

**ADVICE UNDER SECTION 48A(1)(a)
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986**

Shire of Carnarvon Local Planning Scheme 13 Amendment 11 and 12

Location: Gnaraloo Homestead Tourism Node (Amendment 11) and Three Mile Camp Minor Tourism Node (Amendment 12)

Determination: Scheme Not Assessed – Advice Given (not appealable)

Determination Published: 16 December 2025

Summary

Amendments 11 and 12 propose several changes, including rezoning of land from 'Rural', 'Local Distributor Road', and 'Foreshore' to the 'Tourism' zone within the Gnaraloo Homestead Tourism Node, and 'Foreshore' to the 'Tourism' zone within the Three Mile Camp Minor Tourism Node. The amendment areas are identified in LPS 13 as 'Restricted Use No. 9' (RU 9) and 'Restricted Use No. 12' (RU 12), respectively.

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has considered the scheme amendments in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The EPA considers that the scheme amendments are unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment and do not warrant formal assessment under Part IV of the EP Act. The EPA has based its decision on the original referral documentation and additional information provided by the Shire of Carnarvon (the Shire). Having considered this matter, the following advice is provided.

Environmental Factors

Having regard to the EPA's (2021) *Statement of Environmental Principles, Factors, Objectives and Aims of Environmental Impact Assessment*, the EPA has identified the following preliminary environmental factors relevant to the scheme amendments:

- Coastal processes
- Marine fauna
- Marine environmental quality
- Inland waters
- Social surroundings.

Advice and Recommendations regarding the Environmental Factors

Coastal processes, Marine fauna

The EPA notes that the Gnaraloo Homestead Tourism Node (Amendment 11) and Three Mile Camp Minor Tourism Node (Amendment 12) are located adjacent to the Ningaloo Marine Park and the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area. This includes mapped marine sanctuary zones,

including Three Mile Lagoon and Gnaraloo Bay, and two high-density turtle rookeries, being the Gnaraloo Bay Rookery and Cape Farquhar Rookery. These sanctuaries provide nesting habitat for threatened species (listed under the *Biodiversity and Conservation Act 2016*), including (but not limited to) Loggerhead Turtle ('Endangered'), Green Turtle ('Vulnerable'), Hawksbill Turtle ('Vulnerable'), and migratory shorebirds (terns and raptors).

The EPA notes that turtle nesting can be affected by artificial light spill and glow, which the EPA notes is cumulative, and therefore the proposed expansion of tourism and recreational land uses may increase light pollution. The EPA further notes that both the Gnaraloo Homestead and Three Mile Camp are located within a 20 km threshold at which potential impacts from light spill and glow may be considered high. The EPA notes and supports scheme provisions under Schedule 5 – Additional site and development requirements for all zones' that require management of light impacts on sea turtle nesting sites. Consistent with the *National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife* (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW, 2023) light mitigation measures may be required for any future expansion of 'Tourism' land uses within both amendment areas.

The EPA notes that consistent with existing scheme text provisions for RU 9 and RU 12, future development within the two amendment areas require the approval of a local development plan (LDP), which is to be supported by information to demonstrate that environmental outcomes are consistent with World Heritage objectives and any relevant state planning policies and objectives. The RU 9 and RU 12 scheme text provisions require any supporting information and assessment to be prepared having due regard to the 'Planning and environmental guidelines for sustainable tourism on the Ningaloo coast' (Ningaloo Coast Regional Strategy Carnarvon to Exmouth, 2004) or any guidelines that supersede it.

The EPA expects that any environmental studies and assessment undertaken to support an LDP that is prepared consistent with the above scheme text provisions should incorporate consideration of avoidance, mitigation and management of potential impacts to conservation significant fauna, including protection of turtle nesting habitat, mitigation of light emission impacts and consideration of management of increased foreshore access. The EPA also expects that any future LDPs and any future development are informed by the following to manage and mitigate potential impacts to environmental values:

- *National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife* (DCCEEW, 2023)
- *EPA Environmental Assessment Guideline No. 5 – Protecting Marine Turtles from Light Impacts* (2010)
- *EPA Technical Guidance – Protecting the Quality of Western Australia's Marine Environment* (2016)
- *State Planning Policy 2.6 – Coastal Planning*
- *State Planning Policy 6.3 – Ningaloo Coast.*

The EPA notes that the amendment areas may also be at risk of future coastal hazards associated with erosion and sea level rise, which may impact built infrastructure. The EPA notes that due to the elevation of the amendment area the risk is likely to be minimal, however expects that future development considers *State Planning Policy 2.6 – Coastal Planning*, to ensure minimisation of potential impacts to infrastructure and the marine environment from coastal hazards.

Marine environmental quality, Inland waters

The EPA notes that both amendment areas are currently serviced by onsite effluent disposal and that existing onsite effluent disposal systems may need to be expanded to accommodate any future expansion of tourism land uses and development.

The EPA notes that referral information provided by the Shire that future LDPs will be required to address onsite effluent disposal. The EPA expects that the future expansion of onsite effluent disposal systems be informed by a site and soil evaluation, to assess the suitability of the sites to accommodate an expanded system. The EPA notes and supports the requirements for sewerage disposal under 'Schedule 5 – Additional site and development requirements for all zones' to be '*consistent with the current Government Sewerage Policy*'. The EPA expects that consistency with the *Government Sewerage Policy 2019* and the implementation of its advice will mitigate potential impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and achieve consistency with the EPA's objective for inland waters.

Social surroundings

The EPA notes that there are no registered Aboriginal heritage sites or places of significance mapped within the amendment areas. However, according to the Native Title Tribunal database (NTV Western Australia), land surrounding each amendment area (i.e., broader Gnaraloo Pastoral Station) is mapped as having (non-exclusive) Native Title (Gnulli, Gnulli #2, and Gnulli #3 – Yinggarda, Baiyungu, and Thalanyji People).

The EPA notes that the amendment areas are subject to an existing Indigenous Land Use Agreement, being the *Gnaraloo Indigenous Land Use Agreement* (WI2021/010), in which the *Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation* (NTGAC) is the registered native title bodies corporate. The EPA notes and supports the commitment in the referral information that any future LDP approval be referred to the NTGAC and the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Committee* for consideration. The EPA also considers that impacts to Aboriginal heritage can be managed by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*.

Conclusion

The EPA concludes the scheme amendments can be managed to meet the EPA's environmental objectives for the above factors through existing scheme provisions. The EPA also notes that impacts may be mitigated further through future planning processes (local development plan approval). The EPA recommends its advice is implemented to manage and mitigate potential impacts to the above environmental factors.