

Council

COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM 2026/2027 – CATEGORY
3, ROUND 1 APPLICATIONS

Supplementary Information – Mt Barker Wildlife Hospital

Meeting Date: 27 October 2026

Number of Pages: 2

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Supplementary information is provided with the Mt Barker Wildlife Hospital (MBWH) application, as this is a relatively new organisation that Councillors may not be familiar with.

The MBWH is located on the same site as the Mount Barker Veterinary Clinic. The Clinic receives 5 – 10 wildlife cases daily, with birds forming 80% of the number of cases. The remaining cases include bats, possums, kangaroos, lizards and turtles. Most animals are received from Shire residents, however some more complex cases have been received from veterinary hospitals located in the South West.

Two veterinarians and two nurses volunteer their time to wildlife care, supported by a network of volunteer carers. When wildlife is dropped off at the clinic the animals are registered and treated. If injuries are minor then the animals are relocated to carers with appropriate facilities. If injuries require ongoing medical attention they are housed in the Clinic and a volunteer carer steps in to administer ongoing care.

The MBWH is refurbishing a shed at the Veterinary Clinic to establish a Wildlife Hospital. This removes native animals from the Clinic environment where they are housed next to dogs and cats, creating a stressful environment for wildlife. The shed is being lined and climate controlled so wildlife can be housed safely and appropriately, and volunteers can administer care without interrupting the Clinic operations.

The Hospital will have an adjacent storage container (part funded through the Shire's Community Grant Program) to house a range of equipment and feed for different animals. The longer term plans include a toilet and wash facility for volunteers.

The MBWH's current application seeks funding for a Flight Aviary. This will be housed next to the Hospital and will enable volunteers to determine whether birds are ready for release to their home environment. At present, once birds have been treated they are transported to a carer with an aviary to determine whether they can fly or not. If not, they are returned for further medical care. If they can fly they are returned to the environment they were found, and released. This is a costly exercise for vets and/or volunteers, as the nearest Flight Aviary is 20km from Mount Barker.

The Wildlife Hospital has sought funding from a range of government and philanthropic programs to support their activities. The Incorporated group has an application pending with the Department for Primary Industries and Regional Development to establish a Bird-Flu Response shelter, which is a standalone facility that will provide a triage and care space for suspected Bird-Flu cases with appropriate infectious disease control.

The Veterinary Clinic is supporting their staff who volunteer time with the MBWH, providing nurses with work-place experience at the WA Wildlife Hospital and Taronga Zoo in Sydney.

The MBWH's long term plan is to develop a Hospital facility at a different location, staffed independently with volunteer support. The group is liaising with relevant government and

philanthropic bodies and is receiving support from the WA Wildlife Hospital to help plan for their future goals. The MBWH will likely seek support from the Council to locate and secure an appropriate site for the \$350,000+ development.