

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING - 12 NOVEMBER 2025 ATTACHMENTS

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SHIRE OF AUGUSTA MARGARET RIVER
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA 12 NOVEMBER 2025

Proposed Illegal Camping Roadmap (1-3yrs)

Area of focus	Short-term (25/26 summer)	Medium-term (26/27 summer)	Longer-term (2027/28+)
Compliance & enforcement Objective: Ensure compliance and enforcement settings are acting as a sufficient illegal camping deterrent Outcome: Stricter penalties and robust compliance monitoring of illegal camping in region	Quick wins Illegal camping infringement penalty has increased from \$100 to \$200 Review Ranger patrol routes to include residential areas, specifically Baudin Drive, increased presence in Augusta and randomised routes to reduce predictability	Momentum and planning for more difficult actions Local law review process to review and instigate rise in illegal camping penalties (increased penalties could be in affect by 26/27 season) Review Ranger service levels and present options to Councillors during 25/26 budget review (Ie. to increase and change Ranger patrol times over peak season) Investigate and pilot model for community participation in illegal camping enforcement in region	Delivery of difficult actions Increase in illegal camping penalties
Infrastructure Objective: Infrastructure to reduce the occurrence of illegal camping and pressure on popular destinations Outcome: Infrastructure deployed to limit opportunities for illegal camping and bolster compliance regime	Quick wins Identify existing campgrounds with surge capacity to make an overflow facility available Install gates to prevent access to certain areas of bushland in Gracetown Temporary closure of vehicle access to Barret St weir, from circa 1 Jan	Momentum and planning for more difficult actions Second trial + evaluation of sites and operating model for permanent overflow facility Permanent closure: Move through process for permanent closure, based on evidence from trial and wider community consultation Investigate and design timed parking regime for popular attractions (Ie. Gracetown) Investigate technology options for enhancing enforcement capability of Shire (Ie. CCTV, drones)	Delivery of difficult actions If data supports it, installation of permanent overflow camp facility Delivery of timed parking solution for popular attractions (Ie. Gracetown) Installation of technology options for enhancing enforcement capability of Shire
Education & awareness Objective: Shift behaviour of visitors to the region to ensure they camp responsibly and treat our environment and community with respect Outcome: Visitors understand the region is a strictly no free camping region and respects the natural environment, Community pereception of the Shires actions in response to this are positive	Quick wins No free camping posters installed in public toilets and businesses throughout the region	Momentum and planning for more difficult actions Upgrade welcome signs to include no free camping messaging Marketing campaign to share values with visitors to the region and shift free camping perception of region	Delivery of difficult actions
Regional collaboration Objective: Develop working collaborations between Shire, DBCA and community Outcome: Shire, DBCA and community have a strong working relationship to address illegal camping and broader pressures on popular destinations	Quick wins Community + Shire + DBCA working group to build common understanding of illegal camping and peak season pressures in region, along with transparency of Shire efforts to resolve Closer collaboration between Shire and DBCA Rangers to improve the efficiency of illegal camping patrols between the two agencies across the region	Momentum and planning for more difficult actions DBCA + Shire MOU in place to better delineate illegal camping patrol areas in region Prepare advocacy position for state and federal government support of visitation pressures in region	Delivery of difficult actions Advocate to state government for economic instruments that can protect the regions natural environment and shift financing burden from rate payers to visitors/state government

Illegal Camping & Peak Season Pressures

Shire of Augusta Margaret River – Community Roadmap for the 2025/26 Summer Season

Date: September 2025

1. Background

Illegal camping continues to generate significant environmental, amenity and safety pressures across the Shire during the peak visitor season. In response, the Shire has moved to work in a more collaborative approach to problem-solving with the community.

This roadmap sets out the actions proposed for the 2025/26 summer, focusing specifically on illegal camping while recognising that these issues form part of broader “peak season” challenges impacting residents, visitors, and the environment. This should be read alongside the three year community roadmap which captures longer term initiatives arising from the community working group.

The community engagement approach being used by the Shire moves beyond traditional consultation toward shared decision-making, where residents have a meaningful role in identifying problems, testing ideas, and allocating resources.

All recommendations in this roadmap are subject to Council budget approval, prioritisation, planning and scheduling, and depending on the action under consideration may require a specific council decision. Once the budget is endorsed, prioritisation and implementation will occur in collaboration with a community working group.

2. Overarching Process

The following process will guide the implementation of this roadmap:

1. Community engagement: Circulate the draft roadmap to community working group members and interested residents for feedback.
2. Council decision: Present the quick win actions and 3yr roadmap for budget endorsement at the special OCM in November 2025
3. Shire Executive review: Assess feasibility, resource requirements, and alignment with Council policy and budget.
4. Implementation: Prioritise and implement endorsed actions ahead of the 2025/26 summer, in partnership with the working group and other agencies.
5. Evaluation: The working group will monitor implementation and recommend adjustments for the 2026/27 season.

3. The New Way of Working – Deliberative Democracy

This roadmap has been developed in partnership with impacted community members and aims to build shared ownership and accountability.

Key features

- Community-led identification and prioritisation: Residents and stakeholders collaborate directly with the Shire to identify emerging problem areas and test solutions.
- Shared decision-making: The working group will inform and guide prioritisation of an annual budget of approximately \$30,000 for local actions.
- Evidence-based evaluation: The group will monitor what works and what doesn't, adjusting future actions accordingly.
- Shire as facilitator: The Shire's role shifts toward providing technical advice, operational support, transparent data and reporting.

This partnership model ensures decisions are informed, transparent, and locally grounded — a key step in rebuilding trust, improving outcomes, and embedding continuous improvement.

4. Recommended Townsite Actions

Listed below are the recommended actions for the 2025/26 season. Note that they are subject to final budget approval, prioritisation, and further community consultation where necessary (I.e. Limiting access to Barrett Street Weir).

4.1 Barrett Street Weir (Margaret River)

Community proposal:

- Install a lockable gate at the entrance to the weir car park to prevent overnight and unauthorised vehicle access.

Next steps:

- Consult with nearby residents on the proposed gate installation.
- Implement a three-month trial closure of the car park over summer 2025/26.
- Review the trial's impact on safety, environmental condition and community feedback to determine the long-term approach.

4.2 Gracetown

Community proposals:

- Install additional signage, including variable message boards, to reinforce that camping is prohibited.

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- Install gates to prevent access to sensitive bushland areas used for illegal camping.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Shire and DBCA Rangers to clarify enforcement responsibilities and coordination.
- Explore establishment of an overflow campground to provide legal, short-term camping alternatives.

Next steps:

- Conduct joint site visits with DBCA and local residents.
- Undertake planning and negotiations with landholders, considering fire safety and emergency access.
- Procure and install gates before summer.
- Investigate viable overflow camping sites and, if feasible, implement a pilot arrangement with private operators.

4.3 Gnarabup

Community proposal:

- Expand Ranger patrols to include residential areas, particularly Baudin Drive, where overnight camping has been reported.

Next steps:

- Review and update Ranger patrol routes and scheduling to ensure coverage of residential streets and key hotspots.
- Incorporate patrol data and outcomes into post-season reporting.

4.4 Augusta

Community proposal:

- Increase Ranger patrol presence across Augusta during the summer season.

Next steps:

- Adjust Ranger rosters to increase coverage of Augusta and nearby recreation sites.
- Monitor infringement data and community feedback to measure impact.

4.5 Margaret River Township

Community proposal:

- Provide an affordable and accessible camping option during peak visitor periods (e.g. overflow camping).

Next steps:

- Engage private campground operators to discuss surge-capacity partnerships.
- Investigate cost effective options for piloting overflow campsites in the region

5. Region-Wide Actions

5.1 Compliance and Enforcement

- The penalty for illegal camping has increased from \$100 to \$200.
- Patrol routes to include residential areas (e.g. Baudin Drive) and maintain a randomised schedule to avoid predictability.
- Stronger coordination between Shire and DBCA Rangers to ensure a consistent enforcement approach.

Next steps:

- Consider further penalty adjustments through the FY25/26 Local Law Review.
- Review patrol coverage and effectiveness ahead of December 2025.
- Explore potential for joint patrols or shared reporting systems.

5.2 Infrastructure

- Engage private campground operators to discuss surge-capacity partnerships.
- Investigate cost effective options for piloting overflow campsites in the region

Next steps:

- Identify potential operators and site suitability.
- Develop a simple grant agreement and operational guidelines.
- Report pilot outcomes to Council by April 2026.

5.3 Education and Awareness

- Install additional “No Free Camping” signage across all townsites, road reserves, and public facilities.

- Provide posters and digital assets for use by local businesses, visitor centres, and community groups.
- Use variable message boards during peak weeks to reinforce awareness.

Next steps:

- Map sign locations and confirm any necessary approvals.
- Produce and install signage and materials before December 2025.
- Monitor visitor and resident feedback throughout the season.

5.4 Regional Collaboration

- Establish an informal working group with members from the community, Shire and DBCA to monitor progress and adjust actions as needed.
- Strengthen alignment between Ranger teams, including patrol coordination, shared data, and consistent messaging.

Next steps:

- Hold a pre-season coordination meeting to align enforcement and communication plans.
- Schedule monthly check-ins during summer.
- Document and share outcomes through the Shire's website for transparency.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Progress will be tracked through:

- Number and location of infringements issued.
- Community feedback and complaint data.
- Overflow campsite utilisation and feedback.
- Ranger reports and environmental monitoring.
- Collaborative review with DBCA and the community working group.

A post-season evaluation report will be presented to Council by April 2026 summarising outcomes, lessons, and recommended actions for 2026/27.

7. Governance and Council Decision

The implementation of actions in this roadmap are subject to Council budget allocation, any necessary operational considerations, and final prioritisation.