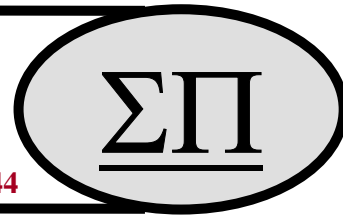


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HARDY INLET MANAGEMENT PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pivotal Moments in Time

The big picture analysis of the Hardy Inlet is that it is a fantastic asset for the community of Augusta with tangible links through tourism to the Perth metropolitan region and the rest of the world. At the southern end of the Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park, the attractive setting will become increasingly popular for settlement and human habitation, which brings with it attendant challenge for effective environmental management.

The question at this time is how best for the community to participate in future management of the asset, and perhaps more poignantly, to consider and espouse 'what can be done' to facilitate pro-actively the outcomes they may be seeking for the next 30 years.

Strategic Planning

The State Government of Western Australia by notice in '*The West Australian*' newspaper of Saturday 15 March 2003 did announce its intention to form a Community Advisory Committee for the purposes of establishing a 'Proposed Marine Conservation Reserve' over the Geographe Bay – Leeuwin Naturaliste – Hardy Inlet region.

The practical outcome of this process may well be a Management Plan governing use and development of the waterways (presume below high water mark) associated with the Hardy Inlet, Flinders Bay and the west coast of the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

It is reasonable to expect the State Government to participate in various strategic planning processes; however, it is considered appropriate if all of these strategic planning mechanisms are consistent with one-another, and a clearly defined decision-making process exists to provide for efficient and effective administration.

Community Growth & Development

Augusta as a town-site and rural community has enjoyed a significant growth rate for the past five years, which is expected to continue over the next decade. It is important for the community to avail itself of the economic opportunity; however, it should balance that consideration with social harmony and ecological sustainability.

Community Participation

The comments provided during the community participation process provide a useful insight to community attitude, and are considered representative of the balance of community opinion and aspiration. Specific issues, particularly relating to marine service facilities development, will require much greater community participation than was afforded by this study.

Population

The population of Augusta and its rural environs will increase – a no change policy is considered implausible. The rate of growth will be determined by the community through government in response to development proposals. This could vary from a projected minimum 3% p.a. (ie. permanent resident 5,000 / itinerant tourist 10,000) up to a maximum 7.5% p.a. (ie. permanent resident 8,000 / itinerant tourist 20,000) by year 2010.

Open River Mouth

There was mixed support for a permanent opening of the river mouth (deemed to be a navigable access channel). The original opening was at the western end of the beach closest to Duke Head, and that is considered the most appropriate location for an armoured channel were one to be constructed.

East Augusta

In the absence of further development (restricted sewerage, residential development & land subdivision), the provision of a bridge access to East Augusta is considered unjustified. However, there is support (particularly from the commercial community), for planning provision for a future road / infrastructure access corridor to East Augusta be re-instated so as to permit this opportunity in the next twenty years.

Commercial Marina in Hardy Inlet

A commercial marina in Hardy Inlet, is supported as a function of the need to :

- ❖ Source funding for water quality monitoring and environmental management
- ❖ Limit the expansion of swing mooring facilities
- ❖ Reduce numbers of / restrict further construction of private jetties
- ❖ Manage water craft associated with various Hardy Inlet recreational activities
- ❖ Effectively manage solid and liquid waste disposal from marine craft
- ❖ Create investment and employment opportunities by value-adding marine experience
- ❖ Consolidate private and service vehicle access and interaction between marine and shore based facilities
- ❖ Plausible locations : West Bay, Lion Islands, Ellis Street and Seine Bay.

Priority Flora & Fauna Breeding Habitat

The principal fish breeding areas associated with Hardy Inlet include North Bay, Scott River Basin, Swan Lake, and The Deadwater. It is considered appropriate to investigate Swan Lake and The Deadwater for possible registration as a Ramsar Wetland, particularly if that attracts federal funding for management.

Heavy Use Locations

The Blackwood River and Hardy Inlet are considered under-utilised assets during non-peak periods, and as a consequence the heavy use areas associated with peak holiday tourism populations include :

- ❖ Ellis Street jetty (considered best boat ramp and worst parking facility)
- ❖ Point Ellis to Seine Bay
- ❖ Molloy Island channels
- ❖ 'The Sticks' navigation channel
- ❖ The Deadwater.

Environmental Management

It is considered appropriate and essential to conduct a comprehensive environmental review of the Hardy Inlet / Blackwood River catchment (to the extent of tidal marine water surge) to document flora and faunal assembly and species habitat sustainability.

In the context, of the Hardy Inlet and Blackwood River catchment, it is considered appropriate to try and bring together concordant government agencies (local, state & federal) and their funding mechanisms in association with private enterprise contributions arising from tangible commercial development opportunities to procure an enduring environmental management framework that is localised as much as possible to Augusta.

Foreshore Management

The proposals outlined in the Monaghan Landscape Plan 1997 are generally endorsed, but it is considered appropriate to conduct an audit of the proposals outlined for implementation, continued relevance, cost effective use of resources, and consistency with new areas of planning strategy as may have evolved.

Augmentation with a management plan for Point Irwin through to the Deadwater and Swan Lake would be an equally valuable tool for what will be a future high impact area of human habitation and activity space in Augusta.

Marine Structures

An audit of marine structures and navigation hazards with the Hardy Inlet environs should be carried out to assist with the definition of risk management and remedial management action. It is considered appropriate to undertake an audit of public and private jetties in the Augusta channel for :

- ❖ Licensed status
- ❖ Structural condition
- ❖ Periodic use and enjoyment
- ❖ Application to various waterway craft
- ❖ Condition of fringing vegetation and water quality.

Floodplain Management

Based on the estimated average annual rainfall, and surface catchment discharge, the vulnerability to flood damage arising from a severe rainfall event is assessed as low, and the relative capacity to manage those waters through Hardy Inlet is considered reasonable to acceptable without loss or damage to the built or natural environment.

Indigenous Consultation

There are considerable public lands held as Crown reserve, with attendant obligations on the responsible vesting authority to undertake consultation with and negotiations for the settlement of Native Title with representatives of the traditional custodians. Native title legislation requires consideration and resolution in respect to all future acts.

Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge / Marine Park – Planning Policy

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge Policy was proclaimed in September 1998, and was the subject of cursory review for the purposes of Smith's Beach. The policy should be reviewed in the future to incorporate considerations associated with this Hardy Inlet Management Plan, the Warren Blackwood Regional Plan, and any Leeuwin Naturaliste Marine Conservation Park Plan that may be prepared by the Dept Conservation & Land Management.

Organisational Management

The formation of the Hardy Inlet Management Authority (HIMA) is advocated, comprising :

- ❖ Augusta Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- ❖ Augusta Community Development Association
- ❖ Augusta Margaret River Shire Council
- ❖ South West Aboriginal Land & Sea Council
- ❖ South West Development Commission
- ❖ WA Dept Agriculture (incl. Fisheries)
- ❖ WA Dept Conservation & Land Management
- ❖ WA Dept Environment Water & Catchment Protection Deputy Chairmanship
- ❖ WA Dept Planning & Infrastructure (South-West Region) Chairmanship.

It is advocated that the Shire of Augusta Margaret River in consultation with HIMA stakeholders explore the opportunity for the establishment of an Augusta Environment Centre, and consider joint funding (capital and recurrent) for a new building facility providing business accommodation for such services in Augusta.

Hardy Inlet Management Plan

A future comprehensive Hardy Inlet Management Plan should be modelled on a combination of the Western Australian Planning Commission's Coastal and Lakelands Planning Strategy (Dawesville – Binningup), and the WA Department of Conservation & Land Management's Serpentine National Park Management Plan.

ooooooo **End of Executive Summary** ooooooo

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED THAT :

1. Augusta as a community, working within the political framework, avail itself of the economic opportunity associated with the Hardy Inlet, balanced in consideration with social harmony and ecological sustainability.
2. Specific issues relating to marine service facilities, bridging the Blackwood River for access to East Augusta and permanently opening the river mouth to the sea be the subject of further community participation.
3. Planning provision for a future road / infrastructure access corridor to East Augusta be re-instated so as to permit this opportunity in the next twenty years.
4. A commercial marina in Hardy Inlet be investigated for the purposes of :
 - ❖ Source funding for water quality monitoring and environmental management
 - ❖ Limit the expansion of swing mooring facilities
 - ❖ Reduce numbers of / restrict further construction of private jetties
 - ❖ Manage water craft associated with various Hardy Inlet recreational activities
 - ❖ Effectively manage solid and liquid waste disposal from marine craft
 - ❖ Create investment and employment opportunities by value-adding marine experience
 - ❖ Consolidate private and service vehicle access and interaction between marine and shore based facilities
 - ❖ Plausible locations : West Bay, Lion Islands, Ellis Street and Seine Bay.
5. Swan Lake and The Deadwater be investigated for possible registration as a Ramsar Wetland.
6. A comprehensive environmental review of the Hardy Inlet / Blackwood River catchment (to the extent of tidal marine water surge) be conducted to document flora and faunal assembly and species habitat sustainability.
7. The proposals outlined in the Monaghan Landscape Plan 1997 be audited for implementation, continued relevance, cost effective use of resources, and consistency with new areas of planning strategy as may have evolved.
8. The Monaghan Landscape Plan 1997 be augmented with a management plan for Point Irwin through to the Deadwater and Swan Lake.
9. An audit of marine structures and navigation hazards within the Hardy Inlet environs be undertaken to assist with the definition of risk management and remedial management action.
10. An audit of public and private jetties in the Augusta channel for :
 - ❖ Licensed status
 - ❖ Structural condition
 - ❖ Periodic use and enjoyment
 - ❖ Application to various waterway craft
 - ❖ Condition of fringing vegetation and water quality.
11. A flood management and mitigation model of the Hardy Inlet be prepared in order to establish a more reliable / predictable level of risk assessment.

12. Preliminary discussions be held with representatives of the traditional custodians for the purposes of establishing project liaison, participation and prospective resolution of native title issues in relation to future acts affecting the Hardy Inlet.
13. The Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge Policy be reviewed to incorporate considerations associated with this Hardy Inlet Management Plan, the Warren Blackwood Regional Plan, and any Leeuwin Naturaliste Marine Conservation Park Plan that may be prepared by the Dept Conservation & Land Management.
14. The Council take discussions with relevant stakeholders to facilitate the formation of the Hardy Inlet Management Authority (HIMA), comprising the following member associations and chairmanship :
 - ❖ Augusta Chamber of Commerce & Industry
 - ❖ Augusta Community Development Association
 - ❖ Augusta Margaret River Shire Council
 - ❖ South West Aboriginal Land & Sea Council
 - ❖ South West Development Commission
 - ❖ WA Dept Agriculture (incl. Fisheries)
 - ❖ WA Dept Conservation & Land Management
 - ❖ WA Dept Environment Water & Catchment Protection Deputy Chairmanship
 - ❖ WA Dept Planning & Infrastructure (South-West Region) Chairmanship.
15. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River undertake consultation with HIMA stakeholders to explore the opportunity for the establishment of an Augusta Environment Centre, with joint venture funding (capital and recurrent) for a new building facility providing business accommodation for such services in Augusta.
16. A future comprehensive Hardy Inlet Management Plan be modelled on a combination of the Western Australian Planning Commission's Coastal and Lakelands Planning Strategy (Dawesville – Binningup), and the WA Department of Conservation & Land Management's Serpentine National Park Management Plan.

ooooooo **End of Section** ooooooo