

## Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board

### MINUTES

#### *Acknowledgement of Country*

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

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

#### Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Meeting #45

**Date:** 25/02/2026

**Start Time:** 9:32 am **Scheduled Finish Time:** 1:00 pm (Lunch followed)

**Location:** Mt Barker Community Centre – Training Room, 3 Dumas Street

**Attendees:** Board Members

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

Staff

Michael Garrod (General Manager), Ben DellaTorre (Manager Landscape Operations), Michaela Heinson (Manager Planning & Engagement), Renee Clark (A/Manager Business and Governance), Megan Harper (Team Leader Fleurieu Peninsula, Luke Price (Regional Ecologist), Tom Kloeden (Regional Coordinator, Grazing Pressure Management), Brett Ibbotson (Program Manager, Dam Compliance), Nicole Bennett (Team Leader (Eastern Hills and Plains), Caroline Taylor (Coast and Marine Project Officer), Paul Wainwright (Team Leader Water Resources), and Emilee Heinrich (Executive Officer).

In Gallery

Karl Hillyard (H5 Bird Flu Preparedness Coordinator) and Katherine Hill (Wildlife Ecologist)

#### Apologies:

#### Meeting Items

##### Preliminary and Procedural Matters

#### 1.1 Welcome and apologies

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

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

Nil conflicts of interest disclosures arising from the agenda declared.

#### 1.3 Consent Schedule

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

**Moved:** A Lowe

**Seconded:** S Day

**Carried**

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

- Ratification of out of session approval of the Consultation Draft of the next H&F Landscape Plan.
- Artificial Intelligence

#### 1.5 Minutes from the previous meeting

The board **confirmed** the minutes of meeting number 44, held on 10 December 2025 as a true and accurate record.

**Moved:** L Muffet

**Seconded:** C West

**Carried**

**1.6 Actions arising from previous meetings**

- M Garrod noted the aged items against W Telfer, will be reassigned to R Clark.

**Action**

- 1) Re-assignment of W Telfer actions to R Clark.

*Responsible Officer: E Heinrich*

*The board:*

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

**Moved:** J Klein

**Seconded:** L Muffet

**Carried**

**1.7 Resolution Register**

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

**Carried**

**Items (for noting or decision)**

**2.1 Presentation – H5 bird flu Preparedness and Response**

- K Hillyard and K Hill (DEW) presented to the board on the H5 bird flu Preparedness and Response, the following key points were noted:
  - H5 is highly infectious and poses a significant threat to poultry, wild and captive birds, with additional risks to human health and other mammals.
  - A new highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) strain has emerged overseas. While it has not yet been detected in Australia, it is expected to arrive.
  - Three potential pathways for the virus entering Australia were outlined.
  - Clinical signs in birds and appropriate reporting processes were discussed, including use of the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline. There is no treatment available for wildlife, and impacts on flora and fauna are expected to be severe.
  - National preparedness measures include, \$100 million in SAFF funding expiring on 30 June 2026, the National Avian Influenza Wild Bird Surveillance Program, and the addition of new targeted surveillance sites.
  - DEW's response and conservation plan include, \$1.5million in funding from DCCEEW to support migratory species, shorebirds, wetland habitats, predator and vector control, and habitat restoration, as well as \$1.2 million from DCCEEW for Australian Sea Lion conservation works.
- Discussion followed:
  - C West noted the strong public reaction to H5 in Europe and emphasised the importance of clear, consistent and accurate communication to inform and reassure the community.
  - A Lowe asked how messaging would be delivered. It was confirmed that education sessions have commenced, and communications materials are currently being developed.
  - J Harvey raised concerns about cumulative mental health impacts on coastal communities, referencing the recent algal bloom events and the risk of reduced community engagement. K Hillyard acknowledged this as a genuine risk under considered.
  - M Harper sought clarification on agency roles and responsibilities if H5 reaches Australia. The Board was advised to engage with PIRSA for guidance. B Della Torre confirmed that initial contact has been made.
- M Harper and C Taylor then presented on the HFLB Bird Flu Threat Mitigation Project funded through SAFF, noting:
  - Two projects have been funded: Habitat restoration and feral bird control on offshore islands of the Fleurieu Peninsula; and Fox and feral cat control to protect threatened fauna across the Fleurieu Coast and the Coorong and Lake Alexandrina and Albert Ramsar area.
  - C Taylor outlined habitat restoration and feral bird control works are being undertaken on Pullen, Granite, Seal, Wright and West Islands.
  - M Harper outlined the fox and feral cat control project, including control activities across approximately 3,000 hectares over 30 nights using shooting and den fumigation, 2,000 hectares of fox control coordinated through 1080 baiting (with baits supplied and laid by land managers), and 400 hectares over 40 nights of feral cat control via trapping and euthanasia by contractors.
  - Euthanasia criteria for trapped feral cats were discussed, noting determinations will be made by contractors or authorised officers.

- A general media release and local newspaper advertising campaign promoting responsible domestic cat management will commence in March.
- Further discussion followed:
  - The Board discussed ecosystem resilience and the risk of community perceptions attributing blame to nature events such as wildfires or a bird flu outbreak.
  - The importance of building both ecological and community resilience was emphasised.
  - C Taylor confirmed that communications will not directly reference bird flu, but will instead focus on protecting wildlife and building ecological resilience

## 2.2 Presentation & Briefing paper – Deep Creek and Tooperang-Nangkita Post- Fire Recovery

- A briefing paper was provided prior to the meeting and taken as read, L Price presented an overview of the post-fire recovery context highlighting:
  - The Deep Creek fire burnt 4,592 hectares, including 66 landholders and 22 structures. Approximately 60 hectares of high value revegetation was burnt. However, a strong seed bank is expected from the Goondooloo closed shrubland revegetation.
  - The Tooperang-Nangkita fire burnt 685 hectares across private and Forestry SA land, affecting 6 structures. The area includes critical black fish sites with significant damage to these sites as a result of the fire.
  - Immediate post fire action is required to prevent irreversible damage from concentrated grazing pressure and weed invasion, with risks including failed revegetation and local extinction of threatened species.
  - A coordinated three year, cross-tenure recovery program is proposed, involving HFLB, DEW/NPWS and the SA Seed Conservation Centre with an estimated total cost of \$1.24 million (excluding GST).
  - Urgent fencing works are currently underway, supported by an initial \$50,000 budget which is anticipated to be recoverable through state insurance.
  - Immediate funding of \$202,000 is required to support herbivore control, threatened species surveys, and rapid weed assessment and control.
- Discussion followed:
  - A Lowe noted the likelihood of more frequent fire events and the need to consider stronger fire management overlay. L Price acknowledged fire is as a natural ecological process with the key challenge being its management.
  - L Muffet highlighted increasing pressure associated with rapid climate change and raised the importance of psychological support for staff. M Garrod acknowledged this and confirmed that management is aware and providing support where possible.
- M Garrod briefed the board on funding through the Landscape Priority Fund, noting:
  - A briefing was provided to the Minister regarding the agency’s use of the Landscape Priority Fund bid. It was proposed that HFLB’s anticipated allocation of approximately \$310,000 be applied to fire recovery efforts, with any remaining funds used to establish a fire affected recovery grant round for landholders. The Minister was supportive of this approach.
  - The board discussed grassroots grants, noting that activities typically covered by insurance would not be eligible for funding.
  - It was recommended to the board that they endorse the investment of the Landscape Priority fund share to support fire recovery efforts and the development of a landholder grant round.
  - Brief discussion followed on the potential for reimbursement through state government funding. M Garrod advised that, due to caretaker mode and the fire not meeting the formal “disaster” threshold, no further engagement or reimbursement is expected.
  - The Board expressed strong support for a rapid and coordinated fire recovery response.

*The board, in block:*

**2.2.1 noted** that the immediate funding requirements for priority post-fire recovery works associated with the Deep Creek and Tooperang–Nangkita bushfires amounts to \$233,835, excluding any additional support for fire-affected private landholders.

**2.2.2 noted** that efforts are underway to secure the required resources.

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

**Carried**

**2.2.3 endorsed** the investment of the HFLB 2026 LPF share to support urgent phase 1 fire recovery projects.

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

**2.2.4 endorsed** the development of a fire recovery grant round (modelled on our Grassroot Grants) to support fire affected landholders.

**Moved:** L Muffet      **Seconded:** A Lowe      **Carried**

### 2.3 General Managers Report

- M Garrod spoke to the report, highlighting the following:
  - The Cabinet submission for the WAP Amendment did not progress to Cabinet and has been deferred. It is expected to be considered within the first 100 days of the new Government.
  - Communication and engagement regarding dams and compliance, have been effective, achieving strong reach and positive engagement outcomes.
- Discussion followed:
  - J Klein commended the First Nations artwork, noting its high quality. The board expressed strong support for this sentiment.
  - S Days' contribution to the procurement of the artwork was discussed, noting the process was well managed by C Dorr. It was further noted that a presentation on the procurement process will be provided following the official launch in May.
  - J Stacey observed a positive shift in community perception regarding the dam compliance program.
  - A Lowe queried the correspondence in relation to the "rabbit plague". M Garrod confirmed that it came from a landholder who was unsatisfied with the advice provided by the board and believed control should be undertaken by the agency. Staff confirmed landholder responsibility of pest control and further spoke to the increase in council contribution to rabbit control.

**Action**

- 2) Presentation to be provided to the board on the process and Launch of the First Nations Artwork Procurement after its May release.

*Responsible Officer: C Dorr*

*The board:*

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

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

### 2.4 Quarterly Project Progress Report Oct-Dec 2025

- The Quarterly Project Progress Report was taken as read, brief discussion followed:
  - D Greenhough queried whether "red dot" items could be linked to the risk register and corresponding glide paths to better demonstrate how issues are being addressed. M Garrod confirmed this functionally will be implemented once the new board portal is operational. In the interim the glide path for the WAP Amendment will be circulated out of session.
  - J Klein reflected on the balance between providing a concise, digestible summary and including sufficient depth and contextual detail. It was queried whether the board requires this level of detail in reporting. M Garrod suggested this be further considered at the March board workshop.

**Action**

- 3) Circulate the Glide Pathway for the WAP Amendment to board members out of session.

*Responsible Officer: E Heinrich*

**Carried**

### 2.5 SA Water Support for RGPM Program

- The paper was taken as read, discussion followed:
  - The board queried the anticipated reception of the proposed letter. M Garrod advised that its intended to prompt engagement at a higher level, noting previous discussions at the operational level have not been successful.
  - S Day queried SA Water's obligations as a landholder in relation to feral deer control. Staff confirmed that under the Landscape Act, landholders are required to destroy all feral deer on their land. The Board agreed this obligation should be referenced in the letter. A Lowe suggested including reference to the impacts of grazing pressure on the SA Water Habitat Recovery Program.

- D Greenhough noted that the letter would benefit from structural revision. The Board supported D Greenhough and M Garrod, in consultation with relevant staff, to revise the letter and incorporate Board feedback.

*The board:*

**2.5.1 Approved** a formal funding request to be made to the SA Water board, in the form of a letter from the Chair of the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board.

**Moved:** A Graham **Seconded:** A Lowe **Carried**

## 2.6 Draft 2026-27 Business Plan Budget

- The paper was taken as read, discussion followed:
  - A Graham queried whether dollar values could be included alongside percentages in the chart relating to the distinction between net zero and climate ready resilience. It was also suggested that Figure 1 and 2 be positioned directly above Figure 3 to improve readability. Staff noted this feedback.
  - It was noted that further detail and contextual information will be provided in the full Business Plan, to be presented to the board at the April meeting.

### Action

- 4) Include dollar values alongside percentages in Figure 2 and update the figures in the Business Plan.

*Responsible Officer:* R Clark

*The board:*

**2.6.1 noted** and provided feedback on the draft budget for the 2026-27 Business Plan.

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

## 2.7 Carbon Audit Emissions Report 2024-25

- The Carbon Emissions Report 2024-25 was taken as read, R Clark highlighted that the agency's electricity contract had changed 12 months earlier without the board's knowledge. A request has since been made to the provider to backdate the associated carbon offset, which has been confirmed as achievable.
- Discussion followed:
  - The board queried why accurate emission data had not been captured prior to the 2024-25 financial year. R Clark advised that the agency has transitioned to a centralised travel booking system, enabling accurate data capture. Prior staff booking was made individually with the assumption that the carbon credit was purchased with each flight.
  - Following discussion on the draft Business Plan, S Day queried whether the reported \$67,000 expenditure with the agency's net zero pathway included the cost outlined in this report and requested a detailed breakdown of this expenditure.

### Action

- 5) Provide a detailed breakdown of the \$67,000 expenditure associated with the Net Zero activities, to be included with the draft Business Plan at the April meeting

*Responsible Officer:* R Clark

*The board:*

**2.7.1 Noted** the Carbon Audit Emissions Report for the 2024-25 Financial Year.

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

## 2.8 Water Resources Steering Committee (WRSC) Update and Collaboration with SA Water

- Taken as read, discussion followed:
  - A Lowe, spoke to the SA Water's involvement in WRSC, noting concerns arising from its participation in the working group component of the committee. Ongoing concerns have been raised regarding both influence and perception of having a significant water holder being involved in the committee.
  - To address perceived conflict of interest, the WRSC has proposed a revised approach to collaboration with SA Water that includes retaining representation on the WRSC and establishing bi-monthly meetings between SA Water and the Hills and Fleurieu Water Resources Team to discuss water planning matters separately from the committee process.

- The board queried whether the proposed changes posed any risk to the relationship with SA Water and the board. M Garrod advised that while some disappointment may be expected, no significant issues are anticipated.
- Given the low level of risk, the board supported the approach to managing SA Water’s involvement.

*The board, in block:*

**2.8.1 noted** the issues discussed at the Hills and Fleurieu Water Resources Steering Committee meeting held on 19 December 2025.

**2.8.2** Further **discussed** the involvement of SA Water representatives on the Water Resources Steering Committee and the Water Resources Working Group.

**Moved: S Day                      Seconded: J Harvey                      Carried**

**2.8.3 approved** a modified approach to collaboration with SA Water that retains representation on the Water Resources Steering Committee and establishes a bi-monthly meeting with the Hills and Fleurieu Water Resources Team to discuss water planning matters.

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

**2.9 Board Portal**

- The paper was taken as read. M Heinson advised that pre-deployment activities have commenced, and the Board Portal may be available earlier than the previously anticipated late March / early April timeframe.

*The board:*

**2.9.1 noted** that Board members will receive a password reset email in late March / early April to enable access to the new Board Portal.

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

**2.10 Compliance Update and revised Policy and Procedure**

- Paper was taken as read, no discussion followed.

*The board:*

**2.10.1 approved** the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Compliance Policy

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

*The board, in block:*

**2.10.2 noted** the Hills and Fleurieu Board Compliance Procedure.

**2.10.3 noted** the Hills and Fleurieu compliance update.

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

**2.11 Engagement Plan for “Towards Net Zero Ag Strategy”**

- The paper was provided prior to the meeting and was taken as read, discussion followed:
  - L Muffet queried the wording of the document heading. N Bennet advised that while the document could more accurately be described as a “framework”, it has been prepared as an internal document for board visibility.
  - J Klein noted the absence of a national context and suggested this be incorporated. It was also recommended that SAWI be included in the consultation stakeholder list.

*The board:*

**2.11.1 endorsed** the proposed Engagement Plan for the Draft *Towards Net Zero Agriculture 2050 Hills and Fleurieu Strategy* (‘Net Zero Strategy’).

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

**Standing Items**

**3.1 Work Health and Safety Update, and revised Work Health and Safety and Injury Management Policy**

- The paper was provided prior to the meeting and was taken as read by the board, no discussion followed.

*The board:*

**3.1.1 noted** the WHS update as at 13 February 2026.

**Moved: L Muffet                      Seconded: A Graham                      Carried**

**3.1.2 approved** the revised WHS-14 Work Health and Safety and Injury Management Policy.

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

**3.2 Financial Overview**

- The financial overview was taken as read, brief discussion in relation to “Park Infrastructure” and what the definition of this is. Staff to confirm with Finance and circulate out of session.

**Action**

6) Clarification of what “Park Infrastructure” includes to be provided out of session.

*Responsible Officer:* E Heinrich

*The board:*

**3.2.1 noted** the Finance update as at 31 January 2026.

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

**Carried**

**3.3 Board Member Activity Register**

The Board Member Activity Register was taken as read.

*The board:*

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

**Carried**

**3.4 Board Forward Agenda**

- The Board Forward Agenda was taken as read. M Garrod noted:
  - D Greenhough will be an apology for the March board workshop. J Klein will step in as Deputy Chair in the interim.
  - K Telfer site visit has been confirmed for the July workshop.

*The board:*

**3.3.1 noted** the Forward Agenda.

**3.5 Register of Interests**

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

**Carried**

**3.6 Correspondence**

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

**Carried**

**Other Business**

- 4.1**
- Ratification of out of session approval of the Consultation Draft of the next H&F Landscape Plan.
    - Consultation draft of the next H&F Landscape Plan was sent out of session to board members for approval; a Corum was reached but wish to formalise in session.

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

**Carried**

- Artificial Intelligence

Discussion was held regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) within the agency:

- S Day raised opportunities for AI to improve efficiency, and the need to consider how its use can be effectively integrated and managed within the workplace.
- R Clark advised that a draft AI strategy has been developed at the state government level, which is expected to include provisions for staff training. An update will be provided to the board in due course.

**Action**

7) When more detail is available, provide an update on State Government AI draft strategy.

*Responsible Officer:* R Clark

- Community Engagement Committee
  - L Muffet noted no dates for 2026 CEC meetings had been set and wishes to get dates confirmed as soon as possible.

**Action**

8) CEC Dates to be drafted and confirmed.

*Responsible Officer: C Dorr and S Johansen*

**In Camera / Confidential Papers**

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

**5.1 Proposed Acting General Manager arrangements to be provided to the DEW Chief Executive for consideration  
Organisational support for board member learning and development.**

**Meeting Closure**

- 6.1 Next meeting:** Wednesday – 29 April 2026  
**Venue:** Mount Barker Polo Grounds
- 6.2 Meeting close – 1:12pm**

Endorsed 	David Greenhough <b>Presiding Member</b> <b>Hills Fleurieu Landscape Board</b>  29 April 2025
--	---