108)	(184,833)	(62,725)	(51.37%)	▼
Surplus or deficit after imposition of general rates		0	16,453,990	23,467,703	7,013,713		▲

KEY INFORMATION

▲ ▼ Indicates a variance between Year to Date (YTD) Budget and YTD Actual data as per the adopted materiality threshold.

▲ Indicates a variance with a positive impact on the financial position.

▼ Indicates a variance with a negative impact on the financial position.

Refer to Note 3 for an explanation of the reasons for the variance.

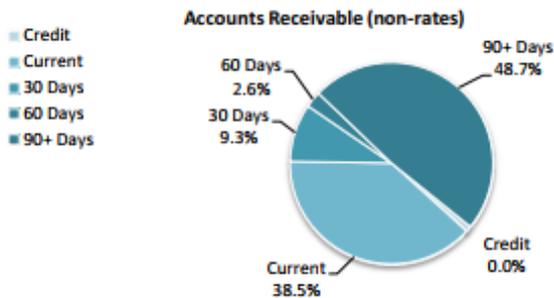
This statement is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Outstanding Debtors

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The following charts compare the outstanding balance of rates and services and the outstanding balance of rates and services in arrears for the current and previous years.

Rates & Services Receivable	30 Jun 2025	31 Dec 2025
	\$	\$
Opening arrears previous years	1,133,789	2,227,185
Levied this year	34,566,402	36,204,942
Less - collections to date	(33,473,005)	(27,369,062)
Gross rates collectable	2,227,185	11,063,065
Allowance for impairment of rates receivable	(82,422)	(82,422)
Net rates collectable	2,144,764	10,980,643
% Collected	93.8%	71.2%



The largest portion of the debt outstanding for more than 90 days relates to a fine billed but not yet paid in full.

Investments

At 31 December the Shire's cash on hand, deposits and investments totaled \$49.858 million including term deposits of \$40.000 million.

Of the \$0.224 million investment interest received in December 2025, \$0.106 million was attributed to interest on reserves and \$0.117million to municipal investments.

Term Deposits – Cash Management

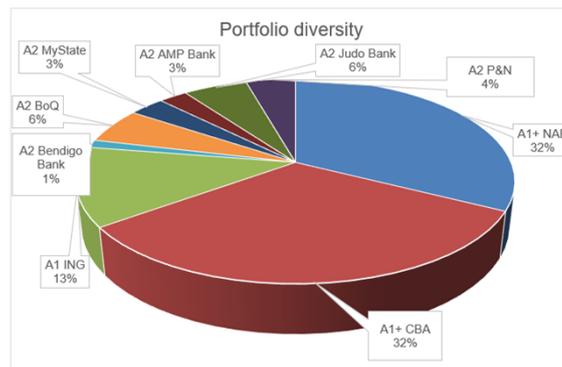
At 31 December 2025, the Shire had the following short-term facilities (term deposits).

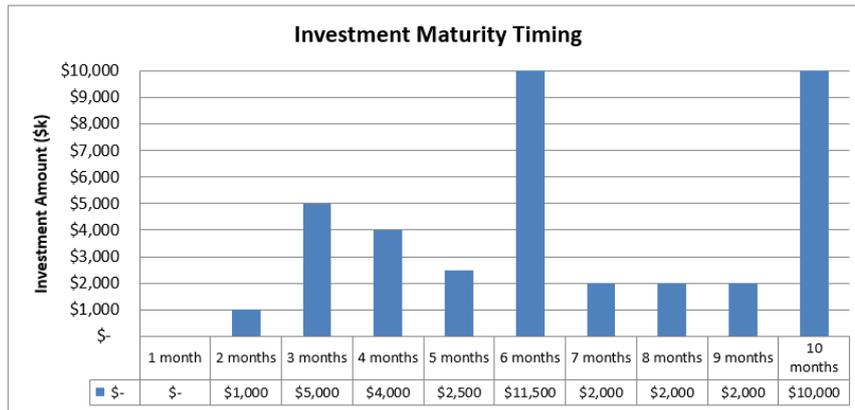
SHIRE OF AUGUSTA MARGARET RIVER
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Maturity Date	Term (days)	Institution (ADI)	Credit Rating	Investment Principal (\$ millions)	Interest Rate	Interest Due (\$ millions)
23/02/2026	182	BOQ	A-2	\$ 1.000	4.05%	\$ 0.020
2/03/2026	181	Bendigo Bank	A-2	\$ 0.500	3.95%	\$ 0.010
2/03/2026	181	Judo Bank	A-2	\$ 0.500	4.00%	\$ 0.010
10/03/2026	120	CBA	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.18%	\$ 0.027
16/03/2026	91	NAB	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.05%	\$ 0.020
1/04/2026	120	CBA	A-1+	\$ 0.500	4.22%	\$ 0.007
7/04/2026	182	AMP	A-2	\$ 1.000	4.00%	\$ 0.020
9/04/2026	150	CBA	A-1+	\$ 2.500	4.20%	\$ 0.043
4/05/2026	182	P&N	A-2	\$ 0.500	4.32%	\$ 0.011
11/05/2026	181	CBA	A-1+	\$ 1.000	4.21%	\$ 0.021
19/05/2026	183	NAB	A-1+	\$ 1.000	4.10%	\$ 0.021
1/06/2026	180	Judo Bank	A2	\$ 0.500	4.45%	\$ 0.011
15/06/2026	182	NAB	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.25%	\$ 0.042
15/06/2026	182	CBA	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.32%	\$ 0.043
16/06/2026	182	Judo Bank	A-2	\$ 1.250	4.55%	\$ 0.028
16/06/2026	182	BOQ	A-2	\$ 1.250	4.50%	\$ 0.028
16/06/2026	182	P&N	A-2	\$ 1.250	4.62%	\$ 0.029
16/06/2026	182	MyState	A-2	\$ 1.250	4.62%	\$ 0.029
23/06/2026	205	NAB	A-1+	\$ 1.000	4.25%	\$ 0.021
30/06/2026	210	CBA	A-1+	\$ 1.000	4.30%	\$ 0.025
15/07/2026	212	CBA	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.36%	\$ 0.051
15/08/2026	243	CBA	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.39%	\$ 0.058
11/09/2026	270	NAB	A-1+	\$ 2.000	4.35%	\$ 0.064
14/10/2026	365	ING	A1	\$ 5.000	4.14%	\$ 0.207
23/10/2026	365	NAB	A-1+	\$ 3.500	4.10%	\$ 0.144
28/10/2026	330	NAB	A-1+	\$ 1.500	4.30%	\$ 0.058
				\$ 40.000		\$ 1.048

During December 2025 three term deposits matured and one was rolled over. Fourteen new term deposits were placed.

The weighted average interest rate on all investments held on 31 December 2025 was 4.25%





In-Kind Support

During December 2025 the following fees & charges have been waived:

- Nil

During December 2025 the following donations were approved:

- Nil

Reserves

Monthly interest on reserve balances was processed for December 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications, Long Term Financial Plan, Whole of Life Cycle Considerations

Monthly financial performance will influence the Long-Term Financial Plan by providing actual revenue and expenditure parameters to compare against forecast results.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental, Social, Economic, Contribution to 'Net Zero' Targets

Nil

ADVOCACY

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Monthly Financial Report for December 2025 in accordance with section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulations 34 and 35 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

11.4

Sustainable Economy and Communities

Nil

12. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

13. MOTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING

14. NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

14.1. Members

14.2. Chief Executive Officer

15. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

16. CLOSURE OF MEETING