



21 November 2016

Hon Albert Jacob MLA
Minister for Environment; Heritage
12th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Minister

Re: Wedge and Grey shack communities

On behalf of the Wedge Island Protection Association, the Grey Conservation and Community Association and the extended network of 15,000 people who use the 400+ shacks at Wedge and Grey, thank you for the opportunity to meet on Wednesday 16th November to discuss our concerns relating to the planning process for these sites.

Obviously from your reaction during the meeting we did not convey those concerns effectively.

There are some matters that are important enough in life to take the hard road if necessary to enable them to be achieved.

The future survival of what these communities represent encapsulates such matters, not only for the existing user profile, but for the extended public and tourist markets.

The associations have adopted a positive approach with all relevant ministers of the Barnett government since 2008 and endeavoured to work in a constructive and collaborative way with the agencies involved to progress the planning process.

Committing to investigate the cultural heritage values, producing a planning framework, contributing feedback when asked and suggesting solutions to resolve perceived roadblocks are some examples of our contribution.

Our justified position on a range of issues has consistently been made clear to DPaW but we have not been invited to meaningful discussions to resolve such matters.

Further restrictions now being imposed by DPaW will limit the options being able to be considered. We believe that ultimately this will result in the process not delivering the original intention to produce a compromise outcome to satisfy existing stakeholders. More significantly, the broader public will be short changed and the State will not maximise the potential of these sites.

DPaW has focused on shack removal justified through an array of solvable technical reasons. This has missed an obvious policy opportunity to identify how the shacks can contribute to increased public use, growth in cultural tourism and the long-term economic sustainability of the settlements and limited cost to the state.

We can appreciate that the task imposed on DPaW extends well beyond its usual sphere of experience and expertise. It does not develop or manage human settlements, deal with European heritage and cultural tourism. In fact its current management authority is limited due to the sites not being land 'owned' within the CALM Act.

We are not blaming DPaW per se for the situation in which we find ourselves, but equally the associations are advocating on behalf of their members and the broader public which support the associations' objects. The problem with lack of collaboration exists and the foreseen outcomes of what is likely to be delivered are not something our members can live with.

The planning process does not have to completely re-start; it needs to be given additional direction to ensure that it delivers on what we believe was the Government's original intention.

Therefore Minister, we ask you to give direction to DPaW to re-scope the project, consistent with the Cabinet decision, to deliver the following outcomes:

- Appoint an independent Planning Project Manager to finalise the master plan for implementation by 2020
- Support formal listing of Wedge and Grey settlements on the State Register of Heritage Places
- Retain the majority of shacks outside of those in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas but with managed retreat provisions of SPP 2.6 being available
- Provide shack owners with universal lease tenure of 21 years with a 21 year option, as permitted under the Conservation and Land Management Act once reserve transfer is in effect

We reiterate our desire to work collaboratively to achieve a compromise outcome and satisfy stakeholder expectations, thus avoiding political protest and wasted resources. We look forward to hearing of your response to the above request.

Yours faithfully,



Ian Hall
President
Wedge Island Protection Association



Peter Sheppard
Chairman
Grey Conservation and Community Association