

Environmental Subcommittee

Minutes

Tuesday, 01 July 2025



Matt Young
Director of Infrastructure and Development

Acknowledgement of Country

We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Wadandi people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their culture; and to Elders past and present, their descendants who are with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps.

Our Vision

A lifestyle of choice; connecting community, culture and country.

Our Values



H Honesty

We are respectful in all that we do, and all interactions we have, whilst being inclusive and mindful of differences.



E Empathy

We are kind and show understanding of peoples circumstances, perspectives and differences.



A Accountability

We are transparent in all that we do, and stay true to our word by taking responsibility for our actions.



R Respect

We are respectful in all that we do, and all interactions we have, whilst being inclusive and mindful of differences.



T Teamwork

We are cooperative, collaborative and united while working towards common goals of our Shire.



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1. Declaration of Opening/Announcement of Visitors

The Presiding Member opened the meeting at 3:06PM and made the following Acknowledgement of Country and statement:

'We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Wadandi people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their culture; and to Elders past and present, their descendants who are with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps.'

2. Record of Attendance/Apologies/Leave of Absence (Previously Approved)

VOTING:

Councillor - Chair	S Schiano
Director of Infrastructure and Development (via Teams)	M Young
Manager Parks, Waste and Natural Environment	J Connah
Natural Resource Manager	V Jackson
Capel Land Conservation District Representative	B Kelly
Leschenault Biosecurity Group Representative	K Duzevich
Ludlow Tuart Forest Restoration Group Representative	H Topp

NON VOTING:

Capel Land Conservation District (Proxy)	B Dear
Ludlow Tuart Forest Restoration Group (Proxy)	B Biggins
Director of Community and Corporate	S Chamberlain
Manager Governance and Risk	T Shipley
Corporate Administration and EA to the Shire President and CEO	B Clayton

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Nil

APOLOGIES:

Councillor (Deputy Chair)	J Fergusson
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VISITORS:

Councillor	R Mogg
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2.1. Introductions

Each member was invited to provide a brief introduction, including their professional background and the organisation or stakeholder group they are representing.

2.2. Housekeeping

The Presiding Member provided information and protocols relating to housekeeping.



3. Declarations of Interest

Nil

4. Confirmation of Minutes

Nil

5. Presentations

Nil

6. Reports

6.1. Shire of Capel – Update on key topics

The Shire initially funded the management of their bushland reserves in 2017. Prior to this, bushland maintenance was unfunded, sparse and uncoordinated. Managing bushland reserves is a fine balance of protecting the high diversity of native plants and animals while allowing public access to appreciate and utilise the area for recreation and exercise.

The Shire has the responsibility of managing Reserves according to the purpose stated on the Management Order.

When a Management Order for a Reserve is given over by the State Government, it will be given one, or a combination, of the Purpose of Management Categories. This will guide the Shire in how each reserve is to be managed.

- Drainage
- Public Recreation
- Foreshore Management
- Landscape Protection
- Conservation
- Quarry (Gravel & Sand)

With over 135 reserves, comprising almost 700 hectares, a “levels of service” analysis was completed to assist with how the Shire will approach task as efficiently as possible.

Levels of Service

1.1 Classification framework for public open space.

The Department of Sport and Recreation's classification framework for public open spaces highlights the importance of amenity and aesthetic values. These spaces offer significant benefits, enhancing both recreational enjoyment and environmental preservation. They serve as essential areas for leisure activities and relaxation while also supporting biodiversity through ecological linkages and natural landscapes. The framework categorizes these spaces into three main groups: Recreational, Sport, and Nature, each further detailed across four hierarchical catchments.

Local Open Space – Small parklands – immediate residential population – 0.4-1 ha

Neighbourhood Open Space – 1-5 ha – Combination of open parkland and bushland – community focus recreational and social focus

District Open Space – 5-15+ ha – for organised sport – substantial recreational space & some nature space – serves several neighbourhoods – can preserve local biodiversity and natural area values – multiple user groups and associations.

Regional Open Space - accommodate important recreation and organised sport spaces as well as significant conservation and/or environmental features – 20 ha +

- ROS should be large enough to accommodate various concurrent uses, including organised sports, children's play, picnicking, bush walking, and protection of natural features.



1.2 Levels of service

Breaking down the reserves into three broad management categories

Level 3: Annual Inspection Frequency (Minimal/Low)

- *Low Public Use Area – High Conservation Status or Moderate Use Area – Low to Moderate Conservation Status*
- Remote reserves (bushland intact with limited management issues)
- Reactive works
- Annual inspections
- Fire break/mitigation works in urban areas

Example – Drainage reserves, Gwindinup, Goodwood Road, Peppermint Grove Beach Foreshore Reserves

Level 2: Biannual Inspection

- *Moderate Public Use Area – High to Moderate Conservation Status*
- Passive monitoring of Flora and Fauna status
- Some weed management of highly invasive species
- Monitoring uses – reactionary works
- Fire break/mitigation works in urban areas
- Limited infrastructure & service requirements

Example – Waste Transfer Station, Gelorup Reserves, Wicklow Wetland, Rail Bridge Reserve

Level 1: Quarterly Inspections

- *High Public Use Area - Moderate to high Conservation Status*
- Monitor Visitor Risk Management (VRM)
- Monitor and undertake weed management of high/moderate invasive species
- Monitor track condition and erosion
- Fire break/hazard mitigation works
- Invasive weed species monitoring and eradication – aesthetic & invasiveness

Example – Kooyar (Roe Rd) Reserve, Sheoak Park, Ironstone Gully, Five Mile Brook

Purpose Nature spaces provide a setting where people can enjoy nearby nature and protect local biodiversity and natural area values.

Description Nature spaces provide opportunity for low-impact recreational activities, such as walking, cycling, picnicking, playing, watching or exploring natural features.

Nature spaces may include bushland, coastal areas, wetlands and riparian habitats, and geological and natural features. Sites are managed to enable recreational access while protecting local ecological and biodiversity values.

The framework classifies open spaces where community access is encouraged and explicitly managed. While it is acknowledged that substantial recreation activities occur in other areas of publicly accessible space, the framework is not intended to apply to areas where the primary purpose or function is identified as:

- Preservation and restoration of natural features and values such as Bush Forever estate, conservation reserve, nature reserve, state forest or similar.
- Residual land or land set aside as urban deferred or for road reserve or a similar purpose.
- River and coastal foreshore reserves and buffer zones.
- Where statutory responsibility lies with the Western Australian Planning Commission, Department of Environment and Conservation or other State Government body.

Coastal and Foreshore Management Plans

The Shire has commenced the development of a comprehensive Foreshore Management Plan (FMP) through a public procurement process, aimed at guiding the future planning, adaptation, and maintenance of the Peppermint Grove Beach and Dalyellup Beach foreshore areas. The FMP will help ensure these coastal areas remain healthy, accessible, and protected for community enjoyment and recreation for generations to come.

Building on the outcomes of the Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan (CHRMAP) and aligning with the requirements of State Planning Policy 2.6, the FMP will inform the management of coastal infrastructure, public reserves, and Aboriginal Heritage sites. By incorporating best-practice environmental planning and coastal adaptation strategies, the plans will establish a clear, long-term framework for future investment and ongoing stewardship.

They aim to

- Protect the coastline,
- Guide future Planning requirements,
- Identify future maintenance and management requirements,
- Enhance natural spaces, and
- Support sustainable tourism and economic growth.

The FMPs will also strengthen the Shire's ability to secure funding for key projects, ensuring long-term resilience and sustainability for coastal areas.

The FMPs will integrate environmental and landscape management principles with coastal adaptation strategies, offering a framework for future investments in land use, facilities, structures, and management practices.

The plans will ensure sustainable recreational and tourism use, while also recognising and incorporating environmental and cultural values. Additionally, these documents can be utilised for future funding applications aimed at detailed design and implementation projects.

The Shire has submitted a grant application for \$60,000 to the Coastal Management Plan Assistance Program (CMPAP). The funding application would combine with the existing budget (\$70,000 24/25 FY and \$50,000 25/26 FY bringing the total expenditure to \$180,000), for the implementation of the FMP.

Clearing Permits and Offset Sites

In November 2021, the Shire of Capel received approval to clear native vegetation (Permit No. 8932/1, 8933/1 and 81162/2) to allow road widening along Payne Road, Weld Road and Boyanup West Road, respectively. The offset site is at Kemerton, having a combined area of 3.6 Ha. The offset site comprises of two separate areas managed by two consultants Natural Areas and Tranen with annual monitoring reports received to allow for annual reporting to DWER as a requirement of the clearing permits.

Natural Areas

Works commenced on the Revegetation Plan in March 2021, which included the installation of the fence, weed control, planting and pest management. There have been numerous planting failures which have resulted in the revision of the species list and renegotiation of the completion criteria with DBCA and DWER. Natural Areas is having some difficulty meeting some of the completion requirements, the Shire has met with them to address the concerns with numerous years of planting failures.

Tranen

Tranen commenced their planting program in June 2024, allowing for an additional year of weed control and site preparation. They initially planted 35,400 seedlings comprising of 25 different species. These have survived their first summer, and their first annual report indicates that the weed control undertaken has been effective and there is limited herbivore grazing.

Figure 1. Kemerton Offset Site – indicating the two management areas.



Contaminated Sites

The Shire holds responsibility for the identification, management, and remediation of contaminated sites located within Shire-managed reserves. These sites are managed in accordance with the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* and relevant guidance from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER). DWER is the regulatory authority responsible for classifying sites and determining whether contamination poses an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment. This determination is influenced by a variety of factors, including the nature and extent of contamination, the sensitivity of current or proposed land uses (e.g. residential developments, schools, or areas of public access), and the potential for contaminants to migrate or be mobilised within the environment.

Contaminants can exist in several environmental media such as soil, groundwater, surface water, sediment, ambient air, or airborne dust. They may be present in different physical states—solid, liquid, vapour, or gas. For instance, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) may exist as vapours in soil pores or ambient air, while heavy metals may be bound to soil particles or suspended in groundwater.

Within the Shire of Capel, the majority of identified contaminated sites are linked to historic land uses, such as former landfill operations or sand mining activities. These legacy uses have the potential to leave behind various pollutants, including hydrocarbons, asbestos-containing materials, heavy metals, and other industrial or municipal waste residues. In many cases, remediation may involve site investigations, risk assessments, long-term monitoring, physical removal of contaminated material, capping or containment, and land use restrictions.

The Shire works closely with DWER and environmental consultants to assess, prioritise, and implement appropriate management strategies to ensure that these areas are safe for current and future land uses, and that they do not pose a risk to public health or the surrounding natural environment. Ongoing monitoring and reporting are essential components of the remediation process, especially where contaminants may pose a risk to groundwater or ecological receptors.

4.1 Boyanup Landfill Site

The Shire has undertaken numerous investigations into the contaminated site, with water and gas monitoring events. A Detailed Site Investigation Report (DSI) was completed by GHD in 2018, however this report didn't outline comprehensive management strategies moving forward.

The Shire has gone to market and engaged MBS Environmental to prepare an Additional Detailed Site Investigation (ADSI), Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and an Ongoing Site Management Plan (OSMP). This will provide advice on long-term management techniques for the thorium-rich stockpiled capping materials, as well as monitoring groundwater contamination, landfill gases and their impacts on the neighbouring Preston River Rise Subdivision.

The rubbish tip site has historically been used for illegal dumping. A gate and signage have now been installed restricting access, and reinstating the perimeter fence is planned for the 25/26 financial year. However, the Asbestos sampling cannot be undertaken whilst there is so much surface debris.



Figure 2. Images of Boyanup Tip Site.

4.2 Harewoods Reserve, Dalyellup - *Possibly contaminated – investigation needed.*

Numerous investigations were completed at the Harewoods Reserve (R31012) between 2022 and 2024. These included a comprehensive Detailed Site Investigation (DSI), Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Ongoing Site Management Plan (OSMP). The Shire has been implementing the recommendations which have included exclusion fencing and signage.



4.3 East Road Sand Pit, Capel – *Possibly contaminated – investigation needed.*

The Detailed Site Investigation, Ongoing Site Management Plan and Construction Environmental Management Plan has been completed, with a remediation plan due to be commenced and implemented in the 2025/26 FY. The site was used as an unofficial waste disposal dump until 2010 and is predominantly contaminated with Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACM), which are both buried and scattered across the surface. The site is primarily used as a dog exercise area and has Caution Asbestos signs at entry points.

4.4 Waste Transfer Station – Mount Capel – *Contaminated – Restricted Use*

The Waste Transfer Station is situated on the former Capel landfill site, which operated for the disposal of industrial and domestic waste until its closure in 2006. As part of the facility's licence conditions, an annual groundwater monitoring program must be conducted to assess potential contamination or leachate impacting the water table.

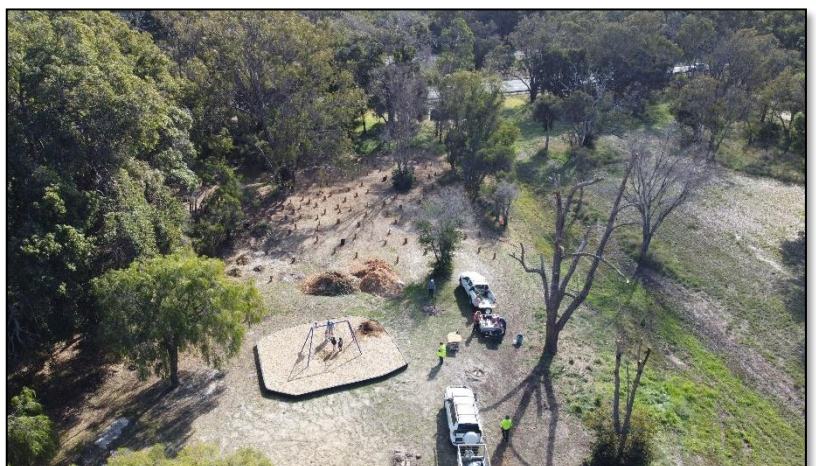
The site is currently classified as *Contaminated – Restricted Use*. While initial remediation works were carried out under the Capel Waste Management and Closure Plan, there have since been incidents involving the disposal of contaminated materials, including asbestos, at the decommissioned facility. These events represent a breach of current licence conditions, and the Shire is obligated to self-report such breaches to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER).

A Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) is now required to fully assess the extent of contamination and to identify appropriate management and mitigation measures to ensure Shire of Capel employees and neighbouring residents are not exposed to asbestos materials.

Sheoak Park & Revive Five Volunteer Group

The Shire was approached by Gelorup residents who wished to undertake revegetation and beautification projects within the Five Mile Brook Catchment. The group has held a start-up meeting with interested Gelorup residents, aiming to outline a plan. The only way the Shire can support and facilitate these works is to engage individuals as volunteers. This has been done via the online Volunteer induction, and a one-off induction and morning tea was held in early May 2025.

A launch event was held on the 16th of February at the Gelorup Hall. The event had guest speakers including Dean Arthurell from Carnaby's Crusaders, Suzie Strapp from Fostering and Assistance for Wildlife Needing Aid (FAWNA) and Sabrina Hahn discussing revegetation and rehabilitation techniques and planting to encourage foraging and feed sources for Western Ring Tail Possums and Black Cockatoos. The turnout exceeded expectations with 80-100 people attending the event. The Revive 5 Mile Brook group in partnership with the Capel LCDC was successful in applying for a \$10,000 grant with Iluka to purchase a trailer mounted watering unit.



Additional Information:**Fire Mitigation & Fire Breaks**

The bushland of the South West is a vital ecological asset that requires careful and proactive fire management to remain healthy and resilient. Fire plays an important role in these ecosystems—helping to destroy invasive weed seeds, regenerate native vegetation, and reduce the build-up of flammable material that can contribute to dangerous wildfires.

New advances in mulching equipment have added new tools to our approach. One such development is the use of heavy machinery fitted with mulching heads, which can mechanically reduce understorey vegetation and accumulated debris. This technique is particularly valuable in areas close to urban development, where traditional prescribed burning may pose risks to nearby homes and infrastructure.

The Shire has been working in partnership with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) through the Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF) to deliver strategic fire mitigation works across key bushland areas. These works have included the mechanical mulching of dense vegetation and ground fuel, as well as the installation of limestone firebreaks to create clear and defensible zones. By constructing more permanent firebreaks, we not only improve access for emergency services but also reduce ongoing maintenance costs. Additionally, many of these firebreaks double as recreational walking trails, providing safe access for the community to enjoy our natural areas.

The mulching works have also opened up opportunities for targeted weed control in previously overgrown and degraded areas, allowing the Shire to support the regeneration of native plant species and improve overall bushland condition. The ongoing implementation and maintenance of firebreaks around the Shire's bushland and drainage reserves are coordinated by the Shire's Natural Resource Management Officer (NRM), ensuring alignment with best-practice environmental and fire management standards.

Trails Management

One of the key takeaways from the Trails Master Plan, undertaken by Community Development, was that trail maintenance was only considered fair, with connectivity and promotion perceived to be poor (see Table 1). The Shire has a very restricted capacity to undertake these maintenance works, having to rely on external programs such as Community Service programs.

Table 1. Results from Community perception survey completed as a part of the Trails Master Plan undertaken by Tredwell, 2025.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Unsure
Contribution to tourism/visitor offerings	21%	36%	24%	5%	1%	13%
Signage (condition, type, amount)	22%	44%	22%	3%	0%	9%
Information provision (brochures,maps,websites)	30%	37%	10%	3%	1%	19%
Promotion/awareness of trails	48%	34%	4%	5%	0%	9%
Connectivity (e.g. linkages)	43%	19%	14%	2%	0%	22%
Maintenance of trails	17%	36%	26%	8%	0%	13%
Number and diversity of trails	32%	31%	14%	5%	1%	17%
Quality of trail experiences	8%	33%	35%	12%	2%	10%
Accessibility for all (all ages, mobility devices,prams)	14%	34%	18%	10%	2%	22%
Support facilities (toilets, shelters, seats)	30%	31%	17%	4%	1%	17%
Car parking	15%	33%	27%	9%	2%	14%
Safety and security	11%	27%	31%	7%	3%	21%
Trail user conduct	5%	20%	41%	12%	5%	17%

Voting Requirements

There is no voting requirement for this item as it is for information only.

7. Meeting Closure

There being no further business, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 3:45pm.