Minutes

Lord Howe Island Board

Meeting	Lord Howe Island Board Meeting
Location	Community Hall, Lord Howe Island
Date/Time	Wednesday 27th May 9:00am to 12:00pm – Open Session
Chairperson	**Naomi Stephens**, NS, ED Park Operations Coastal, NPWS (Teams)
Deputy Chair	**Robert Jeremy**, RJ, Elected Member
Board Members	**Hon. Nathan Rees,** NR, Appointed Member (Teams) **Margaret Osmond**, MO, Appointed Member (Teams) **James Lonergan**, JL, Elected Member **Matthew Retmock**, MR, Elected Member **Therese Turner**, TT, Elected Member
Attendees (All)	**Deon van Rensburg**, DVR, A/Chief Executive Officer **Bradley Josephs**, BJ, Senior Manager, Infrastructure and Engineering Services **Darcelle Matassoni,** DM, Senior Project Officer **Krissy Ward**, KW, Senior Manager, Environment **Lawrence Amato**, LA, Financial Accountant **Darcelle Matassoni,** DM, Senior Project Officer **Emily Pitt**, EP, Senior Program Manager CIP
Apologies	**Michael Chalmers**, MC, Senior Manager, Business and Corporate Services (On leave)
Minutes	Closed Session, **Tamiyka Abbott**, TA, Executive Assistant Open Session, **Anna Connor**, AC, Executive Assistant

On Tuesday 26th May, the meeting was delayed due to the in-flight return and cancellation of the incoming flight. NS, NR and MO joined by Teams. The in-camera and closed sessions were held between 1.30pm and 5.00pm.

On Wednesday 27th May, the open session commenced at 9:00am and closed at 12:15pm. NS, NR and MO joined by Teams. At the request of the Chair, the open session was chaired by the Deputy Chair.

Unless otherwise specified, all Board decisions were unanimous.

CLOSED SESSION

1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Closed Session

2. WH&S AND RISK MANAGEMENT

2.1. Work Health and Safety (WH&S) and Risk Management Update

Closed Session

3. OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

3.1. Marine Freight Service and Birdon Contract

Closed Session

3.2. Roads Update

Closed Session

4. FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE GOWER WILSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

4.1. Dr Tom Leach – Guest Speaker

Closed Session

4.2. LHI Health Service

Closed Session

5. FINANCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

5.1. Finance Report

Closed Session

6. LEASING AND LAND ADMINISTRATION

6.1. Application for consent to sublease J Riddle to A Reed

Closed Session

7. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Committee Minutes and Recommendations

Closed Session

OPEN SESSION

8. GOVERNANCE

8.1. Minutes of February 2026 Meeting – Notice of Adoption

A comment was made from the floor that a number of questions raised at the February meeting had not been recorded in the Minutes.

RJ proposed that the open questions be recorded in the Minutes of this meeting, and that the Minutes of the February Meeting be adopted on that basis.

The Board:

1. **Noted** the matters noted below were not recorded in the February minutes and require follow-up at the next Board meeting or before.

2. **Adopted** the tabled Minutes of the Board meeting held on February 2026

Action: CEO to follow up and report back on the following meetings, at or before the next Board meeting:

- *PA system transition - options for sale or disposal of the old equipment*
- *Grant conditions for lagoon wheelchair access*

8.2. Actions from Previous Meeting

DvR presented the Paper as read and sought questions or comments.

The Board noted the report and requested that the Acting CEO review and where appropriate update the report for the next Board meeting.

Action: Administration to review and update the Report, with explanations where appropriate.

9. STATUS AND COMPLIANCE REPORTING

9.1. Compliance and Status Report

DvR provided a summary of the Report.

The Board:

1. **Noted** the information contained in the Status and Compliance Report for out of session matters, biosecurity update, owners' consent, and development applications approved under delegated authority, motor vehicle importation or transfer status, feedback, and complaints.
2. **Noted** the need for comprehensive reporting on all property transactions (not limited to perpetual leases), including special leases, permissive occupancies, and commercial leases
3. **Noted l**egacy vehicle importation compliance matters (dating back to 2014–2019) should be addressed pragmatically, potentially through a policy-based approach as part of the Policy Review.
4. Noted that compliance with residency conditions is a matter being considered under the Policy Review and further action and reporting should be deferred pending the outcome of the Review.

Action: Administration to:

- *Expand reporting to include all property transactions, including perpetual leases, special leases, permissive occupancies, commercial leases*
- *Review historic vehicle importation compliance matters and consider a policy approach to resolving legacy issues*
- *Defer residential lease compliance action and reporting pending the outcome of the Policy Review process.*

10. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT

10.1. Chief Executive Officer's Report

DvR provided a summary of the Report.

BJ, KW, DM, and LA presented their respective reports.

There were a number of questions from the floor.

The Board:

1. **Noted** the Chief Executive Officer's report including attachments.
2. Noted the questions from the floor reflected in the Actions below.

Action: Administration to:

- *Improve communication to the community on roadworks prioritisation and scheduling, including regular updates via appropriate public channels*
- *Review and update as appropriate public web map data accuracy*
- *Communicate transition arrangements for DA assessments to Mid Coast Council*
- *Investigate and report to foreshore safety and accessibility issues at the old slipway area.*

11. FINANCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

11.1. Financial Status Update (Verbal Update Only)

LA provided a brief verbal update on the Board's financial position.

The Board noted the verbal Finance update.

12. OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

12.1. Critical Infrastructure Program Update

EP joined the meeting by Teams to deliver the CIP Update, including progress on vessel design, infrastructure works, planning approvals, and community engagement. EP noted that the project is progressing in line with key milestones, with ongoing design refinement and feasibility work to ensure alignment between marine operations and supporting infrastructure.

The Board:

1. **Noted** The critical infrastructure program and projects status for May 2026

Actions arising from comments from the floor

Administration to:

- *Confirm the scope of road dilapidation assessments associated with the Critical Infrastructure Project, including whether assessments will apply to the entire road network or only roads used by the contractor.*

13. POLICY AND STRATEGY

13.1.Phasmid Reintroduction

KW presented the Paper.

The Board considered the proposal to reintroduce the Lord Howe Island phasmid to the main island, including community consultation outcomes and proposed release sites. The Board noted strong community support and that the program is external grant funded. The Board also considered a proposal to investigate the potential reintroduction of the Mopoke (boobook owl) found on Norfolk Island as a natural predator and noted broader community support.

The Board:

1. **Approved the** plan to reintroduce phasmids to the main island.
2. **Approved authorising the** World Heritage team to investigate reintroduction of a subspecies of Mopoke/Boobook, to replace the locally extinct species.

13.2.Black Noddy Birds in Town Centre

The Board considered the ongoing issue of Black Noddy nesting in the town centre, including the limited effectiveness of previous vegetation lopping works and the increasing number of nests. The Board considered a proposal to undertake more extensive pruning of Norfolk Pines to discourage nesting, while recognising associated safety concerns and the need to balance environmental, heritage, and community impacts.

The Board:

1. **Noted** the continued increase and spread of Black Noddies nesting within the town centre and associated public nuisance and health risks.
2. **Approved** a further program of tree lopping and removal during winter 2026.
3. **Noted** that any proposed tree removal works will be subject to targeted community consultation and appropriate arborist and ecological advice.
4. **Noted** concerns raised from the floor regarding health and amenity impacts, public safety risks associated with tree condition, the role and management of Norfolk Pines, and the long-term effectiveness of proposed control measures.

Actions: Administration to:

- *Investigate further management options, including:*
    - *Control of juvenile Norfolk Pines*
    - *Potential nest and egg disruption measures (subject to approvals)*
- *Continue monitoring impacts and provide ongoing reporting to the Committee.*

14. LEASING AND LAND ADMINISTRATION

14.1. Board DA wastewater system – Executive Summary

The Board reconsidered the Development Application (DA) for the installation of a wastewater system and associated toilet facilities within the CBD, noting existing infrastructure is at capacity and not meeting current or forecast demand.

The Board acknowledged the need to address system constraints while ensuring a lawful and compliant outcome.

The Board further noted the application must be considered as an integrated proposal for the benefit of the whole CBD area and emphasised the need for a practical approach to progressing a solution, including seeking any required approvals or modifications as the proposal is refined.

The Board:

Approved in principle the development application subject to the following conditions:

- Facilities are to be for benefit of all users of the CBD area and accessible to the general public
- Detailed design and construction plans, including costings, are to be developed and brought back to the Board for consideration.
- The design is to be refined to ensure the scope is fit for purpose and aligned with forecast demand for the CBD area.
- Community feedback and impacts (including visual, amenity and operational considerations) are to be taken into account in the final design.

Noted that detailed design and construction plans will be presented to the Board for further consideration and approval prior to commencement of works.

Noted that any required design changes or planning variations will be brought back to the Board consideration and, where necessary, further approvals will be sought.

Actions: Administration to:

- *Develop detailed design and costings, taking into account community and stakeholder feedback*
- *Undertake targeted consultation with affected stakeholders*
- *Consider design options for the proposed screening, including potential impacts on views from adjacent properties.*
- *Identify any required additional approval pathways arising from the final detailed design.*
- *Consult with the Committee as the project progresses.*

15. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil

16. GENERAL BUSINESS AND QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions on Notice:

- Status of the previous PA system following installation of the new system
- Clarification on grant conditions relating to wheelchair access at the lagoon

17. NEXT MEETING

25th and 26th August 2026