

Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Panel

MEETING MINUTES – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Panel (SEAP)

Date & Time:	19 September 2023 - 5:00pm
Location:	Council Chambers, 21 Saunders Street, Wynyard
Council Representatives:	Cr Celisa Edwards (Chair), Cr Andrea Courtney (Deputy Chair)
Members:	Brenton Hosking, Colin Hocking, Fiona Loughran, Hannah Sadler, Ian Ferris, Ian Newman, Peter Lawrence, Robin Krabbe, Sarah Smith, Wendy Bryant
Staff in Attendance:	Kassandra Steward, Daniel Summers, Bill Walker
Apologies:	Dana Hicks, Sarah Smith, Ian Newman, Cr Andrea Courtney

AGENDA:

1. Welcome
2. Confirmation of Minutes
3. New Year Meeting Dates
4. Tasmanian Government Sustainability Strategy Consultation
5. Food Security Update
6. Ballad Avenue Update
7. Wildlife Corridor Strategy
8. Vegetation Management Strategy Update
9. Update on Recommendations to Council
10. Review of Actions List
11. Upcoming Meetings
12. General Business
13. Closure

ACTIONS TAKEN:

1. R Krabbe to circulate key points for a response to the Tasmanian Government Sustainability Strategy Consultation for the group to make comment on.
2. Group to respond to (above action) NLT 27 September so that a cohesive response can be prepared and submitted by consultation close on 6 October.
3. D. Summers to invite CHC Environmental Compliance Manager to the next SEAP meeting for consultation on threats to food security.
4. W. Bryant to provide details on climate impact for policy view.
5. D. Summers to circulate to the SEAP, the Inglis River Walking Track Study report for review and discussion at the next meeting.
6. C. Hocking to send sequencing details to members for discussion at next meeting.
7. B. Walker to source and circulate the Gondwana Link process and mapping doc to members for reference and guidance.
8. H. Sadler to send a link to the regional strategy on the NRM site to members for reference.
9. D. Summers to source responses to questions of oversight, development, and staff involvement for the creation Vegetation Management Strategy to be discussed at the November meeting.
10. B. Walker to provide Council's current education documentation around cats in the municipality.
11. B. Walker to circulate a recent news story about cats from Clarence Council.
12. B. Walker to provide a discussion paper on cats and cat management for the next meeting.
13. B. Walker to invite a regional cat management coordinator from NRM to present on cat management in the region.
14. K Steward to construct a comment for SEAP members to consider for inclusion with a media release in relation to the Plastic Free Places program and the Tulip Festival.

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RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

1. SEAP recommend Council identify and facilitate mapping of food security based partnerships.
2. SEAP recommend the group along with Councillors attend various communities (e.g. Waratah, Somerset, etc.) to visit and expand the focus areas of interest.

ACTION ITEM UPDATES:

- Action 10.: B. Hosking to follow-up and provide examples to group for consideration.
- Action 16.: W. Bryant to pull together a job specification for type of environmental officer position that would be useful at Council.
- Action 23.: D. Summers to provide the identified Pause Place pilot options to the group.
- Action 28.: F. Loughran to provide updates from current toolkit for group input and potential recommendation, working in consultation with C. Hocking.
- Action 30.: D. Summers to circulate original Infra Wild letter and associated documents for SEAP review and consideration.
- Action 26.: Group to review the Vegetation Management Strategy outline and determine whether to make a recommendation to submit to Council out of session NLT 22 September.
- Action 32.: B. Walker to circulate report on the move from the Weed Management Act to the Biosecurity Act once available. information sessions may then be organised, if required.

1 WELCOME

- A quorum was established with the nomination of SEAP member W. Bryant to Chair in the absence of Councillor representatives at the commencement of the meeting.
- The meeting was officially opened at 17:02

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved P. Lawrence, Seconded H. Sadler

That the minutes of the SEAP meeting held on 18 July 2023, as circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Carried.

3 NEW YEAR MEETING DATES

Minor discussion held in relation to the proposed shift in meeting date in the new year. It was quickly agreed to proceed with proposed new year calendar which sees the first meeting of the year in February and bi-monthly thereafter. This was agreed after noting the that the Council meeting schedule regularly shifts each January due to staff and Councillor availability.

4 TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The meeting continued with discussion over the public consultation that is currently open for the State Governments Sustainability Strategy which invites Tasmanians to have their say and help create Tasmania's sustainability vision and goals.

- Cr Edwards arrived 5:20pm

The conversation raised the question as to whether the SEAP should provide a coordinated response as a group. After some debate on the content and where to draw from. It was thought that iCEP could provide some basis for response. It was ultimately decided that R. Krabbe would circulate the key points to the group for out of session discussion so that a cohesive response could be prepared on the behalf of the group before the closing date for submissions on 6 October.

Action 1.: R Krabbe to circulate key points for a response to the Tasmanian Government Sustainability Strategy Consultation for the group to make comment on.

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Action 2.: *Group to respond to (above action) NLT 27 September so that a cohesive response can be prepared and submitted by consultation close on 6 October.*

5 FOOD SECURITY UPDATE

W. Bryant, H. Sadler and R. Krabbe, provided an update from the sub-group looking at food security. It was suggested during the July meeting that doing data mapping of potential sites and resources as well as identifying the vulnerable sections of the population were a first step towards a potential Community Food Security Policy and action. Since the July meeting the group submitted an application for grant monies from Health Tasmania to facilitate the initial mapping of current resources in the region. It was noted that the application was unsuccessful.

Conversation then shifted towards identification of possible Council officers who might have time to invest in the mapping project. It was mentioned that the Power Partnerships have detailed guidance on how to go approach mapping. Further discussion led to a recommendation that Council facilitate the mapping of food security based partnerships as a first step toward a policy.

It was noted and suggested that Circular Head Council have an environmental compliance manager and that perhaps they could be invited to the next meeting to discuss thoughts on threats to food security. It is suggested that climate impacts be included as part of the policy view to inform policy direction.

Action 3.: *D. Summers to invite CHC Environmental Compliance Manager to the next SEAP meeting for consultation on threats to food security.*

Action 4.: *W. Bryant to provide details on climate impact for policy view.*

Recommendation 1.: *SEAP recommend Council identify and facilitate mapping of food security based partnerships.*

6 BALLAD AVENUE UPDATE

P. Lawrence provided an update on the progress of the Ballad Avenue sub-group to provide Council options for the use of the Ballad Avenue land. The group was advised that there had been a meeting on-site on 1 September. The intention was to meet with a few interested parents and teachers to discuss ideas for the site as a means of including community input into the recommendations to Council. On the day of the meeting a few SEAP members and one teacher were able to attend though feedback was received from the child and family centre.

A quick recap of what was captured in the ideas paper submitted with the agenda was provided to members which included themes of education, connectivity and socialisation as well as nature learning being at the forefront. Ideally the concept would include vegetation and open space for recreation as well as education that helps to create a generation of respect for vegetation. The conversation then shifted to capturing the information, process and outcome as one of a few examples or case studies to include in the Vegetation Management Strategy.

It was discussed and thought that although the strategy would provide overarching guidance on best practices, individual sites should have their own management plans based on the specific needs and nuance of the sites. It was suggested to test and trial the use of management plans to progress and then develop the concepts into a cohesive strategy. The thought was that individuality of these early management plans, executed appropriately will help to provide useful references within the strategy and ultimately future management plans.

6.1 Bike Paths and Walking Tracks

As part of the Ballad Avenue conversation and ideas paper, linkages and connectivity were raised as something to consider. The creation of more accessible active routes between schools, the child & family centre, town and nearby homes as a means of allowing children and families to safely walk or ride between locations. It would not only promote healthier active living but encourage less fossil fuel consumption and be a small step in reducing carbon emissions.

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It was understood that further community consultation would be required before making any recommendations on connectivity or Ballad Avenue. It was suggested that consultation continue to get to a position to provide Council a recommendation with 3 to 4 options for consideration.

Discussion continued on potential pathways at which point it was brought to the attention of the group that a report had been tabled at the September Council meeting which provided recommendations on the Inglis River Walking Track which connects many walking paths to and along the river. It was noted that the recommendation outcomes from the report have the potential to provide the proposed connectivity under consideration. It was suggested that the report tabled at the Council meeting be circulated to members for background information and that the Inglis River implementation plan could come to the group for discussion once prepared. It was suggested that bike paths for connectivity, removal of steepness and stairs and inclusion of prams and scooters should be part of the consideration when designing the implementation plan.

It was highlighted that Waratah and Somerset are not mentioned much in the group when focusing on vegetation management or improvement areas for consideration. It was suggested that the group begin taking a wider view perhaps beginning with community engagement to identify potential locations. It was noted that there is a project in the works for Waratah at Tyre Park to progress with a Tiny Forest. The conversation continued raising the need for broader discussion across communities to understand what would work best for each community. At this point it was suggested that perhaps the group and Councillors could jointly visit the various communities to get some on the ground visibility of the requirements in locations other than Wynyard.

Action 5: *D. Summers to circulate to the SEAP, the Inglis River Walking Track Study report for review and discussion at the next meeting.*

Recommendation 2: *SEAP recommend the group along with Councillors attend various communities (e.g. Waratah, Somerset, etc.) to visit and expand the focus areas of interest.*

7 WILDLIFE CORRIDOR STRATEGY

Discussion on the topic of a wildlife corridor strategy began with the acknowledgment that it is a challenging area but there is a need for a specific strategy. It was recognised that it is or should be interrelated with the Vegetation Management Strategy but that it is also different with a separate purpose.

It was suggested that the identification of the natural areas within the municipality be the first step toward a strategy and that the sequencing of the creation of the strategy as an extension of the vegetation management strategy would be very important as well. Identifying the correct sequence of events would make both strategies more coherent and cohesive and allow better consideration of potential developments, improvements and enhancements.

The conversation continued to the creation of a sub-committee to assist and progress. The thought was that the process should begin with mapping to provide an overview, then develop generalised concepts to guide the progress toward strategy and policy. Discussion raised the question of vegetation mapping on private land for a complete picture, keeping an eye on the vegetation management progress content for use in in the wildlife strategy.

Some discussion came about similar projects which have progressed or completed mapping for a toward a similar purpose such as the Gondwana Link project and the UTAS public and private land mapping and was suggested to be circulated to the members for reference and guidance. It was suggested that protecting identified wildlife corridors be a priority and would link to the regional strategy. These may be used as guiding principles for a prototype at Ballad Avenue. It was noted that regional strategy could be found on the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRM) website.

- D. Summers temporarily excused 5:52pm

Action 6: *C. Hocking to send sequencing details to members for discussion at next meeting.*

Action 7: *B. Walker to source and circulate the Gondwana Link process and mapping doc to members for reference and guidance.*

Action 8: *H. Sadler to send a link to the regional strategy on the NRM site to members for reference.*

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8 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

It was agreed that agenda item 8 was largely discussed throughout earlier conversation. A question was raised as to whether the Vegetation Management Strategy outline had been tabled at the September Council meeting. Discussion was delayed until D. Summers could return to the meeting and speak to this. Further questions regarding who would oversee and be involved in the Vegetation Management Strategy, and whether staff be appointed and raised a question of transparency in the decision making process. It was requested that answers to these questions be relayed to the group by the next meeting.

Action 9.: *D. Summers to source responses to questions of oversight, development, and staff involvement for the creation Vegetation Management Strategy to be discussed at the November meeting.*

9 UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

- Cr. Edwards excused 6:49pm
- **Recommendation 4:** *SEAP recommends Council to investigate opportunities for greater take up and usage of the Home Energy Audit Toolkit (HEAT).*
 - It was noted that the kit that Council have in house is a bit out of date and requires renewal before progressing with education and use in the community.
- **Recommendation 5:** *SEAP recommend Council request a speed limit reduction for Sisters Beach Road from the Transport Commissioner.*
 - Road counters are still out gathering data which will be key in progressing through Council and for any request being submitted to the Transport Commissioner for consideration.
- **Recommendation 6:** *SEAP recommend Council consider extending the virtual fencing along Sisters Beach Road*
 - The group were advised that the data collection needs in order to progress this recommendation are quite rigorous and will require extensive effort to back up the proposal. It has been suggested that the proposal will need about 2 years' worth of detailed data.
 - A suggestion was made that Council could collaborate with Circular Head Council on possible funding to assist with data gathering.
 - The data gathering discussion led to questions on the current fencing. The question was raised whether the polls and batteries on the fencing were regularly being maintained. The advice given was that they are being maintained and that the batteries are being replaced this year.

10 REVIEW OF ACTIONS LIST

- Action Item 5 to form a subgroup looking at a weed reduction program including education and transfer of knowledge into a Council strategy - remains In Progress.
- Action Item 8 to adjust and reorganise the Action Plan produced as part of the January brainstorming session and provide a soft copy of native file - Complete.
- Action Item 10 to provide examples and case studies to assist progress for easily achievable Community adaptation and resilience projects - remains is In Progress, B. Hosking to follow-up.
- Action Item 16 point one to assess the needs of/for an environmental officer, both strategic and day to day – In Progress.
 - Minor discussion occurred around whether there is any potential resource share the new environmental officer that has joined Circular Head Council. The suggestion being that they could potentially manage iCEP delivery and/or assist mapping. It was suggested that SEAP could provide specification for an officer.
- D. Summers returned 6:15pm

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- Action Item 23 for the group to consider the pause places programme and provide feedback and/or endorsement to the Cradle Coast Authority representative out of session and prior to the September meeting - Complete.
 - It was noted that three sites had been identified for the pause place pilot program around Wynyard, the options are to be circulated to members for information and reference.
- Action Item 27 to provide a finalised version of the SEAP Action Plan to members out-of-session for agreement prior to going to Council for endorsement - Complete.
- R. Krabbe excused herself at 6:17pm
- Action Item 28 to provide Sisters Beach toolkit/education options for discussion at the September meeting with the intent of producing a community introduction and education campaign focusing on Sisters Beach – In Progress.
 - F. Loughran to provide updates from current toolkit for group input and potential recommendation, working in consultation with C. Hocking.
- Action Item 29 for a subgroup to explore, map and make recommendations on Ballad Avenue to SEAP which will inform recommendations to Council – In Progress.
- Action Item 30 to resend the small community solar paper for SEAPs review and consideration - Complete.
 - D. Summers to send circulate original Infra Wild letter and associated documents for SEAP review and consideration.
- C. Hocking excused himself at 6:25pm
- Action Item 26 for group members to provide a finalised version of a Vegetation Strategy scope document for review of group ready for recommendations to Council – In Progress.
 - D. Summers advised that the scoping document had not been submitted to Council yet. It was suggested that the group review the vegetation management strategy outline in its current state and determine whether to make a recommendation to submit to Council out of session by 22 September.
- Action Item 7 to seek further information on possible funding for waste education through the state government – In Progress.
- Action Item 31 to provide a copy of a 2 page report from the Climate Council on bioenergy to the group for review - Complete.
- Action Item 32 to organise an information session on the move from the Weed Management Act to the Biosecurity Act – In Progress.
 - B. Walker attended a meeting on the changes to the Act and the oversight agency. A report is being produced from that meeting and it is intended that once the report becomes available it will be circulated to the group. An information session may be organised after the report is circulated, if required.
- Actions Confirmed

Action 10.: (update) B. Hosking to follow-up and provide examples to group for consideration.

Action 16.: (update) W. Bryant to pull together a job specification for type of environmental officer position that would be useful at Council.

Action 23.: (update) D. Summers to provide the identified Pause Place pilot options to the group.

Action 28.: (update) F. Loughran to provide updates from current toolkit for group input and potential recommendation, working in consultation with C. Hocking.

Action 30.: (update) D. Summers to circulate original Infra Wild letter and associated documents for SEAP review and consideration.

Action 26.: (update) Group to review the Vegetation Management Strategy outline and determine whether to make a recommendation to submit to Council out of session NLT 22 September.

Action 32.: (update) B. Walker to circulate report on the move from the Weed Management Act to the Biosecurity Act once available. information sessions may then be organised, if required.

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11 UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Next meeting on 21 November 2023 located at Council Chambers has been confirmed.

12 GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair called for members to raise other general business; the following discussions were noted:

- It was brought to the groups attention that cats had been in the news recently which has raised the question of whether Council have a cat policy. The group was advised that the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) have a cat management policy while Council tend toward education and consultation. Council do not have the requisite power to trap where PWS can. The question was raised whether Council would be willing to develop a policy. The conversation continued whether a policy was required given the difficulty in enforcement. It was discussed that in the general community there could be issues with enforcement especially where in how domestic vs feral animals may be dealt with. It is suggested that the solution is to lean on higher policies already in place while introducing more education into the community on the issues. The conversation went on to discuss the introduction of community grants out there to assist people to build their own cat enclosures at home. It was suggested that Council should at the very least have some procedures in place and a clear position on the subject. A suggestion to the group was that we could request a cat management coordinator from NRM present at the next meeting to discuss cat management issues.
- Minor discussion on the Sisters Beach estuary project around erosion, the group have asked whether they can be involved.
- The final piece of general business was in regard to Council's partnership with the Plastic Free Places Program as part of the Tulip Festival. The Community Activation team are aiming to get the word out about the involvement of Plastics Free Places at the Tulip Festival through a media release and provided SEAP some details about the program for review and comment. The group had positive feedback but given time constraints were unable to organise comment on the night. It was suggested that a comment based on earlier email comment and thoughts during the meeting could be constructed for SEAP to review and approve for use.
- It is requested that the group revisit the walking track discussion as an agenda item at the next meeting.

Action 10.: *B. Walker to provide Council's current education documentation around cats in the municipality.*

Action 11.: *B. Walker to circulate a recent news story about cats from Clarence Council.*

Action 12.: *B. Walker to provide a discussion paper on cats and cat management for the next meeting.*

Action 13.: *B. Walker to invite a regional cat management coordinator from NRM to present on cat management in the region.*

Action 14.: *K Steward to construct a comment for SEAP members to consider for inclusion with a media release in relation to the Plastic Free Places program and the Tulip Festival.*

13 CLOSURE

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 19:00.