



UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Ordinary Meeting of Council



Meeting held in Council Chambers at
15 Maddock Street, Mukinbudin
Commencing at 2.30pm Tuesday 16th December 2025

**** DISCLAIMER ****

Disclaimer:

The Shire of Mukinbudin assumes no responsibility for any act, omission, statement, or implication arising during Council or Committee meetings. The Shire of Mukinbudin explicitly disclaims any liability for any loss incurred as a result of reliance on such acts, omissions, statements, or implications by any individual or legal entity. Any person or legal entity who chooses to act or refrain from acting based on statements, acts, or omissions made during Council or Committee meetings does so at their own risk.

Please note that all meetings are audio recorded and published on the Shire's website for public access.

In particular, it should be noted that in discussions pertaining to planning applications or license applications, any statements or implications of approval made by members or officers of the Shire of Mukinbudin during meetings should not be construed as official notice of approval from the Shire of Mukinbudin. The Shire of Mukinbudin advises that individuals with pending applications must obtain written confirmation of the application's outcome and should only rely on such written confirmation, including any attached conditions determined by the Shire of Mukinbudin.

Ethical Decision Making and Conflicts of Interest:

Council adheres to a code of conduct and ensures that all decisions are based on an honest assessment of the matter, ethical decision-making, and personal integrity. Councillors and staff members comply with statutory requirements to disclose financial, proximity, and impartiality interests. Once declared, they abide by the relevant legislation.



Tanika McLennan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Vision Statement

To assist our community towards a prosperous future by providing a positive environment in which to work and live.

Table of Contents

1. **Declaration of Opening**
 - 1.1 Declaration of Opening
2. **Record of Attendance, Apologies, approved Leave of Absence**
 - 2.1 Present
 - 2.2 Staff
 - 2.3 Visitors
 - 2.4 Apologies
 - 2.5 Approved Leave of Absence
 - 2.6 Applications for Leave of Absence
3. **Public Question Time**
 - 3.1 Response to previous questions taken on notice
 - 3.2 Declaration of Public Question time open
 - 3.3 Declaration of public time closed
4. **Declarations of Interest**
5. **Petitions, Deputations, Presentations**
 - 5.1 Petitions
 - 5.2 Deputations
 - 5.3 Presentations
6. **Announcements by the presiding member without discussion**
 - 9.3.5 Development Approval - Short-Stay Accommodation Buildings
7. **Confirmation of minutes of previous meetings**
 - 7.1 Confirmation of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18th November 2025.
8. **Committee Meetings**
 - 8.1 **Receipt of Minutes of Committee Meetings**
 - 8.1.1 NEWROC Council Meeting 2nd December 2025
 - 8.1.2 CEACA Management Committee Meeting 1st December 2025
 - 8.1.3 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting Tuesday 16th December 2025
 - 8.2 Recommendations from Committee Meeting for Council Consideration

9. Reports**9.1 Council Monthly Information Reports**

9.1.1 Receipt of December 2025 Information Report

9.2 Finance Reports

9.2.1 List of Payments – November 2025

9.2.2 Monthly Statement of Financial Activity Report – November 2025

9.3 Chief Executive Officer's Reports

9.3.1 Australia Day Citizen of the Year ****Confidential****

9.3.2 Development Approval - Carbon Neutral

9.3.3 Development Approval - Community Cultural Hub

9.3.4 Development Approval - Proposed Tree Farm

9.3.5 Development Approval - Short-Stay Accommodation Buildings

9.3.6 Request for Additional Community Chest Funding – Wilgoyne Christmas Tree

9.3.7 Rural Health Funding Alliance

9.3.8 NEWROC Memorandum of Understanding

10. Elected members Motions of which previous notice has been given

10.1

11. Urgent Business Approved by Person Presiding or by Decision

11.1

12. Closure of Meeting

12.1 Closure of Meeting

AGENDA

Agenda of the Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held in Council Chambers, Maddock Street, Mukinbudin on Tuesday 16th December 2025.

1. Declaration of Opening

The Shire President declared the Meeting open at 2.30pm

2. Record of attendance, apologies, and approved leave of absence

2.1 Present:

Cr G Shadbolt	Shire President
Cr A Walker	Deputy Shire President

Cr G Bent
Cr A Brandis
Cr A Dagelet
Cr C McGlashan

2.2 Staff:

Tanika McLennan	Chief Executive Officer
Renee Jenkin	Deputy Chief Executive Officer

2.3 Visitors:

Cameron Gruber	Red Fox Group (from 2.30pm until 2.56pm)
Frank Vaughan	Red Fox Group (from 2.30pm until 2.56pm)
Nathan Baker	Red Fox Group (from 2.30pm until 2.56pm)

2.4 Apologies:

Nil

2.5 On leave of absence:

Cr Ventris

2.6 Applications for leave of absence:

Nil

3. Public Question Time (max 15 minutes)

3.1 Response to previous questions taken on notice.

3.2 Declaration of public question time opened (maximum 15 mins)

The Shire President to declare public question time open at 2.31pm.

3.3 Declaration of public question time closed

The Shire President to declare public question time closed at 2.32pm.

4. Declarations of Interest

5. Petitions, deputations, and presentations

5.1	Petitions	Nil
5.2	Deputations	Nil
5.3	Presentations	Nil

6. Announcements by the Presiding person without discussion

Nil

Change in order of business

The Presiding Member, President Shadbolt, changed the order of business to discuss Item 9.3.5 – Development Approval - Short-Stay Accommodation Buildings to allow Nathan, Cameron and Frank from Red Fox Group to present their Short-Stay Accommodation proposal to Council.

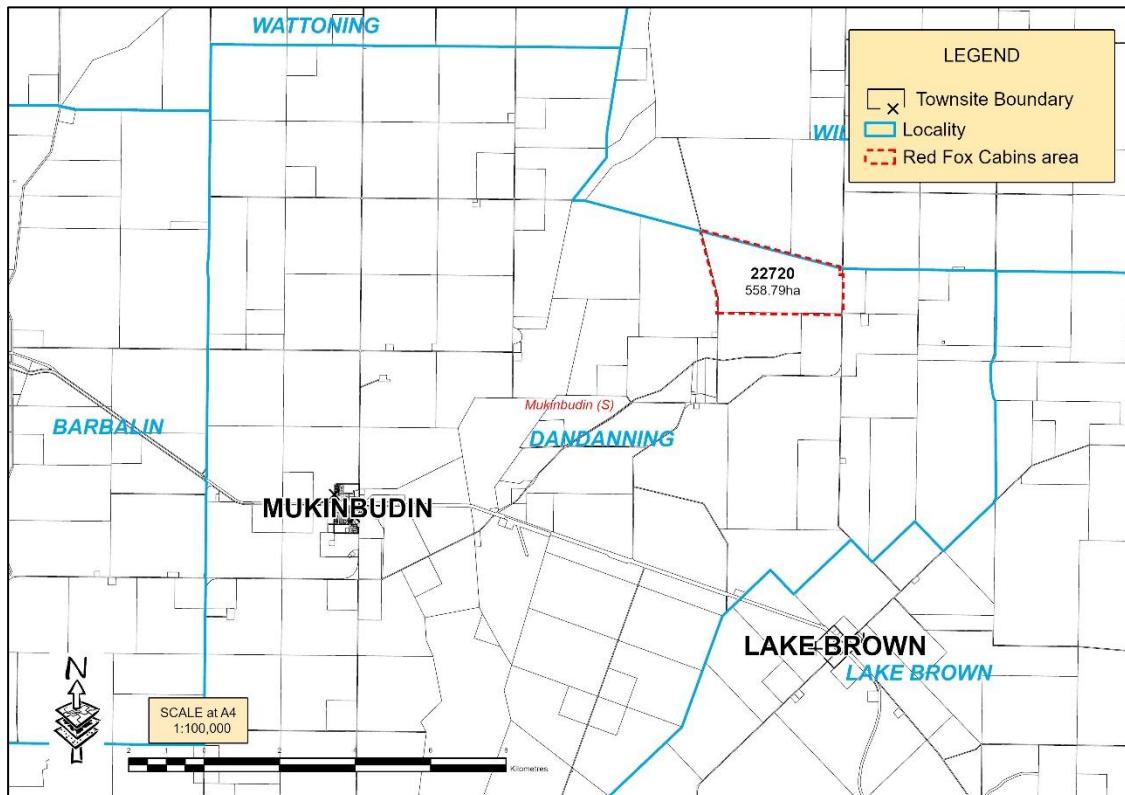
9.3.5 Development Application - Short-Stay Accommodation Buildings	
Location:	22720 Copeland Road, Dandanning
File Ref:	A1211
Applicant:	Red Fox Ag Pty Ltd
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner - Planwest
Voting Requirements:	Absolute Majority
Documents Attached:	Development Approval (DA) Application Form
Documents Tabled:	Nil

Summary

Red Fox Ag Pty Ltd has applied for a Development Approval (DA) for 6 short-stay accommodation buildings and a shed. The lot is owned by Red Fox Ag Pty Ltd. And the application form has been signed by the two current Directors.

Figure 1 provides a location plan of the subject land.

FIGURE 1 – LOCATION PLAN OF CURRENT DA



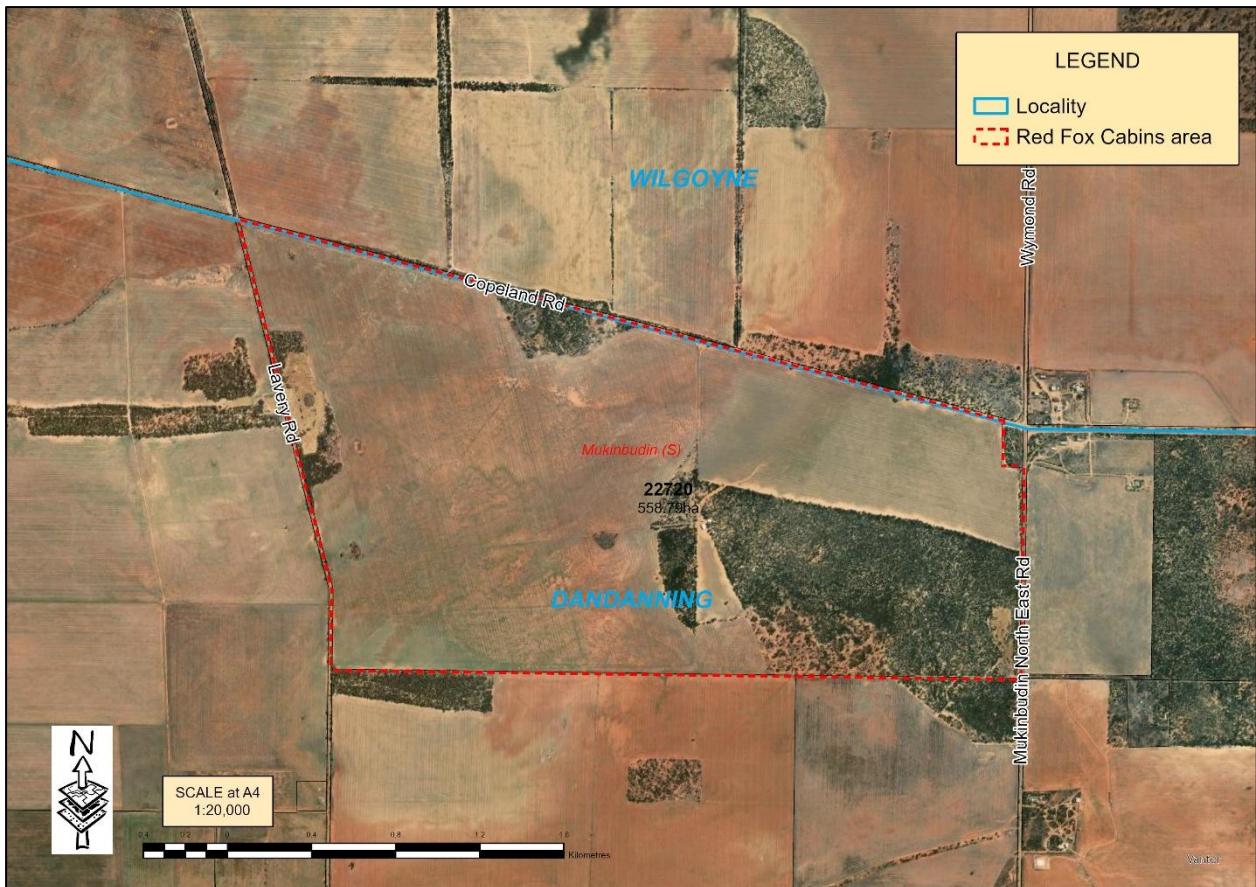
Source: Landgate, Planwest

Figure 1 also shows the subject land in relation to the nearby townsites, the Shire boundary and locality boundaries.

Background Information

Figure 2 shows an enlargement of the subject land. The site is located about 11 kilometres northeast of Mukinbudin Townsite and is nearly 560 hectares in area with a 3.8-kilometre frontage to Copeland Road. As the photograph shows the land is currently cropped with significant areas with remnant bushland.

FIGURE 2 – AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF PROPERTY



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Existing Development

The DA states that there are no structures on the subject land and the land is used for extensive cropping and grazing.

Proposed Development

The estimated cost of the proposed development is \$1m and is proposed to be completed by September 2027. The development is for the establishment and operation of a small-scale premium tourist and visitor accommodation development on the subject land.

The DA states that the proposal involves the installation of six (6) brand new zincalume clad self-contained chalets (i.e. tiny homes) and various associated improvements in the northern portion of the subject land to attract and accommodate short-term visitors to the region.

The location of the proposed development has been carefully selected to ensure it is easily accessible, serviceable, suitable and capable in terms of built form improvements and on-site effluent disposal and will allow for the continued use of the majority portion of the property for extensive agricultural purposes (i.e. cropping and grazing). It should be noted that no guests will be accommodated during seeding and harvesting to ensure they are not exposed to chemicals, dust, noise and vibration.

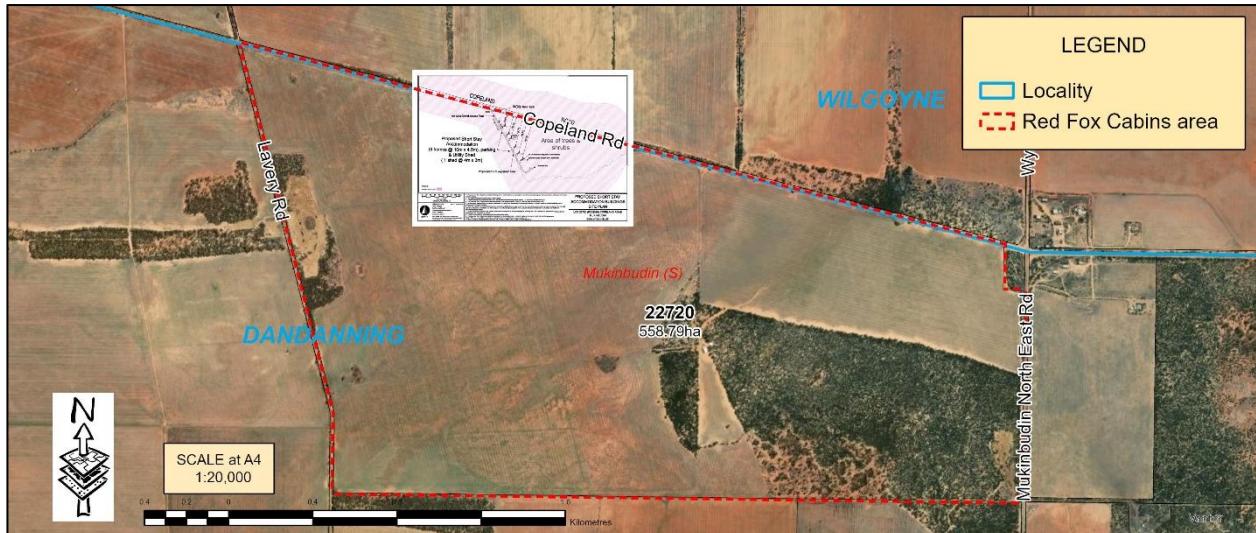
The accompanying letter states that the proposed development will be connected to reticulated water supply infrastructure which is readily available along the land's Copeland Road frontage and will be served by a standalone electricity supply system comprising roof mounted solar panels and free-standing batteries.

The proposed development will be managed by Red Fox Ag Pty Ltd with assistance from a locally based manager employed by the company. The proposed development will be used to provide accommodation for up to 24 guests at any one time on a commercial basis (i.e. up to 4 guests per chalet) with no individual guest accommodated for a period or periods exceeding a total of 3 months in any 12-month period.

Arrangements will be made by the landowner and locally based manager to ensure the development is regularly serviced and cleaned, including waste disposal. An Accommodation Management Plan has been prepared demonstrating all the proposed management arrangements for the life of the development. It should also be noted that no pets will be permitted on the property aside from those that are specially trained to help people with physical and emotional disabilities. The setbacks of the proposed development to all lot boundaries are compliant with the specific requirements of Town Planning Scheme No.4. The proposed development is also not located in close proximity to any other land uses that require a buffer zone. The proposed development has direct frontage and access to a sealed and drained local road and will be served by all required essential service infrastructure.

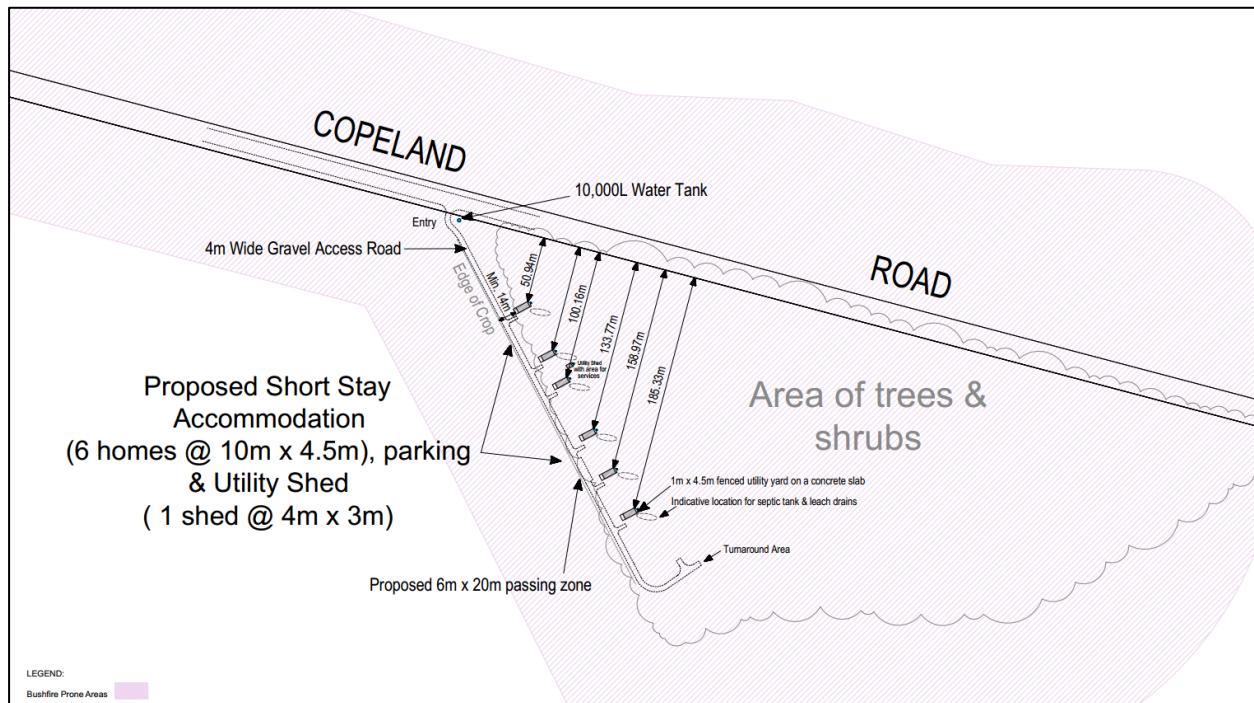
Figure 3 shows the location of the enlargement drawing shown in **Figure 4**.

FIGURE 3 – LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



Source: Landgate, DA, Planwest

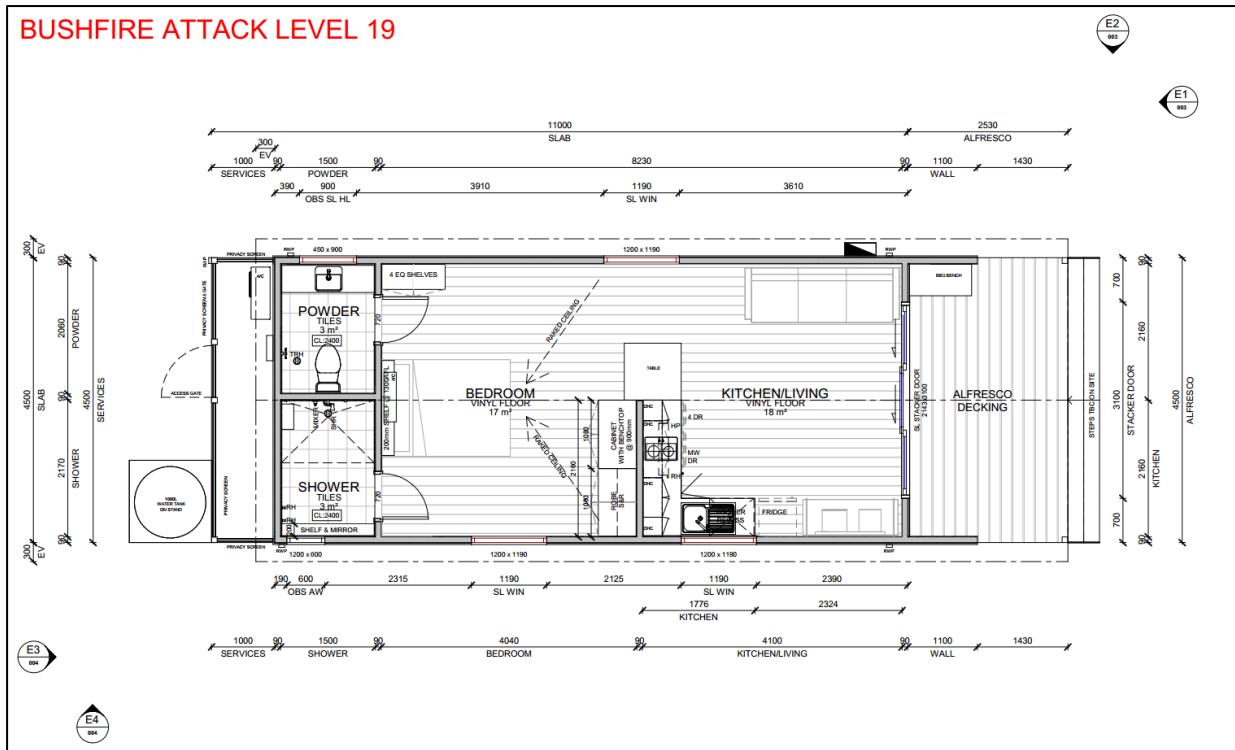
FIGURE 4 – SITE PLAN



Source: DA, Planwest

Figure 5 provides a plan of a typical accommodation unit.

FIGURE 5 – TYPICAL UNIT DESIGN



Source: DA, Planwest

Strategic & Social Implications

There is no Local Planning Strategy for the Shire and the Council sees no strategic or social implications of the proposed development provided the conditions of the DA are complied with.

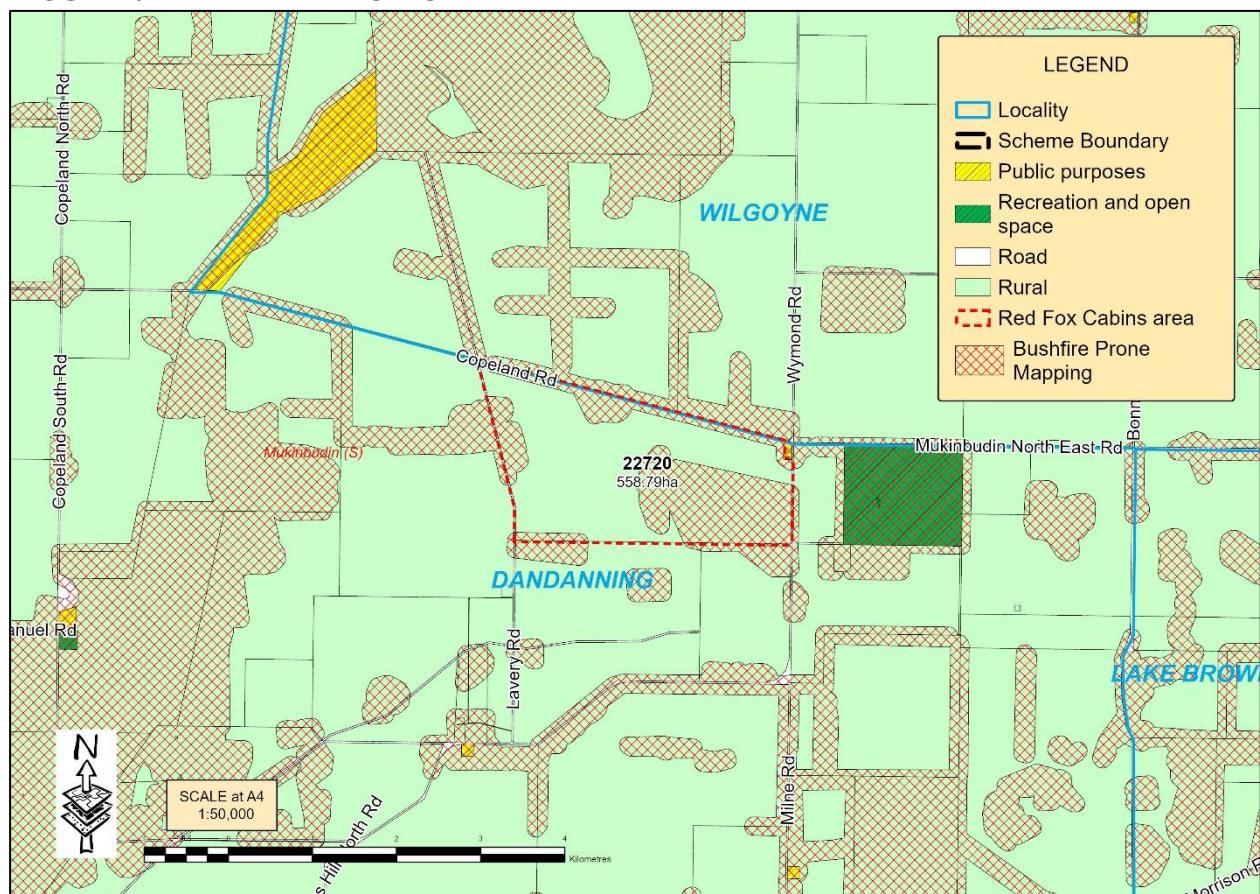
The applicant states that this proposal aligns strongly with the strategic objectives of both the Shire of Mukinbudin and the Wheatbelt Development Commission, contributing to the broader vision of a resilient, diversified, and sustainable regional economy. It is also consistent with the objectives of the Shire's local planning framework including Town Planning Scheme No.4 all relevant local planning policies.

It will allow for and not compromise the continued use of the majority portion of the subject land and all immediately adjoining properties for extensive agricultural purposes (i.e. broadacre cropping and grazing) and will provide much needed facilities for tourists and travellers in the district in a well-planned and coordinated manner.

Statutory Environment

The Shire of Mukinbudin Local Planning Scheme No 4 (Scheme 4) was originally approved in 2003. The subject land is included in the Rural zone as shown in an extract from the Scheme mapping (**Figure 6**).

FIGURE 6 – EXTRACT FROM SCHEME



Source: Landgate, DPLH, Planwest.

One of the aims of the Scheme is *to assist employment and economic growth by facilitating the timely provision of suitable land for retail, commercial, industrial, entertainment, and tourist developments, as well as providing opportunities for home-based employment.*

The relevant objectives for the Rural zone include;

- to consider non-rural uses where they can be shown to be of benefit to the district and not detrimental to the natural resources or the environment.
- to allow for facilities for tourists and travellers, and for recreation uses.

There is no use class for tourist development in Table 1 – Zoning Table of the Scheme. The closest in definition is ‘ancillary tourist use’ which is a ‘D’ use (Discretionary).

Clause 3.4.2 of the Scheme states

3.4.2 If a person proposes to carry out on land any use that is not specifically mentioned in the Zoning Table and cannot reasonably be determined as falling within the type, class or genus of activity of any other use the local government may:

- determine that the use is consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore permitted;*
- determine that the proposed use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval; or*
- determine that the use is not consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore not permitted.*

Consultation

Nil

Policy Implications

There are no Council policy implications that relate to the proposed development.

Financial Implications

Nil

Bushfire Prone Mapping

The Bushfire prone mapping is shown in **Figure 6**.

A Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) has been prepared by a Level 2 Bushfire Planning and Design (BPAD) Consultant. The BMP outlines certain actions and works that are required to ensure safety in the event of a bushfire.

The requirements of a BAL 19 (Bushfire Attack Level) will need to be conditioned as part of any determination of the DA.

Officer Comment

The proposed development can only benefit the Shire. This support has been acknowledged by the Shire in Red Fox’s application for a REDS Grant. The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Scheme and zone and provides a facility that will no doubt bring additional business and benefits to the region.

The proposed development is unlikely to impact any other uses in the locality and therefore does not need to be advertised, however it is crucial that the project is properly maintained and managed.

The Bushfire Management Plan has been prepared by a certified bushfire practitioner and provides appropriate guidance for the development.

The DA is of a high standard and addresses all the components that need to be addressed.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION
Council Decision Number – 03 12 2025

Moved: Cr Dagelet

Seconded: Cr McGlashan

That the Council, under the provisions of Clause 3.4.2 (a), determines that the DA is not a complex application, and determines that the use is consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and therefore approves the proposed development subject to the following conditions:

1. The vehicular crossover to Copeland Road to be located and constructed to the satisfaction of the local government.
2. The requirements of the Bushfire Management Plan to be complied with to the satisfaction of the local government.
3. All drainage and effluent systems to be designed and constructed to the satisfaction of the local government.
4. The preparation of an Accommodation Management Plan to the satisfaction of the local government.

**Carried 6 / 0
By Absolute Majority**

Frank Vaughan, Cameron Gruber & Nathan Baker departed the meeting at 2.56pm and did not return.

7. Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings

7.1 Confirmation of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18th November 2025.

Voting Requirement

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 04 12 2025

Moved: Cr Brandis

Seconded: Cr Bent

That the Minutes of the following meetings be accepted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

- **Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18th November 2025**

Carried 6 / 0

8. Committee Meetings

8.1 Receipt of Minutes of Committee Meetings

8.1.1 NEWROC Council Meeting held 2nd December 2025[NEWROC Minutes](#)8.1.2 CEACA Management Committee Meeting held 1st December 2025[CEACA Minutes](#)8.1.3 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held Tuesday 16th December 2025

ARIC Minutes

Voting Requirement

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**Council Decision Number – 05 12 2025****Moved: Cr Walker****Seconded: Cr McGlashan****That the Minutes of the following committee meetings be received.**

- NEWROC Council Meeting held 2nd December 2025
- CEACA Management Committee Meeting held 1st December 2025
- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held 16th December 2025

Carried 6 / 0

8.2 Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council Consideration

NEWROC Council Meeting held 2nd December 2025

Recommendations from the NEWROC Council Meeting are addressed in items 9.3.7 and 9.3.8.

CEACA Management Committee Meeting held 1st December 2025

Nil

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held Tuesday 16th December 2025

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 06 12 2025

Moved: Cr Walker

Seconded: Cr Brandis

That Council:

1. Adopt the Audited Annual Financial Report for the period ended 30 June 2025; and
2. Receive the Annual Audit Completion and Audit Findings Reports

Carried 6 / 0

9.1 Monthly Information Report

9.1.1 December 2025 Information Report	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM 360
Applicant:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Date:	8 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Renee Jenkin, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Voting Requirements	Simple Majority
Documents Attached	Nil
Documents Tabled	December Information Report

Summary

The purpose of this communication is to enable the Council to receive the Monthly Information Report, which includes reports from key personnel, namely the Environmental Health Officer, Aquatic Centre Manager, Caravan Park Manager, Works Supervisor, Community Resource Centre Coordinator, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief Executive Officer.

Background Information

The Monthly Information Report serves as a means to provide Council with updates on various operational matters within the Shire of Mukinbudin. These reports offer valuable insights into the performance and progress of the respective areas under the purview of the aforementioned personnel.

Officer Comment

Refer to December Information Report.

Consultation

Tony Turner – Environmental Health Officer
 Larry Garlett – Aquatic Centre Manager
 Tania Sprigg – Caravan Park Manager
 Craig Powell – Works Supervisor
 Jessica McCartney – Community Resource Centre Coordinator
 Renee Jenkin – Deputy Chief Executive Officer
 Tanika McLennan - Chief Executive Officer

Statutory Environment Nil

Policy Implications Nil

Financial Implications Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**Council Decision Number – 07 12 2025****Moved: Cr Dagelet****Seconded: Cr Bent****That Council receive the December 2025 Information Report.****Carried 6 / 0**

9.2 Finance Reports

9.2.1 List of Payments – November 2025	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM 007
Applicant:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Juliet Nixon, Finance Officer
Voting Requirements	Simple Majority
Documents Attached	List of Payments - Municipal Account (6 pages) List of Payments - Restricted Municipal Account (2 pages) Corporate Credit Card Statement – November 2025 (7 pages) Credit Card Summary - November 2025 (1 page) Fuel Cards Statement - November 2025 (3 pages)
Documents Tabled	Nil

If a Councillor has any questions regarding the enclosed finance report, please see the Manager of Corporate Services prior to the meeting, so that a researched answer may be provided.

Summary

List of payments made in November 2025 for endorsement by Council.

Background Information

A list of payments submitted to Council on 16th December 2025, for confirmation in respect of accounts already paid or for the authority to those unpaid. (Please refer to Payment listing attached).

Officer Comment

Standard process of obtaining Council endorsement of payments.

Strategic & Social Implications N/A

Consultation N/A

Statutory Environment

A list of payments is required to be presented to Council as per section 13 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.

Policy Implications

Council Policy No. 1.6.5 (e) states that a list of payments is required to be presented to Council each month in accordance with Financial Management Regulations 13(1) for recording in the minutes.

Financial Implications

All payments have been made in accordance with the 2025/2026 Budget.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 08 12 2025

Moved: Cr Bent

Seconded: Cr McGlashan

That the list of payments made in November 2025 be endorsed for payment.

Municipal Fund:

Muni EFTs	EFT	10845	to	EFT	10953	\$780,807.06
Muni Cheques	Chq	-	to	Chq	-	\$0.00
Muni Direct Debits	DD	13911.1	to	DD	13911.10	\$31,708.20
(Superannuation, loans, leases)						
Pays on						06/11/2025 & 20/11/2025
(Not included on payment listing)						
Total Municipal Funds						\$928,366.17

Restricted Muni Fund:

RMF EFTs	EFT	-	to	EFT	-	\$0.00
RMF Cheques	Chq	-	to	Chq	-	\$0.00
RMF Direct Debits	DD	13893.1	to	DD	14014.1	\$36,752.69
Total Restricted Muni Funds						\$36,752.69

Carried 6 / 0

9.2.2 Monthly Statement of Financial Activity Report – November 2025	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM 005
Applicant:	Lucia Scari, Manager of Corporate Services
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Lucia Scari, Manager of Corporate Services
Author:	Lucia Scari, Manager of Corporate Services
Voting Requirements	Simple Majority
Documents Attached	<u>Statement of Financial Activity – November 2025</u>
Documents Tabled	Nil

If a Councillor has any questions regarding the enclosed finance report, please see the Manager of Corporate Services prior to the meeting, so that a researched answer may be provided.

Summary

The Monthly Financial Report for November 2025 is presented for Council's consideration.

Background Information

This financial report is provided to Council monthly in accordance with provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management Regulations 1996)*.

Officer Comment

The Shire prepares the monthly financial statements in the statutory format along with other supplementary financial reports consisting of:

- (a) Statement of Comprehensive Income by Function/Program;
- (b) Statement of Comprehensive Income by Nature/Type;
- (c) Statement of Financial Activity by Nature/Type;
- (d) Statement of Financial Activity by Function/Program;
- (e) Summary of Net Current Asset Position;
- (f) Statement of Material Variances;
- (g) Statement of Financial Position;
- (h) Statement of Cash Flows;
- (i) Capital acquisitions;
- (j) Disposal of Assets;
- (k) Statement of Capital Grants and Contract Liabilities;
- (l) Statement of Cash Back Reserves;
- (m) Loan Borrowings Statement;
- (n) Restricted Cash Statement;
- (o) Detailed Operating and Non-Operating Schedules.

The Regulations require local governments to prepare annual budget estimates and month by month budget estimates so that comparatives can be made to Year to Date (YTD) Actual amounts of expenditure, revenue and income and materials variances can be commented on.

Strategic & Social Implications

N/A

Consultation

Bob Waddell – Financial Consultant

Statutory Environment

Local Government Act 1995

Section 6.4–Specifies that a local government is to prepare such other financial reports as are prescribed.

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996:

Regulation 34 states:

- (1) A local government is 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) for that month in the following detail:
 - (a) annual budget estimates, taking into account any expenditure incurred for an additional purpose under section 6.8(1)(b) or (c);
 - (b) budget estimates to the end of month to which the statement relates;
 - (c) actual amounts of expenditure, revenue and income to the end of the month to which the statement relates;
 - (d) material variances between the comparable amounts referred to in paragraphs (b) and (c);
 - (e) the net current assets at the end of the month to which the statement relates.

Sub regulations 2, 3, 4, and 5 prescribe further details of information to be included in the monthly statement of financial activity.

Policy Implications

Council is required annually to adopt a policy on what it considers to be material as far as variances that require to be reported for Council. Council adopted a policy that the material variation be set at \$11,000 and 10%.

Financial Implications

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 09 12 2025

Moved: Cr Walker

Seconded: Cr Dagelet

That Council receive the Monthly Financial Report for the period ending 30th November 2025.

Carried 6 / 0

9.3 Chief Executive Officer's Reports

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

9.3.1 Australia Day Citizen of the Year	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM 278
Applicant:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Date:	4 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Cr Brandis – Impartiality Interest
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Voting Requirements	Simple Majority
Documents Attached	Nil
Documents Tabled	Citizen of the Year Nominations (Combined)

Statutory Environment

5.23. Meetings generally open to public

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), the following are to be open to members of the public —
 - (a) all council meetings; and
 - (b) all meetings of any committee to which a local government power or duty has been delegated.
- (2) If a meeting is being held by a council or by a committee referred to in subsection (1)(b), the council or committee may close to members of the public the meeting, or part of the meeting, if the meeting or the part of the meeting deals with any of the following —
 - (a) a matter affecting an employee or employees; and
 - (b) the personal affairs of any person; and
 - (c) a contract entered into, or which may be entered into, by the local government and which relates to a matter to be discussed at the meeting; and
 - (d) legal advice obtained, or which may be obtained, by the local government and which relates to a matter to be discussed at the meeting; and
 - (e) a matter that if disclosed, would reveal —
 - (i) a trade secret; or
 - (ii) information that has a commercial value to a person; or
 - (iii) information about the business, professional, commercial or financial affairs of a person,

where the trade secret or information is held by, or is about, a person other than the local government; and
 - (f) a matter that if disclosed, could be reasonably expected to —
 - (i) impair the effectiveness of any lawful method or procedure for preventing, detecting, investigating or dealing with any contravention or possible contravention of the law; or
 - (ii) endanger the security of the local government's property; or

- (iii) prejudice the maintenance or enforcement of a lawful measure for protecting public safety;

And

- (g) information which is the subject of a direction given under section 23(1a) of the *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971*; and
- (h) such other matters as may be prescribed.

(3) A decision to close a meeting or part of a meeting and the reason for the decision are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 10 12 2025

Moved: Cr Walker

Seconded: Cr Dagelet

That in accordance with section 5.23 (2) (a) of the Local Government Act 1995 that the meeting be closed to members of the Public as Agenda item 9.3.7 is deemed to be

- (b) the personal affairs of any persons:

Carried 6 / 0

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 11 12 2025

Moved: Cr Walker

Seconded: Cr Dagelet

That Council award Citizen of the Year 2026 & Local Group/Community Event of the Year 2026 to the following:

- Local Citizen for 2026
- Local Group/Community Event for 2026

[REDACTED]

Carried 6 / 0

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 12 12 2025

Moved: Cr Brandis

Seconded: Cr Walker

That the meeting be reopened to members of the public.

Carried 6 / 0

9.3.2 Development Approval – Carbon Neutral

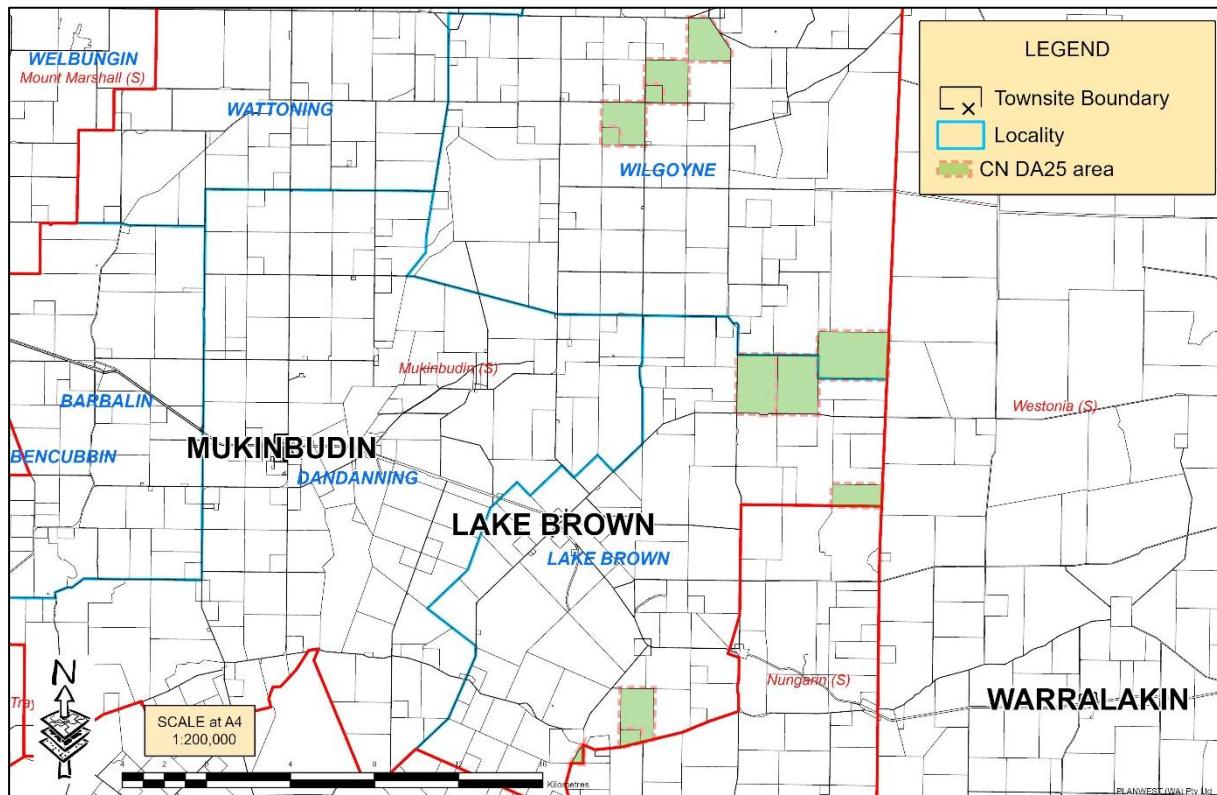
Location:	Various Lots in Wilgoyne and Lake Brown
File Ref:	ADM 275
Applicant:	Carbon Neutral
Date:	1 st December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner – Planwest
Voting Requirements:	Absolute Majority
Documents Attached:	Development Approval (DA) Application Form
Documents Tabled:	Nil

Summary

Carbon Neutral (CN) has applied for a Development Approval (DA) for a tree farm over 12 lots in the localities of Wilgoyne and Lake Brown. The lots are owned by Apache Investments Australia Pty Ltd (Apache). The Form 1 has been signed by the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Apache.

Figure 1 provides a location plan of the subject land.

FIGURE 1 – LOCATION PLAN OF CURRENT DA



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Figure 1 also shows the subject land in relation to the nearby townsites, the Shire boundary and locality boundaries. It is noted that Lot 23166, which is contained in the Schedule of properties, is in the Shire of Nungarin.

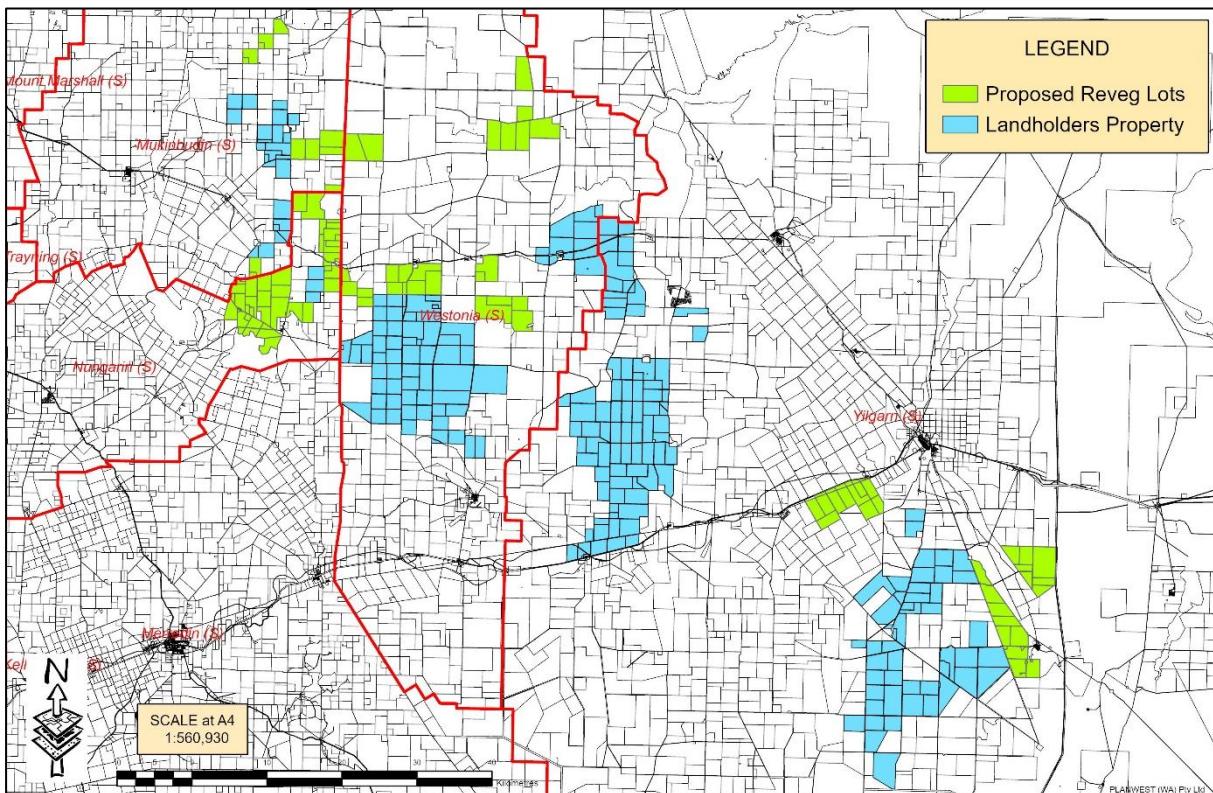
Background Information

Other Apache Land

Apache is the owner of many properties spread across several Shires in the Eastern Wheatbelt area. It is likely that this project may extend to other landholdings in the future once the company has assessed the success and viability of the current proposal as it relates to different land types and species across the region.

Figure 2 shows other land holdings owned by Apache in the Eastern Wheatbelt area covering land in the Shires of Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Westonia and Yilgarn. This information has previously been provided as part of Carbon Neutral's earlier discussions with these Shires.

FIGURE 2 – OTHER APACHE OWNED LAND



Source: Landgate, Carbon Neutral, Planwest

WAPC Tree Farm Fact Sheet

The WA Planning Commission (WAPC) and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) released a fact sheet on Tree Farms in November 2023. Fact sheets are a method in which these agencies can clarify the planning arrangements within the appropriate State Planning Policies (SPP) - in this case SPP 2.5- Rural Planning.

The fact sheet states that 70% of tree farms were established in the Southwest of the State due to the rainfall being over 600mm per annum. However, there appears to be a steady widening of these areas for tree farms as different methods, species and understanding of the techniques improves.

It should be noted that the most common tree farms, that are currently established, are for harvesting of the product, however, there appears to be a growing interest in tree farms for

carbon sequestration projects. In these cases, there is no requirement for harvesting but there may be an increased focus on management requirements.

SPP 2.5 sets out 7 key policy positions to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to tree farms in WA. In summary, the intent of each **relevant** policy statement is explained below.

1. *tree farming is supported and encouraged on rural land as a means of diversifying rural economies and providing economic and environmental benefit* – this means the WAPC supports tree farms in rural areas and will implement this approach in assessment of local planning strategies and schemes;
3. *tree farming should generally be a permitted use on rural land,*
5. *in planning for tree farming, local government considerations should include but are not limited to, potential bushfire risk, environmental and economic factors, water availability and recharge, visual landscape impacts, transport impacts of tree farming (where harvesting is proposed), planting thresholds, appropriate buffers, and location relative to conservation estates and sensitive land uses* – this means that local governments should consider tree farms in the context of other existing and proposed land uses in their municipality, and set planning controls as required, based on demonstrated evidence that the control is needed;

Do tree farms have an impact on agricultural communities?

The WAPC Tree Farm fact sheet states that the Australian economy has been forced to adjust structurally over time, which has seen ongoing change in the agricultural sector. Research by Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) in 2001 and 2007 highlights the impacts of globalised economic rationalism on family farms and subsequent issues of their declining viability, leading to farm amalgamation, reduced labour hire and the contraction of local economies.

Tree farms are part of the ever-changing agricultural sector. But they are not the underlying cause of the population or economic changes.

For local governments where pine tree farms are likely to be developed, population change data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census 2001 to 2021), indicates that the general trend is for increasing or stable population figures, and the ‘family’ makeup of households has remained steady at around 70%. Family composition or population has not significantly declined in the last 20 years

What are the land use planning considerations with tree farms?

The WAPC Tree Farm fact sheet states that the growing of trees for timber is similar to other crops, however there are some planning issues associated with tree farming that may require further assessment and management, if relevant. As set out in SPP 2.5, these include:

- *Bushfire risk* – tree farms may establish a bushfire risk where not occurring before. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services has published guidelines to assist in the management of bushfire risk for tree farms. Any development conditions to manage bushfire risk should accord with these guidelines.
- *Environmental and economic issues*, including planting thresholds – the location of tree farms relative to environmental and/or biodiversity assets, and management of potential impacts (eg

wildling spread). So too, ensuring there is a balanced supply of rural land for other economic activity can be addressed in local planning strategies.

- *Water availability and recharge* – potential impacts on groundwater and surface water systems may need to be considered.
- *Visual landscape impacts* – local governments may identify rural prominent landscapes to exclude tree farms for visual reasons. While the converse may occur, these areas can be identified in keeping with the Western Australian Planning Commission's (WAPC) Visual Landscape planning manual.
- *Transport impacts* – where tree farming involves harvesting, local governments may need to make arrangements with developers for road and/or intersection upgrades to manage potential haulage impacts.
- *Separation from sensitive land uses* – local governments may establish buffers to exclude tree farming around these land uses eg. electrical substations or transmission lines.

Existing Development

The DA states that there are no structures on the subject land. It appears from aerial photographs that much of the land has been cleared with some areas of remnant vegetation. It is unclear from aerial photographs how much of the land is currently used for agricultural purposes.

Proposed Development

This project involves establishing permanent native revegetation and mixed environmental plantings on land currently being operated by Mr John Nicoletti on behalf of the owners. It is intended that development will occur over 2026 and 2027 at a cost of \$250,000.

The project aims to re-forest lower quality or degraded landscapes and some higher risk farming areas with endemic native vegetation. Environmental planting of this nature will improve biodiversity, sequester carbon, assist to mitigate soil salinity, and stabilise the land.

The applicant states that *the proposal has been prepared to align with the Shire's objectives, requirements, and environmental and agricultural priorities. The design ensures continued productivity of agricultural land, avoids impacts to remnant vegetation, and incorporates robust fire management measures consistent with the Shire's Firebreak Notice.*

The proposed revegetation is planned to be commenced during winter 2026 and completed by 2028. Areas not planted in any year will continue to be operated for agriculture.

Carbon Neutral Pty Ltd have been carrying out permanent revegetation works in the northern wheatbelt for two decades and has developed successful techniques for revegetation of land on lower productivity sites in lower rainfall areas.

Carbon Neutral will maintain a viable, operating property that continues to support the local community. Up to June 2020, Carbon Neutral's projects in the northern and eastern wheatbelt of Western Australia have contributed significantly to their local communities (and continues to increase our contribution), including:

- *Engaging over 80 businesses for services,*
- *Excluding land purchases, having spent \$12.8M in local economies,*
- *Over the life of the current projects, will contribute up to \$30M in regional economic impact, and*

- Supporting community events and initiatives wherever possible.

Carbon Neutral is a responsible landowner, engaging with local activities and groups for feral animal control and properly maintaining firebreaks and infrastructure to support local fire prevention efforts.

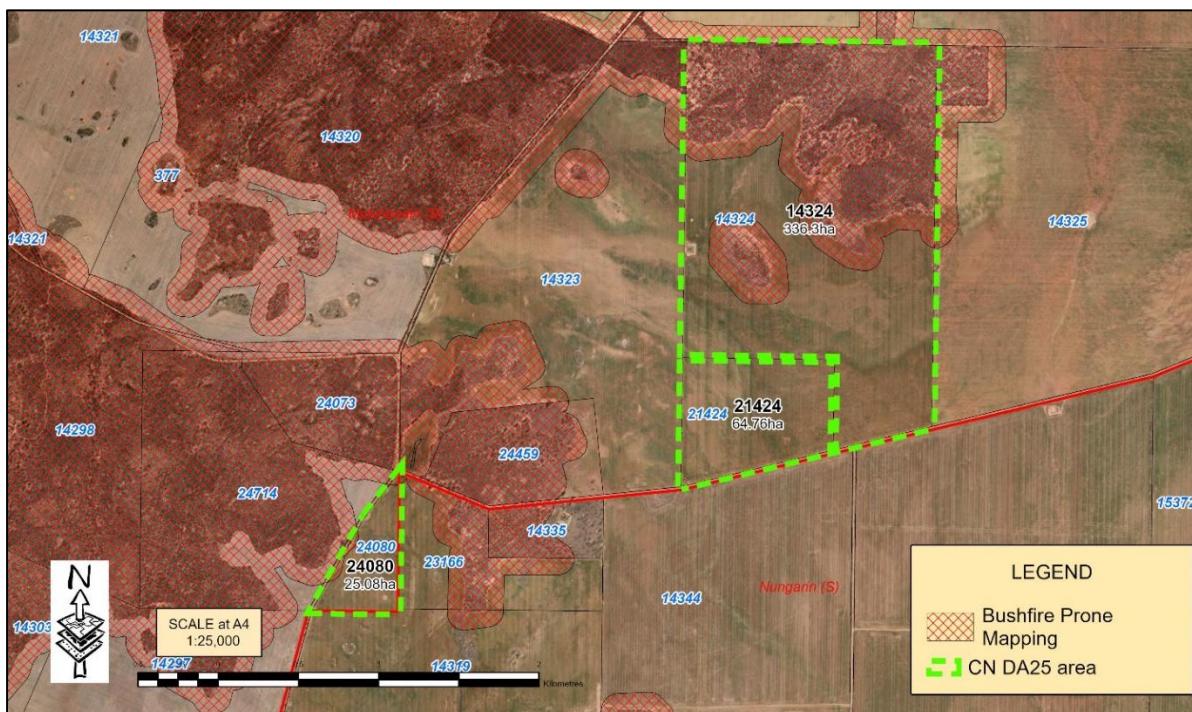
A Management Plan for the property is included with this Planning Application. The Management Plan details establishment and management arrangements, maps of the proposed plantings, and a fire management regime. The Plan is consistent with the requirements of the DFES Guidelines for Fire Protection and the Code of Practice for Timber Plantations (bearing in mind the proposed plantings are not intended for harvesting).

The proposal also includes lots on neighbouring Shires. The project aims to re-forest lower quality or degraded landscapes and some higher risk farming areas with endemic native vegetation. Environmental planting of this nature will improve biodiversity, sequester carbon, assist to mitigate soil salinity, and stabilise the land.

The Lots that are the subject of this DA include four areas (as described in the DA) as follows.

Area 1 (South) includes three lots measuring a total of 426.3 hectares. **Figure 3** provides an aerial photograph of this area showing that only about 50% of Lot 14324 being used for agricultural uses. The figure also shows the Bushfire Prone mapping prepared by DFES.

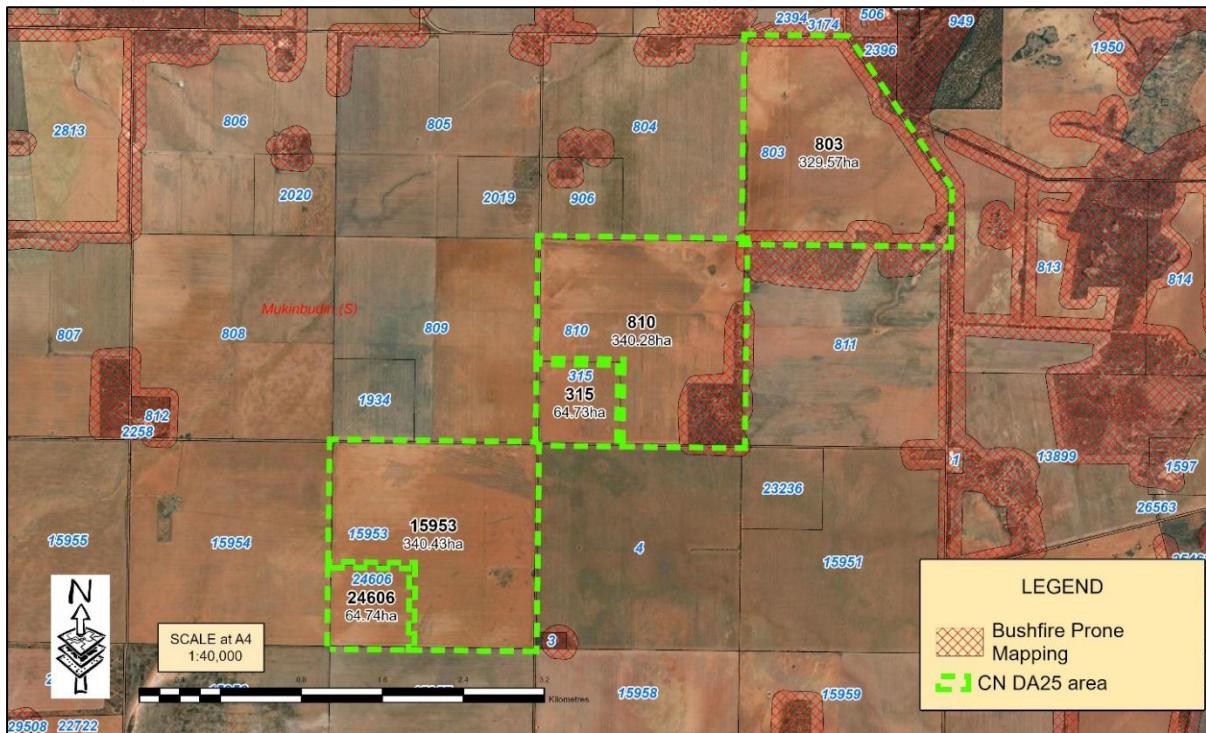
FIGURE 3 – AREA 1



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Area 2 (North) includes 5 lots measuring 1,140 hectares in total. **Figure 4** provides an aerial photograph of this area showing a portion of Lot 810 containing what looks like remnant vegetation. The figure also shows the Bushfire Prone mapping prepared by DFES.

FIGURE 4 – AREA 2



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Area 3 (East) includes 3 lots measuring 1,793 hectares in total. **Figure 5** provides an aerial photograph of this area showing a portion of the lots containing what looks like remnant vegetation. The figure also shows the Bushfire Prone mapping prepared by DFES.

FIGURE 5 – AREA 3



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Area 4 (North) includes 1 lot measuring nearly 240 hectares. **Figure 6** provides an aerial photograph of this area showing a portion of the lot containing what looks like remnant vegetation. The figure also shows the Bushfire Prone mapping prepared by DFES.

FIGURE 6 – AREA 4



Source: Landgate, Planwest

The applicant states that *DPIRD assessments show a significant proportion of the project area contain land that is classed at the lower end of productivity for broadacre cropping, but have a reasonable suitability for grazing.*

The applicant further states that *initially, the Project proposes to establish trees across a subset of the titles currently owned and operated under entities managed by Mr John Nicoletti. This subset of titles will be purchased by Carbon Neutral for the primary purpose of establishing a tree farm.*

Discussions are continuing with Mr Nicoletti for the project to be expanded over 3-4 years as part of a broader proposal for ongoing agricultural production across higher yielding areas, and planting blocks of native vegetation on areas of lower cropping productivity and around paddocks to create squarer paddocks for easier cropping.

In the shorter term, these initial lots will allow for future grazing activities but will not support broadacre cropping.

The report accompanying the DA details the land and agricultural capability, including soils, dryland cropping, grazing and salinity factors, based on information from the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD).

The report suggests that *once the forest is sufficiently matured (~3 years), the area can be used to allow grazing and harvesting forest products such as honey. There are also various design options that allow for reservation of land area for cropping and grazing, such as planting in belts along fence lines and to square up paddocks. Although not intended on the current application, practical ongoing broadacre cropping is usually incorporated into the design of our projects in two main ways:*

- *Keeping tree plantings to edges of cropping areas and to square up paddocks, and*
- *Where belts are within cropping areas, these are separated sufficiently for multiple passes of modern broadacre equipment in between the belts.*

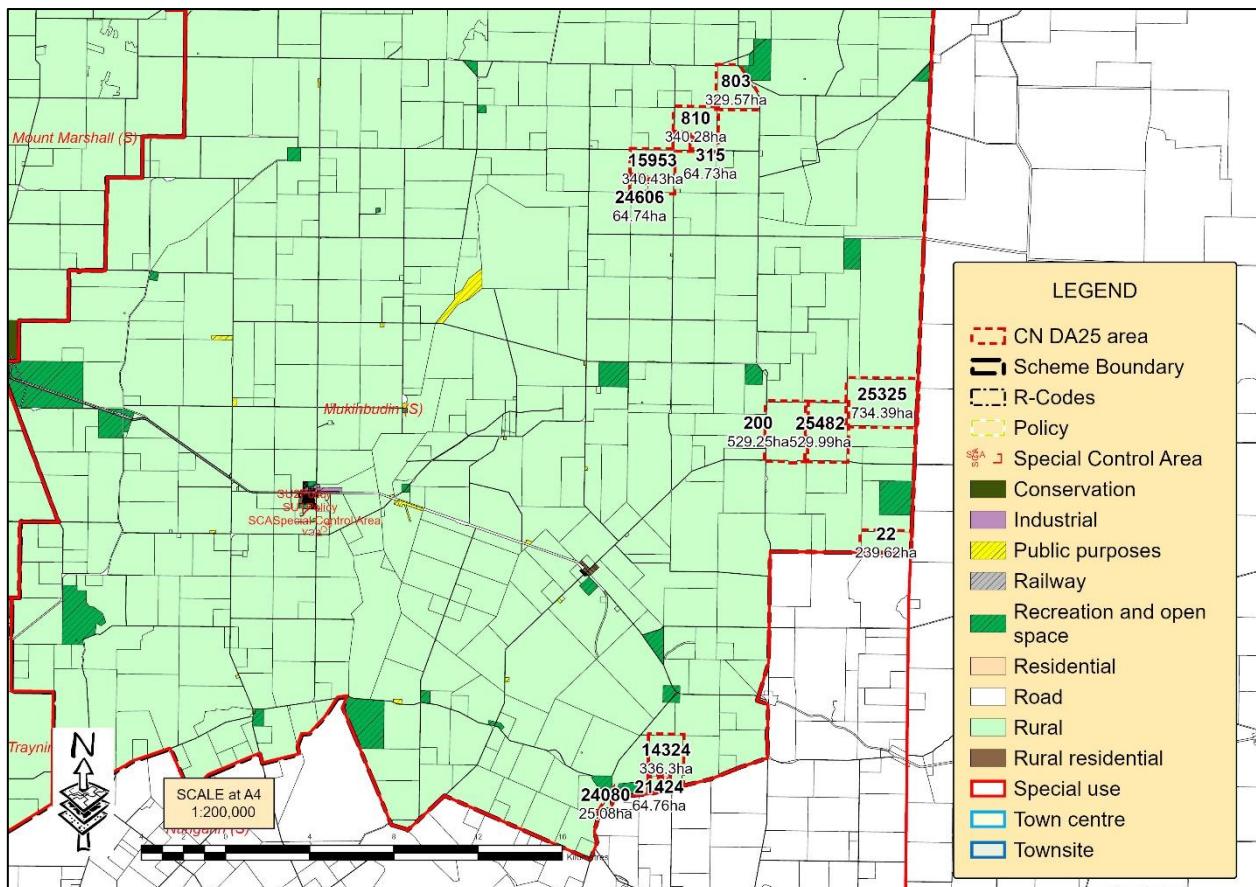
Strategic & Social Implications

There is no Local Planning Strategy for the Shire and the Council sees no strategic or social implications of the proposed development provided the conditions of the DA are complied with.

Statutory Environment

The Shire of Mukinbudin Local Planning Scheme No 4 (Scheme 4) was originally approved in 2003. The subject land holdings are all included in the Rural zone as shown in an extract from the Scheme mapping (**Figure 7**).

FIGURE 7 – EXTRACT FROM SCHEME



Source: Landgate, DPLH, Planwest.

A Tree farm is not a listed use class in the Zoning Table (Table 1 of the Scheme). Clause 3.4.2 of the Scheme provides the Council with the discretion for unlisted uses to –

- determine that the use is consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore permitted;
- determine that the proposed use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval; or
- determine that the use is not consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore not permitted.

Consultation

Nil, however, it is recommended that the DA be referred to agencies including DFES, DBCA and EPA for comment.

Policy Implications

There are no Council policy implications that relate to the proposed development.

Financial Implications

Nil

Bushfire Prone Mapping

The Bushfire prone mapping is shown in **Figures 3-6** for each area. Although there are no dwellings or other sensitive uses involved in the proposal, the development may increase the chance of a bushfire or the consequences of a bushfire.

Officer Comment

The proposal in principle is supported as it seeks to better use rural land that is considered marginal for traditional agricultural uses. At the same time, it promotes long-term carbon sequestration and permanent biodiversity restoration.

To ensure that the project is appropriately managed, it is recommended that the DA be determined as a use class not listed and advertised in accordance with clause 3.4.2 (b) *determine that the proposed use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval;* by –

- a) Advertise the DA on the Shire's web site and advising adjacent neighbours inviting submissions from interested parties within 28 days, and
- b) Referring the DA to the following agencies for comment with the recommendation that the following draft conditions be imposed to ensure compliance with current policies and requirements.
 - DFES (Department of Fire and Emergency Services)
 - EPA (Environmental Protection Authority)
 - DWER (Department Water and Environmental Registration),
 - DAA (Department of Aboriginal Affairs now part of Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries – Aboriginal Engagement and Culture Division), and
 - DBCA (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions)

Suggested draft conditions –

1. The preparation of a Bushfire Management Plan prepared by a qualified Bushfire Consultant to the satisfaction of the local government and DFES.
2. No clearing of native vegetation or TECs (Threatened Ecological Communities) without permits.
3. The preparation of a Property Management Plan to include weed and pest control management, inspection and maintenance schedule, emergency contact details, salinity monitoring and fencing to the satisfaction of the local government.
4. The preparation of a plantation establishment plan, maintenance schedule, planting types and locations, and ultimate fencing plans, to the satisfaction of the local government.

Responses from these referrals should be requested within 28 days to ensure that the Council is able to determine the DA within the prescribed time.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**Council Decision Number – 13 12 2025****Moved: Cr Bent****Seconded: Cr Dagelet**

That the Council, under the provisions of Clause 3.4.2 (b), determines that the DA is not a complex application, and -

- a) Advertise the DA on the Shire's website and advising adjacent neighbours inviting submissions from interested parties within 28 days, and**
- b) Refer the DA to DFES, EPA, DWER, DAA and DBCA for comment with the recommendation that the following draft conditions be imposed to ensure compliance with current policies and requirements.**
 - 1. The preparation of a Bushfire Management Plan prepared by a qualified Bushfire Consultant to the satisfaction of the local government and DFES.**
 - 2. No clearing of native vegetation or TECs (Threatened Ecological Communities) without permits.**
 - 3. The preparation of a Property Management Plan to include weed and pest control management, inspection and maintenance schedule, emergency contact details and salinity monitoring program to the satisfaction of the local government.**
 - 4. The preparation of a plantation establishment plan, maintenance schedule, planting types and locations, and ultimate fencing plans, to the satisfaction of the local government.**
 - 5. Once development has commenced, the developer is to enter into a written agreement with the local government for a total project development costs percentage (%) contribution towards community development initiatives. The % amount, terms and arrangements are to be agreed to in writing by the local government and developer.**

**Carried 4 / 2
By Absolute Majority
Cr Walker & Cr Brandis Against**

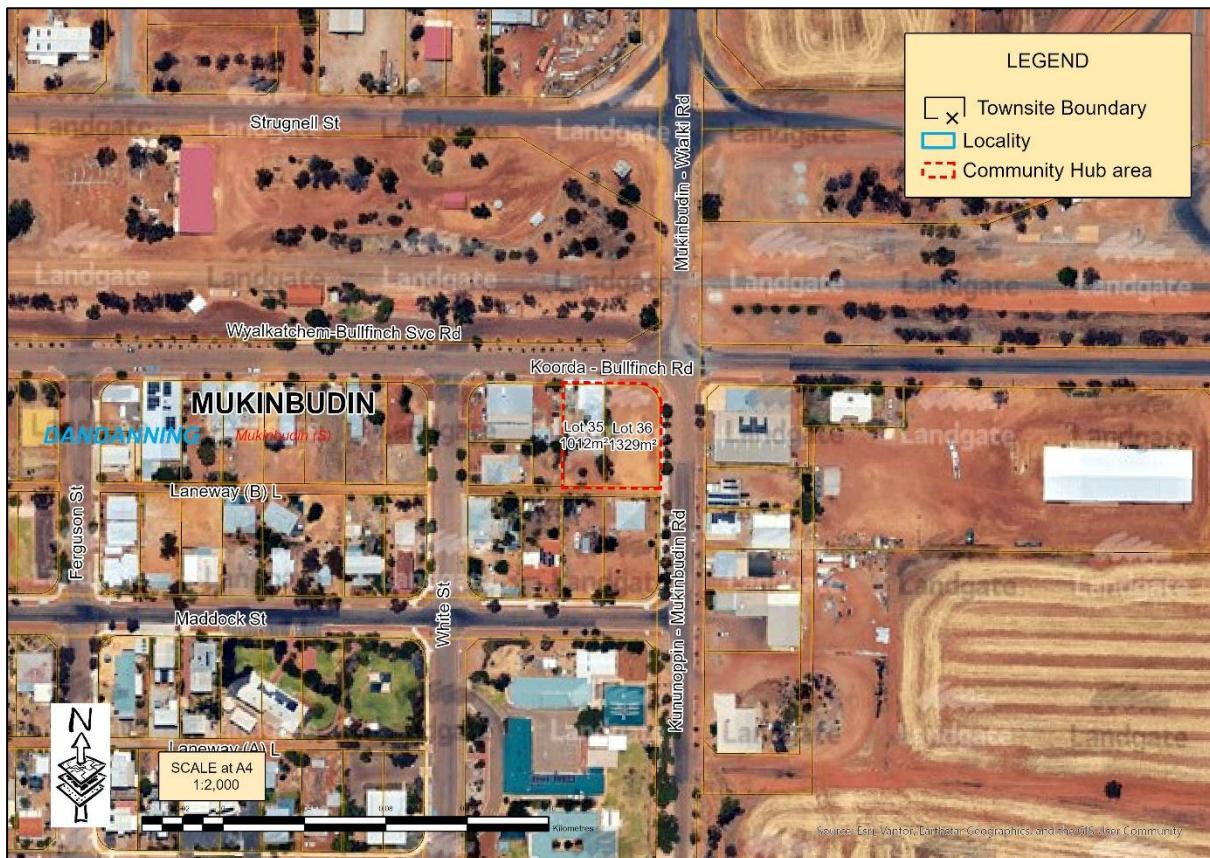
9.3.3 Development Application - Community Cultural Hub

Location:	5 and 7 Shadbolt Street, Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM 275
Applicant:	Evoke Living Homes
Date:	8 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner - Planwest
Voting Requirements:	Absolute Majority
Documents Attached:	Development Approval (DA) Application Form
Documents Tabled:	Nil

Summary

WBS Modular Pty Ltd, trading as Evoke Living Homes, has applied for a Development Approval (DA) for a community cultural hub facility on two lots on the corner of Bent and Shadbolt Streets in Mukinbudin. **Figure 1** provides a location plan of the subject land.

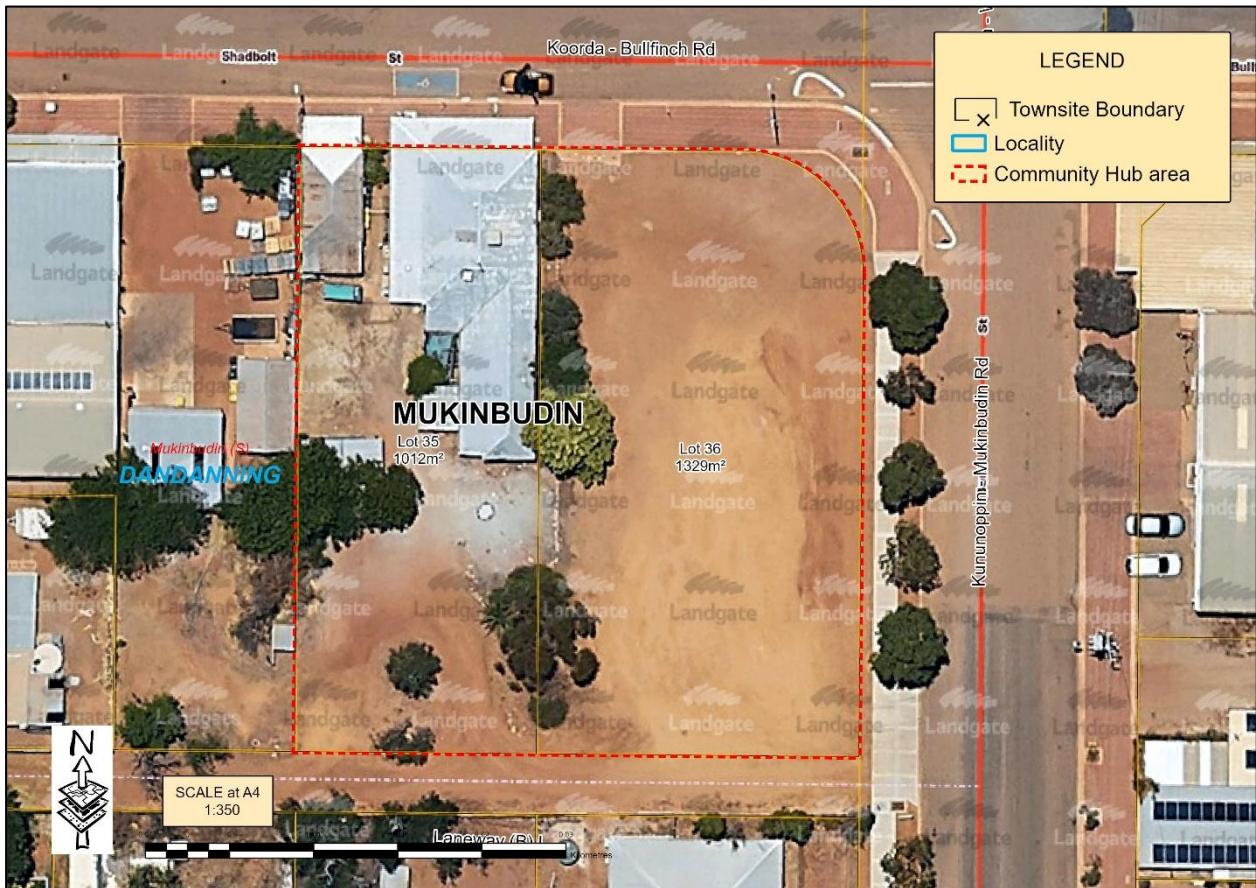
FIGURE 1 – LOCATION PLAN OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY HUB



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Both lots are now amalgamated and owned by the Shire of Mukinbudin, and the DA form has been signed by the CEO.

FIGURE 2 – AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY HUB LAND



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Proposed Development

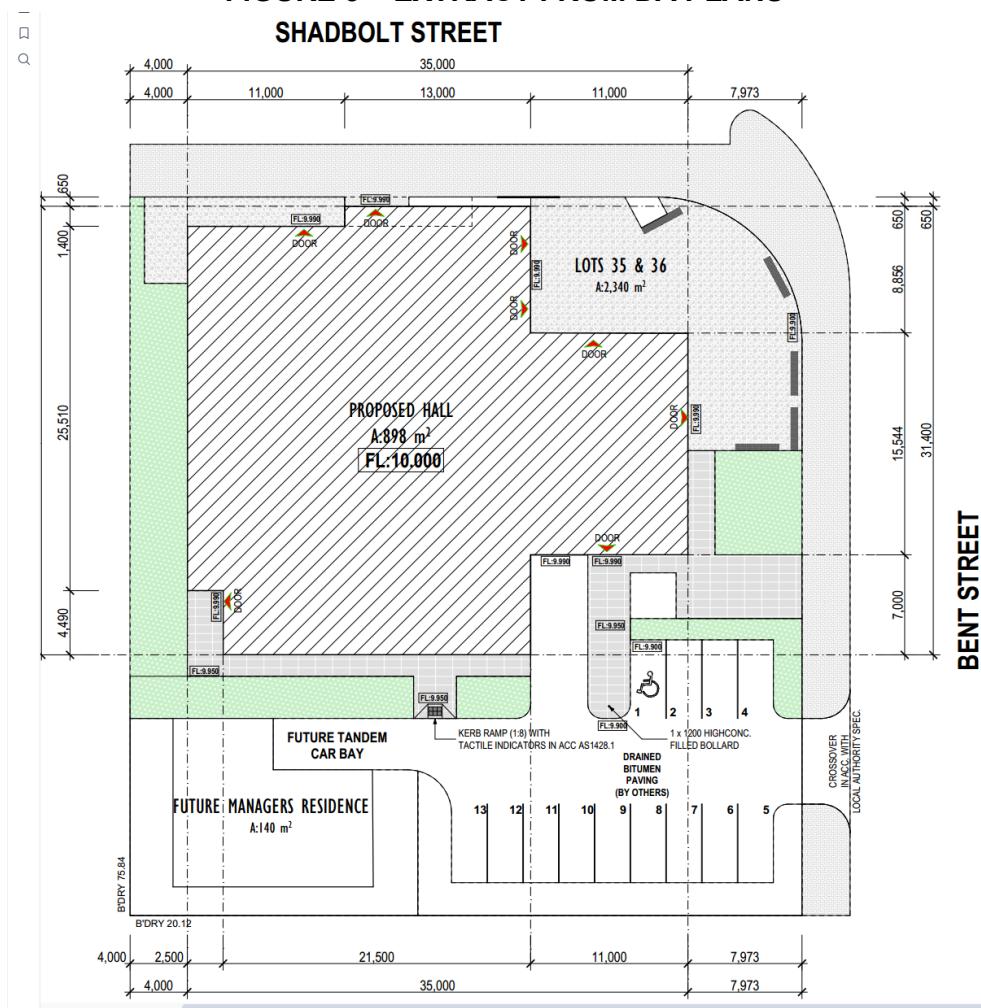
The proposal includes a new community cultural hub comprising of cafe with commercial kitchen, community resource centre, multi-purpose community area, covered playground, public amenities and landscaping/ external works. The proposed hall will occupy 898m² with several access points for a tourism area, retail area, dining room, administration, a playground, kitchen, loading bay and servicing area.

The lodged plans also show a future manager's residence on the same site. Access to the carpark will be restricted to Bent Street. Although there are only 13 bays shown on the plans, it is expected that most visitors will be local (and may walk) with the street parking provided on Shadbolt Street providing additional parking bays.

Figure 3 provides an extract from the DA plans, with **Figure 4** showing a perspective of the proposed facility. More details are provided in the DA application attached to this item.

FIGURE 3 – EXTRACT FROM DA PLANS

SHADBOLT STREET



Source: DA Plans, Planwest

FIGURE 4 – PERSPECTIVE OF FACILITY



Source: DA Plans, Planwest

The DA states that the hub will be serviced with scheme water and connected to the town's deep sewerage system. The proposed development faces a railway corridor and Shadbolt Street to the north and other town centre developments elsewhere.

The DA Form states that the cost of the proposed development is estimated to be about \$3.3m and to be completed by February 2027.

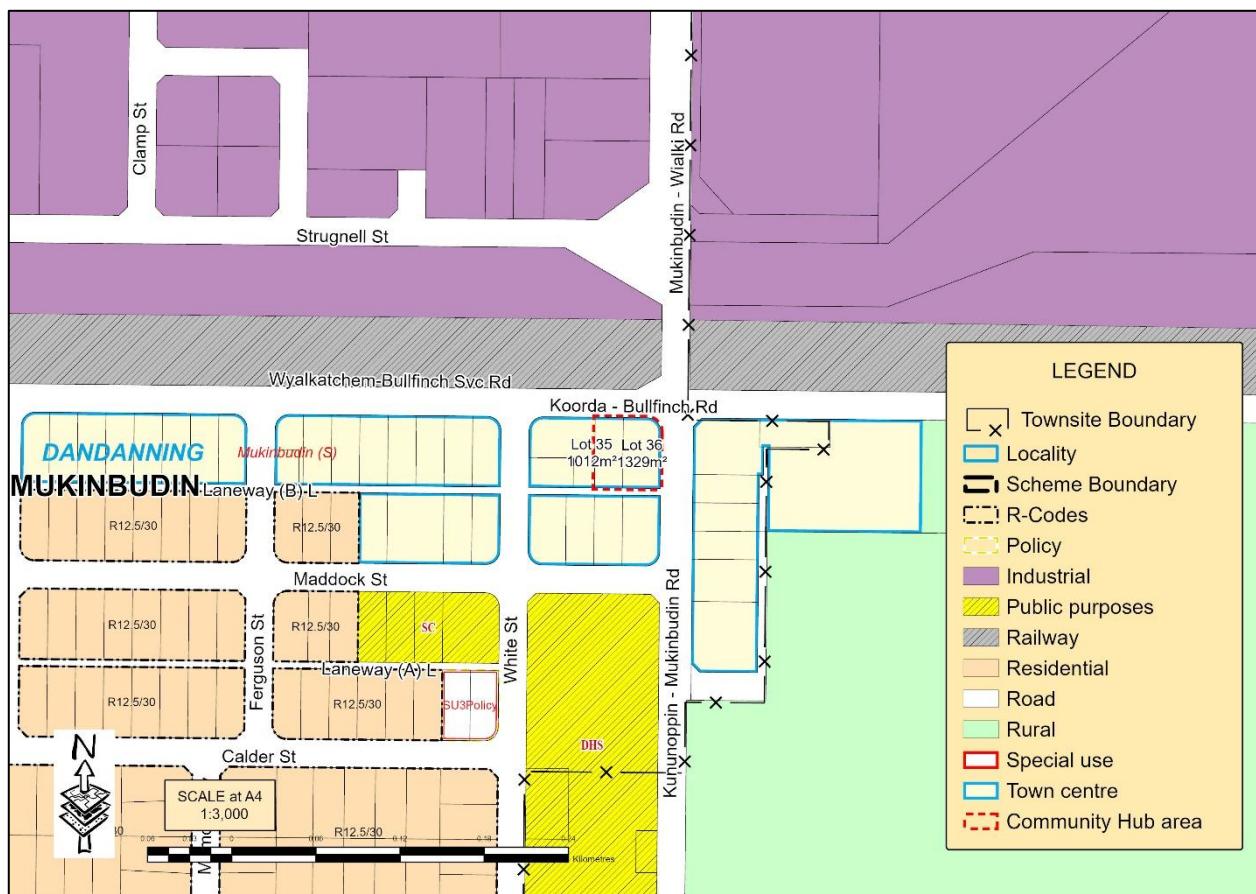
Strategic & Social Implications

There is no Local Planning Strategy for the Shire, and the Council sees no strategic or social implications of the proposed development provided the conditions of the DA are complied with.

Statutory Environment

The Shire of Mukinbudin Local Planning Scheme No 4 (Scheme 4) was originally approved in 2003. The subject land is zoned Town centre as shown below in an extract from the Scheme mapping (**Figure 5**).

FIGURE 5 – EXTRACT FROM SCHEME



Source: Landgate, DPLH, Planwest.

The objectives for the Town centre zone target a variety of uses typically found in country towns.

The objectives for the Town Centre zone are as follows.

- to ensure the established town centre in Mukinbudin remain the principal place for retail, commercial, civic, and administrative functions in the district
- to ensure development will not adversely affect local amenities and will enhance the character of the townsite. –

- to provide for the efficient and safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles (including trucks, buses, and caravans). –
- to provide sufficient parking spaces for cars, caravans, and buses, without compromising pedestrian movements. –
- to provide an increased level of public amenities including public toilets, shaded areas, and street furniture. –
- to provide for expansion of commercial activity and community facilities to meet future demands.

It is clear that the proposed development is consistent with the objectives of the zone.

There are no specific development requirements in the Town Centre zone however the local government is to have regard to the following:

- (i) the colour and texture of external building materials; the local government may require the building facade and side walls to a building depth of 3m to be constructed in masonry;
- (ii) building size, height, bulk, roof pitch;
- (iii) setback and location of the building on its lot;
- (iv) architectural style and design details of the building;
- (v) function of the building;
- (vi) relationship to surrounding development; and
- (vii) other characteristics considered by the local government to be relevant;

The local government will also ensure that landscaping is provided to complement the appearance of the proposed development and its setting; and the layout of car parking is to have regard for traffic circulation in existing parking areas and is to be integrated with any existing and adjoining parking area.

Consultation

Tanika McLennan – Chief Executive Officer

Policy Implications

There are no Council policy implications that relate to the proposed development.

Financial Implications

Nil

Bushfire Prone Mapping

The subject land is not impacted by the Bushfire prone mapping.

Officer Comment

The proposal in principle is supported as it provides a community facility in a central location, however as there is no specific use class listed for the mixed-use facility in Table 1 – Zoning Table of the Scheme, clause 3.4.2 applies.

3.4.2 If a person proposes to carry out on land any use that is not specifically mentioned in the Zoning Table and cannot reasonably be determined as falling within the type, class or genus of activity of any other use the local government may:

- a) determine that the use is consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore permitted;*

- b) determine that the proposed use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval; or
- c) determine that the use is not consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore not permitted.

It is clear that 3.4.2 b) applies in this situation.

Any new crossovers to Bent Street will need to be in accordance with the location and construction standards to the satisfaction of the local government.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 14 12 2025

Moved: Cr McGlashan

Seconded: Cr Dagelet

That Council, under the provisions of Clause 3.4.2 (a), determines that the DA is not a complex application, and determine that the use is consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore permitted, hereby grants development approval for the proposed community cultural hub subject to the following conditions and advice notes;

1. The new crossover to Bent Street to be located and constructed to the satisfaction of the local government.

**Carried 6 / 0
By Absolute Majority**

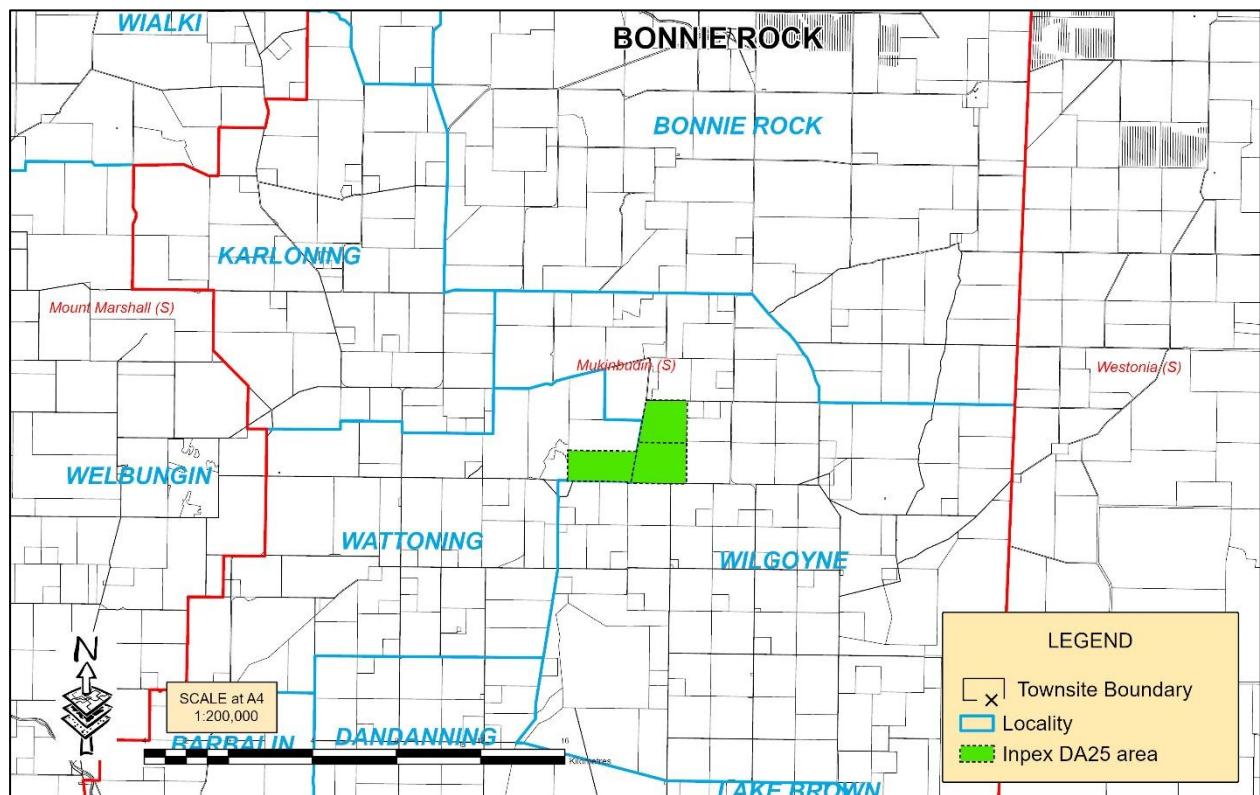
9.3.4 Development Application - Proposed Tree Farm	
Location:	Lots 3170, 3171 and 2835 Harry Road, Wilgoyne
File Ref:	ADM 275
Applicant:	Inpex
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner - Planwest
Voting Requirements:	Absolute Majority
Documents Attached:	Development Approval (DA) Application Form
Documents Tabled:	Nil

Summary

Inpex has applied for a Development Approval (DA) for a proposed agroforestry development for carbon credits over 3 lots in the localities of Wilgoyne and Wattoning. The lots are owned by Rodney Comerford who has signed the Form 1 application and has the next-door address.

Figure 1 provides a location plan of the subject land in relation to Bonnie Rock and localities.

FIGURE 1 – LOCATION PLAN OF CURRENT DA

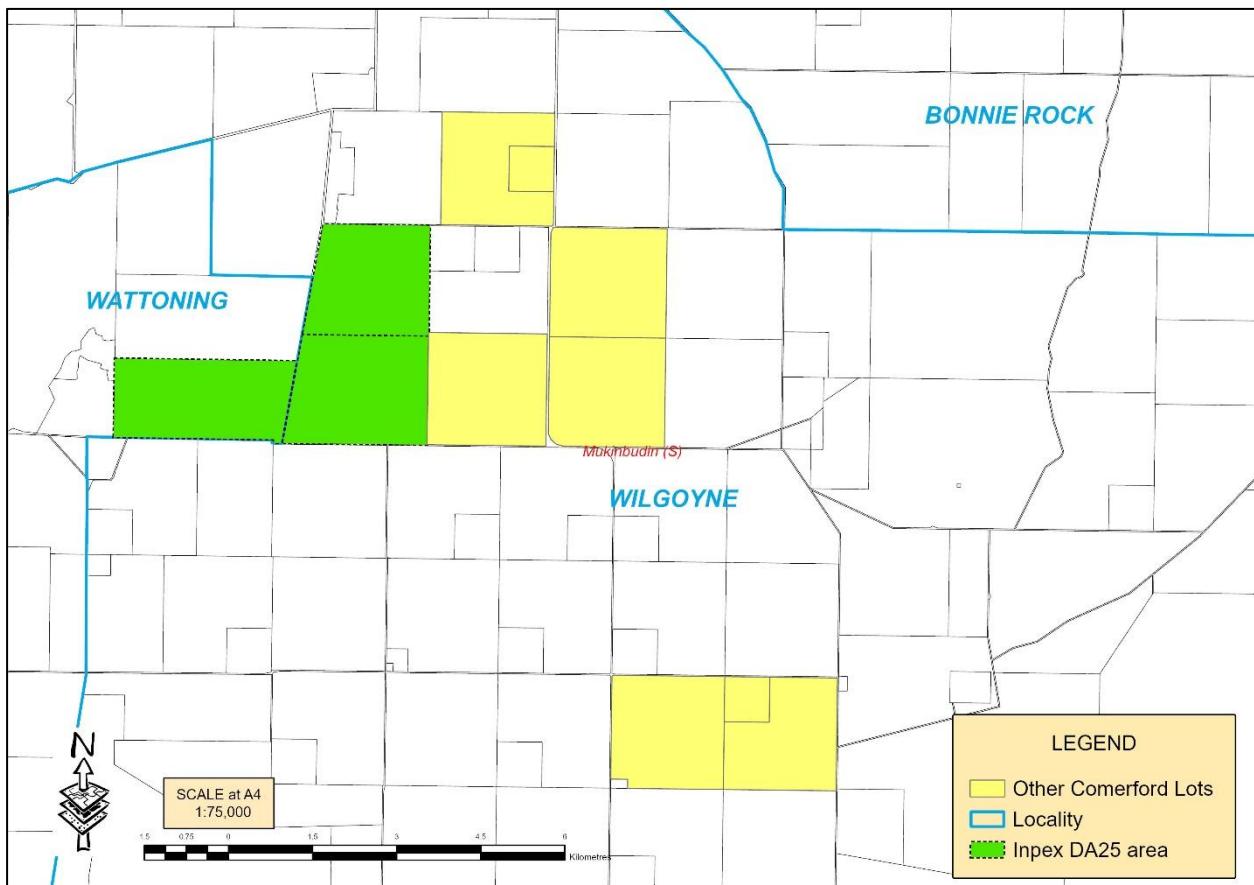


Source: Landgate, Planwest

Inpex New Energy Business Australia Pty Ltd (INEBA), as Operator of the Wheatbelt Connect project (Wheatbelt Connect) proposes to undertake an environmental planting project to extend native vegetation on a property in the localities Wilgoyne and Wattoning. The subject land is in three lots measuring a total of 1,305 hectares and is located 17 kilometres due South from Bonnie Rock townsite and over 40 kilometres north of Mukinbudin townsite.

The term Storm Rose is a property owned by Rod Comerford and is primarily used for cropping. **Figure 2** provides a plan showing other land owned by Rodney Comerford in the area that could potentially add another 2,439 hectares.

FIGURE 2 – OTHER PROPERTIES OWNED BY COMERFORD



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Background Information

WAPC Tree Farm Fact Sheet

The WA Planning Commission (WAPC) and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) released a fact sheet on Tree Farms in November 2023. Fact sheets are a method in which these agencies can clarify the planning arrangements within the appropriate State Planning Policies (SPP) - in this case SPP 2.5- Rural Planning.

The fact sheet states that 70% of tree farms were established in the Southwest of the State due to the rainfall being over 600mm per annum. However, there appears to be a steady widening of these areas for tree farms as different methods, species and understanding of the techniques improves.

It should be noted that the most common tree farms, that are currently established, are for harvesting of the product, however, there appears to be a growing interest in tree farms for carbon sequestration projects. In these cases, there is no requirement for harvesting but there maybe an increased focus on management requirements.

SPP 2.5 sets out 7 key policy positions to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to tree farms in WA. In summary, the intent of each **relevant** policy statement is explained below.

1. *tree farming is supported and encouraged on rural land as a means of diversifying rural economies and providing economic and environmental benefit* – this means the WAPC supports tree farms in rural areas and will implement this approach in assessment of local planning strategies and schemes;

3. *tree farming should generally be a permitted use on rural land,*

5. *in planning for tree farming, local government considerations should include but are not limited to, potential bushfire risk, environmental and economic factors, water availability and recharge, visual landscape impacts, transport impacts of tree farming (where harvesting is proposed), planting thresholds, appropriate buffers, and location relative to conservation estates and sensitive land uses* – this means that local governments should consider tree farms in the context of other existing and proposed land uses in their municipality, and set planning controls as required, based on demonstrated evidence that the control is needed;

Do tree farms have an impact on agricultural communities?

The WAPC Tree Farm fact sheet states that the Australian economy has been forced to adjust structurally over time, which has seen ongoing change in the agricultural sector. Research by Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) in 2001 and 2007 highlights the impacts of globalised economic rationalism on family farms and subsequent issues of their declining viability, leading to farm amalgamation, reduced labour hire and the contraction of local economies.

Tree farms are part of the ever-changing agricultural sector. But they are not the underlying cause of the population or economic changes.

For local governments where pine tree farms are likely to be developed, population change data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census 2001 to 2021), indicates that the general trend is for increasing or stable population figures, and the ‘family’ makeup of households has remained steady at around 70%. Family composition or population has not significantly declined in the last 20 years

What are the land use planning considerations with tree farms?

The WAPC Tree Farm fact sheet states that the growing of trees for timber is similar to other crops, however there are some planning issues associated with tree farming that may require further assessment and management, if relevant. As set out in SPP 2.5, these include:

- *Bushfire risk* – tree farms may establish a bushfire risk where not occurring before. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services has published guidelines to assist in the management of bushfire risk for tree farms. Any development conditions to manage bushfire risk should accord with these guidelines.
- *Environmental and economic issues*, including planting thresholds – the location of tree farms relative to environmental and/or biodiversity assets, and management of potential impacts (eg wildling spread). So too, ensuring there is a balanced supply of rural land for other economic activity can be addressed in local planning strategies.
- *Water availability and recharge* – potential impacts on groundwater and surface water systems may need to be considered.

- *Visual landscape impacts* – local governments may identify rural prominent landscapes to exclude tree farms for visual reasons. While the converse may occur, these areas can be identified in keeping with the Western Australian Planning Commission's (WAPC) Visual Landscape planning manual.
- *Transport impacts* – where tree farming involves harvesting, local governments may need to make arrangements with developers for road and/or intersection upgrades to manage potential haulage impacts.
- *Separation from sensitive land uses* – local governments may establish buffers to exclude tree farming around these land uses eg. electrical substations or transmission lines.

Existing Development

The DA states that there are no structures on the subject land. It appears from aerial photographs that much of the land has been cleared with some areas of remnant vegetation. The Landgate aerial photographs suggest that Lot 3170 is currently cropped, however it is unclear how much of the other lots are currently used for agricultural purposes.

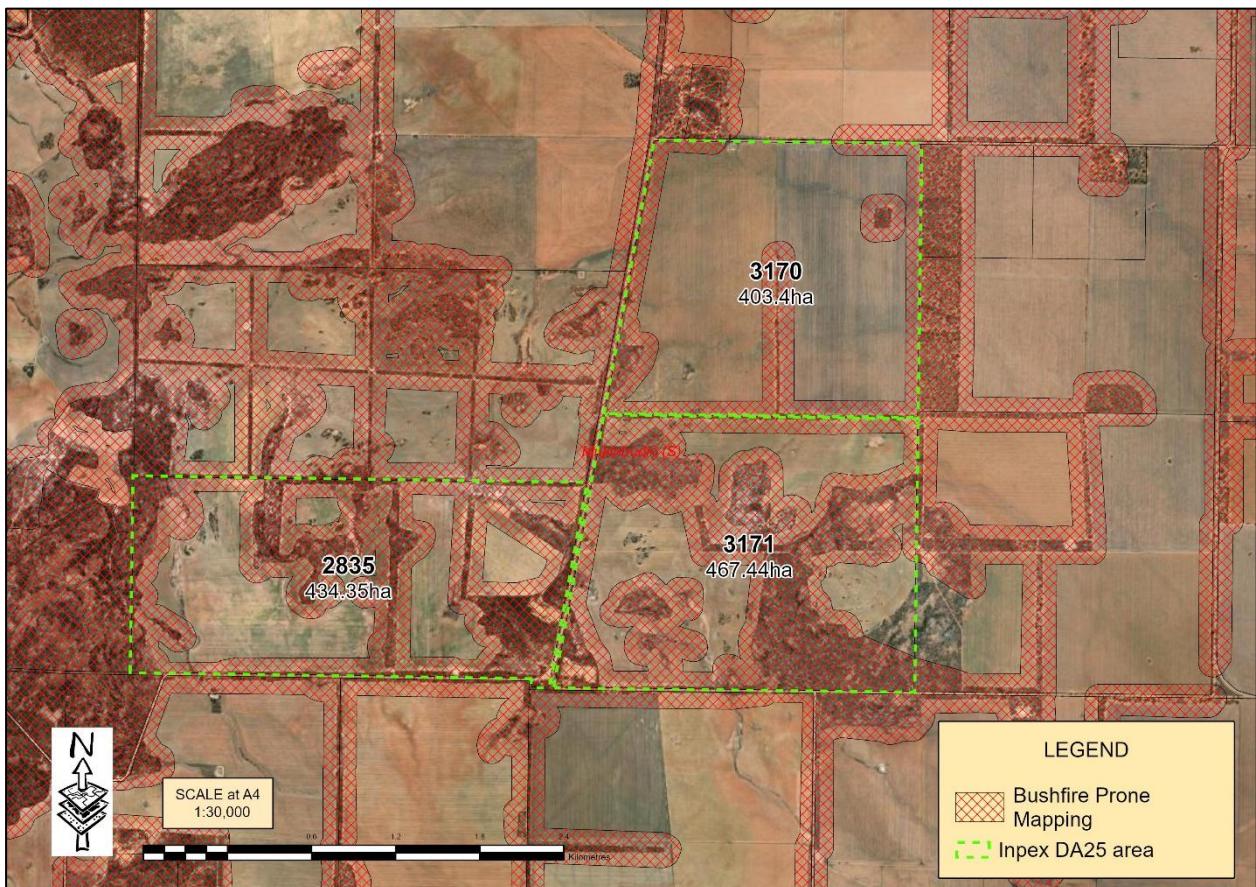
The report accompanying the DA suggests that the property is currently used for cropping. The proposed project provides an alternative income for an area that is difficult to crop due to shallow soil and outcropping rocks (regular breaking of equipment occurs during cropping activities).

The DA states that *all the project areas are contained within the Kwolyin System, which is comprised of gently undulating granitic terrain of the Kellerberrin batholith with large outcrops of granite, dominated by duplex soils with minor occurrences of sandplain soils. The vegetation consists of York Gum/ Salmon gum woodlands with smaller amounts of Wandoo, Jam, Sheoak and heath vegetation.*

Within this system, over 90% of the project area is the Kwelkan subsystem. This feature consists of undulating granitic low hills, in the central Zone of Ancient Drainage, with bare rock, deep sandy duplex (grey and red), shallow sand (red and yellow/brown) and red loamy duplex. The natural vegetation complex comprises of York gum-jam woodland. The remaining (<10% of the planting area is the Nembutting subsystem. This feature rises and low hills, in the northern Zone of Ancient Drainage, with alkaline red loamy duplex (mostly shallow) and yellow sandy earth. This subsystem is dominated by mallee scrub and woodland.

Figure 3 provides an aerial photograph of the subject land showing that most of Lot 3170 is being used for cropping, however Lots 2835 and 3171 may be partly used for other agricultural purposes. The figure also shows the Bushfire Prone mapping prepared by DFES.

FIGURE 3 – AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SUBJECT LAND



Source: Landgate, Planwest

Proposed Development

INEBA has executed a lease with Mr Comerford and will manage the planting on behalf of the Wheatbelt Connect Joint Venture. The activity will change the land use in the project areas from agriculture to agroforestry.

The proposal seeks to develop 560 hectares of the 1,305-hectare holding, at a cost of \$820,000. Estimated completion time is October 2026.

The DA report provides a detailed response to each relevant State Planning Policy and Scheme objectives.

The applicant states that *Wheatbelt Connect aims to achieve sustainable land use through the integration of strategic revegetation into broadacre farming systems in the Western Australian Wheatbelt. The key objectives of this proposed planting project are to:*

1. Establish a native vegetation carbon project across approximately 560 ha (representing 17 per cent inclusive of fire breaks) of the 3,400 ha property.
2. Register the project under the Federal government's Emissions Reduction Fund to allow the planting to deliver carbon abatement in the form of Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) over a 25-year period.
3. Ensure the plantings are maintained for at least the permanence period of the registered project and achieve a minimum of 20% canopy cover and 2 m height at maturity.

4. Contribute towards achieving local and regional biodiversity objectives.
5. Protect and provide for the continuation of agricultural production on the remaining land through the provision of supplemental income from carbon farming.
6. Provide an alternative income for an area that is difficult to crop due to shallow soil and outcropping rocks (regular breaking of equipment occurs during cropping activities).
7. Allow for the reintroduction of livestock grazing to the planted areas, once the seedlings have reached sufficient maturity (approximately 3-4 years).

The Figure below (**Figure 4**) shows an extract from the DA that lays out the area of the subject land that will be planted. Clearly the remnant vegetated areas appear to be excluded, as is the majority of Lot 3170.

FIGURE 4 – EXTRACT FROM DA SHOWING PLANTING AREA



Source: DA, Planwest

The DA clearly outlines the procedure for the development including ripping, spraying, planting, weed control and infill planting by 2027. The DA details the types and densities of planting

The applicant states that a search of the State Aboriginal Heritage Register has been undertaken. Two lodged sites were identified adjacent to the planting area ACH-4507 (Traditional Structure) and ACH-5652 (Traditional Structure) with the boundaries of these sites overlapping a proposed area of planting. The planting design was altered to avoid overlapping with the boundaries of these sites.

The applicant suggests that the land will be suitable for the continuation of agriculture through grazing once the trees are sufficiently mature, if the landholder chooses to do so.

In addition, the project will also, help to protect marginal land from degradation by reducing wind and water erosion and providing protection, provide a diversification of income for the

landholder and bring biodiversity benefits through utilisation of native species that will also attract native animal species.

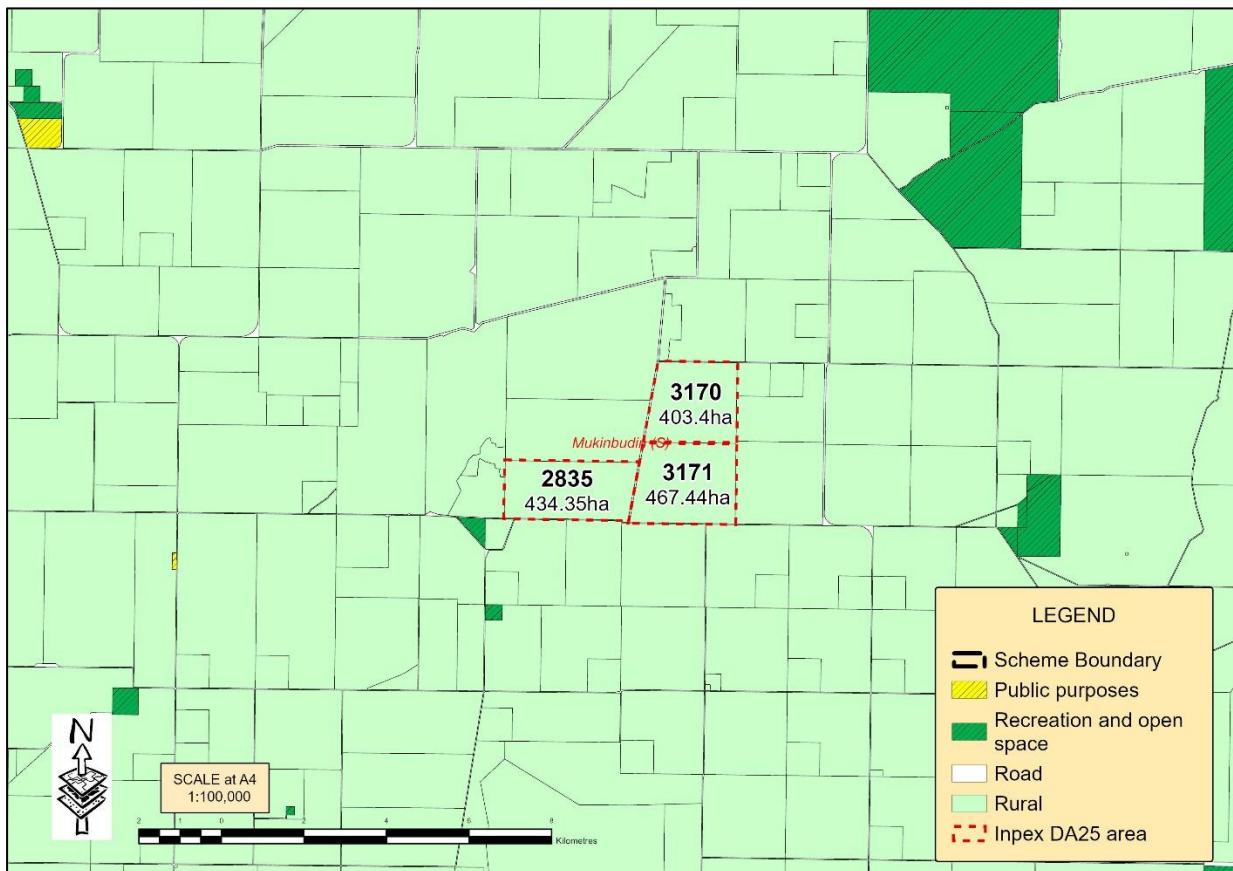
Strategic & Social Implications

There is no Local Planning Strategy for the Shire and the Council sees no strategic or social implications of the proposed development provided the conditions of the DA are complied with.

Statutory Environment

The Shire of Mukinbudin Local Planning Scheme No 4 (Scheme 4) was originally approved in 2003. The subject land holdings are all included in the Rural zone as shown in an extract from the Scheme mapping (**Figure 5**).

FIGURE 5 – EXTRACT FROM SCHEME MAPPING



Source: Landgate, DPLH, Planwest.

A Tree farm is not a listed use class in the Zoning Table (Table 1 of the Scheme). Clause 3.4.2 of the Scheme provides the Council with the discretion for unlisted uses to –

- (a) determine that the use is consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore permitted;
- (b) determine that the proposed use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval; or
- (c) determine that the use is not consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and is therefore not permitted.

Consultation

Nil, however, it is recommended that the DA be referred to agencies including DFES, EPA, DWER, DAA and DBCA for comment.

Policy Implications

There are no Council policy implications that relate to the proposed development.

Financial Implications

Nil

Bushfire Prone Mapping

The Bushfire prone mapping is shown in **Figure 3**. Although there are no dwellings or other sensitive uses involved in the proposal, the development may increase the chance of a bushfire or the consequences of a bushfire.

Officer Comment

The proposal in principle is supported as it seeks to better use rural land that is considered marginal for traditional agricultural uses. At the same time, it promotes long-term carbon sequestration and permanent biodiversity restoration.

To ensure that the project is appropriately managed, it is recommended that the DA be determined as a use class not listed and advertised in accordance with clause 3.4.2 (b) *determine that the proposed use may be consistent with the objectives of the particular zone and thereafter follow the advertising procedures of clause 64 of the deemed provisions in considering an application for development approval;* by –

- c) Advertise the DA on the Shire's web site and advising adjacent neighbours inviting submissions from interested parties within 28 days, and
- d) Referring the DA to the following agencies for comment with the recommendation that the following draft conditions be imposed to ensure compliance with current policies and requirements.
 - DFES (Department of Fire and Emergency Services)
 - EPA (Environmental Protection Authority)
 - DWER (Department Water and Environmental Registration),
 - DAA (Department of Aboriginal Affairs now part of Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries – Aboriginal Engagement and Culture Division), and
 - DBCA (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions)

Suggested draft conditions -

1. The preparation of a Bushfire Management Plan prepared by a qualified Bushfire Consultant to the satisfaction of the local government and DFES.
2. The preparation of a Property Management Plan to include weed and pest control management, inspection and maintenance schedule, emergency contact details, salinity monitoring and fencing to the satisfaction of the local government.
3. The preparation of a plantation establishment plan, maintenance schedule, planting types and locations, and ultimate fencing plans, to the satisfaction of the local government.

Responses from these referrals should be requested within 28 days to ensure that the Council is able to determine the DA within the prescribed time.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**Council Decision Number – 15 12 2025****Moved: Cr Walker****Seconded: Cr Bent**

That the Council, under the provisions of Clause 3.4.2 (b), resolves to determine that the DA is not a complex application, and -

- c) Advertise the DA on the Shire's website and advising adjacent neighbours inviting submissions from interested parties within 28 days, and**
- d) Refer the DA to DFES, EPA, DWER, DAA and DBCA for comment with the recommendation that the following draft conditions be imposed to ensure compliance with current policies and requirements.**
 - 1. The preparation of a Bushfire Management Plan prepared by a qualified Bushfire Consultant to the satisfaction of the local government and DFES.**
 - 3. The preparation of a Property Management Plan to include weed and pest control management, inspection and maintenance schedule, emergency contact details and salinity monitoring program to the satisfaction of the local government.**
 - 4. The preparation of a plantation establishment plan, maintenance schedule, planting types and locations, and ultimate fencing plans, to the satisfaction of the local government.**
 - 5. Once development has commenced, the developer is to enter into a written agreement with the local government for a total project development costs percentage (%) contribution towards community development initiatives. The % amount, terms and arrangements are to be agreed to in writing by the local government and developer.**

**Carried 6 / 0
By Absolute Majority**

Change in order of business

Item 9.3.5 was dealt with earlier in the meeting.

9.3.5 Development Application - Short-Stay Accommodation Buildings	
Location:	22720 Copeland Road, Dandanning
File Ref:	A1211
Applicant:	Red Fox Ag Pty Ltd
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner - Planwest
Voting Requirements:	Absolute Majority
Documents Attached:	<u>Development Approval (DA) Application Form</u>
Documents Tabled:	Nil

9.3.6 Request for Additional Community Chest Funding – Wilgoyne Christmas Tree	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM 375
Applicant:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Date:	4 th February 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Voting Requirements	Absolute Majority
Documents Attached	Nil
Documents Tabled	Nil

Summary

Council is requested to consider providing additional support by increasing the Community Chest Funding for the Wilgoyne Christmas Tree from \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00.

Background Information

Council allocated funding under the Community Chest Program at the October Ordinary Meeting of Council. A copy of the resolution is provided below:

Financial Implications

The 2025/2026 Budget allows for expenditure up to \$10,000.00 (ten thousand dollars) for community projects. These applications total \$6,809.49 in cash/kind. If all applications were approved, this would result in an underspend of \$3,190.51.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 08 10 2025

Moved: Cr Dagelet

Seconded: Cr McGlashan

That Council approves all seven applications submitted under the 2025/2026 Community Chest Program, totaling \$6,809.49, as follows:

APPLICANT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	PURPOSE
Mukinbudin Basketball Club	\$ 864.49	Equipment Purchases - new balls and weighted bags for portable hoops
Mukinbudin Swimming Club	\$ 1,300.00	Professional Fees - Swimming WA coaching and stroke development clinic
Uniting Church - Op Shop	\$ 415.00	"Open" Flags
Mukinbudin Football Club Inc Ladies Auxiliary	\$ 730.00	Various kitchen equipment
Mukinbudin Football Club	\$ 1,500.00	New TV (upgrade) - Complex Function room
Mukinbudin & Bonnie Rock Playgroups	\$ 1,000.00	New storage items
Wilgoyne Christmas Tree	\$ 1,000.00	Travel for food van - 2025 Wilgoyne Event
	\$ 6,809.49	

Carried 7 / 0

Following the allocation of funding, an email was received from Jenny Heaney on behalf of the Wilgoyne Christmas Tree requesting an additional \$500.00 due to an unexpected increase in participation. A copy of the email is provided below.

Hi Renee,

Sorry I'm only sending this now, but is there a way to get it paid this week?

Also, I know we were approved for \$1,000 - I'm wondering if council would be open to upping the amount to \$1500? I know community chest was undersubscribed this year and we have more people RSVPing than we expected. I think we'll be about \$350 short, even with ticket sales.

Anyway, let me know.

*Thanks,
Jen*

Officer Comment

Following receipt of the email request from Jenny Heaney, the request was circulated to Council for out of session endorsement, as the event occurs prior to the December Ordinary Meeting. Council indicated support for increasing the contribution, noting that the 2025/2026 Community Chest Program was undersubscribed.

Strategic & Social Implications

Integrated Strategic Plan 2025-35:

Strategic Pillar 2: Community

Outcome Statement: Our community enjoys a healthy, safe and inclusive environment for all ages.

Goal 4: Access to quality recreation and leisure facilities

Priority Project 4.5: Provide annual Community Chest Fund

Consultation

Whole of Council

Statutory Environment

Local Government Act 1995.

Policy Implications

Policy 2.3 Community Chest Grants Scheme

Financial Implications

With the prior Community Chest allocation resulting in an underspend of \$3,190.51, endorsing this recommendation would decrease the underspend by \$500.00, resulting in a final underspend of \$2,690.51.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 16 12 2025

Moved: Cr Dagelet

Seconded: Cr Brandis

That the out of session decision to provide an additional contribution of \$500.00 to the Wilgoyne Christmas Tree 2025 event, be ratified.

Carried 6 / 0

9.3.7 Rural Health Funding Alliance	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM292
Applicant:	Rural Health Funding Alliance
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Voting Requirements	Simple Majority
Documents Attached	Alliance Communiqué to Local Governments Alliance Position Paper 2025 – Provision of Remote GP Services Alliance Preferred GP Service Model
Documents Tabled	Nil

Summary

Council is requested to consider supporting the Rural Health Funding Alliance and its advocacy position regarding increased Federal Financial Assistance Grants to support the provision of General Practitioner (GP) services in remote communities.

Background Information

The Rural Health Funding Alliance is a collective of six Western Australian local governments established to advocate for sustainable long term funding for rural medical services. Member local governments report significant pressure in funding GP services, with some spending up to 16% of rate revenue to retain medical service access.

Research undertaken by the Alliance highlights:

- Life expectancy in remote WA is seven years lower than metropolitan areas;
- Residents in remote towns often rely on hospital emergency departments for primary care;
- The rising cost of medical recruitment is placing increasing strain on local government budgets.

The Alliance is seeking support from other local governments to strengthen a collective advocacy position for increased Federal Financial Assistance Grants. The NEWROC Council resolved on 4 November 2025 to recommend that member Councils consider the matter at their upcoming meetings.

Supporting the Alliance does not create a funding commitment for Council but contributes to advocacy efforts to secure more equitable rural medical service funding.

Officer Comment

A review of the documentation indicates alignment with challenges experienced by Mukinbudin and the Kununoppin Medical Practice in attracting and retaining medical services. The proposal promotes structural reform aimed at reducing financial burden on rural ratepayers and ensuring continuity of GP access.

The Alliance's preferred model proposes Federal Government allocation of \$300,000 annually to local governments classified as MM5-MM7 under the Modified Monash Model, which includes Mukinbudin.

Support from Council would strengthen the collective advocacy effort and position the Shire to benefit from future funding allocation should the proposal be adopted.

Strategic & Social Implications

Integrated Strategic Plan 2025–2035

Pillar 2 – Community

- Outcome 5: Accessible health and support services for residents.
- Strategy 5.1: Advocate for health services that meet community needs.

Pillar 4 – Civic Leadership

- Outcome 11: Compliant governance and responsible financial management.
- Strategy 11.4: Advocate for improved funding and service delivery models for regional communities.

Consultation

Nil

Statutory Environment

Nil – advocacy position only.

Policy Implications

Nil

Financial Implications

No direct financial impact from supporting the Alliance.

Successful advocacy may reduce future municipal funding requirements for medical services.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 17 12 2025

Moved: Cr Brandis

Seconded: Cr Walker

That Council:

1. Registers support on the Local Government Rural Health Funding Alliance website acknowledging the funding challenges experienced by remote local governments in providing medical services;
2. Supports the Alliance in seeking recalculations and increased Federal Financial Assistance Grants to help fund GP services in regional Western Australia; and
3. Calls on the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) to undertake an impact assessment and advocacy campaign to improve medical service funding for remote and very remote communities.

Carried 6 / 0

9.3.8 NEWROC Memorandum of Understanding	
Location:	Mukinbudin
File Ref:	ADM205
Applicant:	Caroline Robinson, NEWROC Executive Officer
Date:	9 th December 2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Responsible Officer	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Tanika McLennan, Chief Executive Officer
Voting Requirements	Simple Majority
Documents Attached	Current NEWROC Memorandum of Understanding (expired)
Documents Tabled	Nil

Summary

Council is requested to consider the updated North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for execution, noting the previous agreement expired on 30 June 2025. The NEWROC Executive Officer has advised that no changes are proposed to the document other than updating the term to 1 January 2026 – 31 December 2028.

Background Information

The NEWROC MoU establishes the collaborative framework between the participating local governments for regional cooperation, advocacy, shared services and project delivery.

Participating Councils are:

Dowerin, Koorda, Mt Marshall, Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Trayning and Wyalkatchem.

The current MoU expired on 30 June 2025. At the 25 November 2025 NEWROC Council Meeting, member Councils were advised that the agreement has reached end-of-term and that a renewed MoU is required to maintain membership and continued participation in the regional group.

The NEWROC EO indicated that no amendments are proposed outside of resetting the date period for the next three year term.

Officer Comment

Execution of the new MoU will enable the Shire of Mukinbudin to remain a member of NEWROC and continue to participate in strategic initiatives, resource sharing and regional advocacy.

The renewed term proposed is 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028.

Membership contributions, governance structure and operational functions remain unchanged.

Strategic & Social Implications

Integrated Strategic Plan 2025–2035

Pillar 4 – Civic Leadership

- Outcome 11: Compliant governance and responsible financial management.
- Strategy 11.4: Advocate for improved funding and service delivery models for regional communities.

Consultation

Caroline Robinson - NEWROC Executive Officer
NEWROC Member Councils

Statutory Environment

Nil – NEWROC is a voluntary regional collaboration under a Memorandum of Understanding, not a statutory regional council.

Policy Implications

Nil

Financial Implications

Annual membership contribution continues as per the current cost-share schedule (1/7th share per participant). Costs are provided within the existing operational budget.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Council Decision Number – 18 12 2025

Moved: Cr Brandis

Seconded: Cr McGlashan

That Council:

1. Endorses the updated NEWROC Memorandum of Understanding for the period 1 January 2026 – 31 December 2028; and
2. Authorises the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to execute the document and affix the Common Seal as required.

Carried 6 / 0

10. Elected Members Motions of which previous notice has been given

10.1 Nil

11. Urgent Business Approved by Person Presiding or by Decision

11.1 Nil

12. Closure of Meeting

12.1 The Chairperson thanked Elected Members and Staff for attending and declared the meeting closed at 3.18pm.