



PUBLIC NOTICE

TEMPORARY INSTALLATION OF BARRIER FENCING AT MOUTH OF THE WELLSTEAD ESTUARY

Notice is given that the Shire will be reinstating the barrier fencing as a temporary measure across the sandbar near the mouth of the Wellstead Estuary.

This area of the estuary is used extensively by a variety of endangered and vulnerable shore bird species for breeding, feeding and resting and the main threat to the bird's survival is principally human disturbance by people, vehicles and animal movements.

The barrier fence has previously been erected in this area and has proven to be highly effective in protecting the habitat. Falling water levels in the estuary has made the area accessible to traffic once again. It is currently nesting season and there is a risk to nesting birds if immediate action is not taken.

The Council at their December 2022 Meeting resolved to undertake broad community consultation on the longer-term future of barrier fencing on the estuary, however, reserved the right to install the fencing on a temporary basis should a need be identified in the interim period. Falling river levels combined with the peak holiday period has created the situation whereby immediate action is required to preserve the habitat. Notwithstanding this interim action, the Shire will be releasing an information package shortly for community consultation on the longer-term future of fencing on the estuary.

The Shire is working in conjunction with the local community and groups which include the Fitzgerald Biosphere Group (FBG) and local Birders with extensive experience and knowledge. Information sessions are being held and signs are being installed around the estuary and townsite by those parties to help inform the community and visitors of the unique environmental values of the area that have contributed to the Shire being included in the UNESCO listed Fitzgerald Biosphere.

We seek the support of all our residents and visitors to respect the purpose and intent of the barrier fencing and to help preserve the habitat for the varied and unique shorebirds which so heavily rely upon the area for their survival.

We thank you for cooperation and assistance in this endeavour. Should you wish to obtain any further information on the bird life of the Wellstead Estuary, please contact Ms Leonie McMahon of the FBG on 0438 678 492. To report issues concerning broader management of the area please contact the Shire on 9835 1022 or the Shire's Ranger on 0499 351 141.

Martin Cuthbert
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

11 January 2023