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Reference: TRS5

Economics and Industry Standing Committee
Parliament House
Perth, WA 6000

Attention Dr Loraine Abernethie

Dear Loraine,

**RE: PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY – PROVISION, USE AND REGULATION OF
CARAVAN PARKS (AND CAMPING GROUND) IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

In reply to your request for a submission I would like comments considered:

1. The Shire of Nannup recognises that being in the south west it is a popular tourist destination. With completion of Mowen Road providing direct access from Margret River, Nannup will continue to increase in visitors numbers and it is envisaged that occupancy rates of the caravan parks and camping grounds will increase.
2. The two parks owned by the Shire, (Brockman Caravan and Camping Ground and the Riverbend Caravan and Camping Ground) are key capital assets. However, there is debate as to if these are “core” local government business. The debate at one end is that they are “public” amenities, therefore the Shire should manage and fully fund them to provide low cost public faculties, whilst at the other end is that they are “non core” business which should be driven by a commercial operator and full markets rates to ensure that they are totally self funding.
3. The provision of the “camping” experience and low cost accommodation for recreation purposes should be retained in Western Australia. Antidotal evidence is indicating that with the increase in coastal real estate values some “public” camping areas have been lost to development. Additionally, strictly on financial grounds camping areas could provide better return on investment if converted to cabins/motels for short to long term stay.

4. A negative side of public low cost accommodation is the utilisation of long term stay by disadvantaged persons, aged, mental disorders, displaced persons and low social economic sector. Historically, camping grounds were just that, used for family camping on a temporary basis. The indications are that there is increasingly permanency in some of the occupation of camp sites and tourist accommodation. The provision of camping grounds and caravan parks needs to be an integrated policy with strategies to address community needs that include low cost housing, residential care, pensioner housing, dwellings and the tourist related variants such as, chalets, motels, back packers, retreats, hotels, relocatable housing developments.
5. The legislative imperative as "minimum" standards is supported as the process of "camping" is living in conditions that are less than those of a permanent dwelling. It is even of more relevance if the provision of caravan parks and camping grounds move to greater commercial focus. An up dating of the legislation to better reflect the modern environment and addressing the potential social issues associate would be supported. It should be stressed that the legislative aspects are there as protection for all parties and are just that, minimum standards. From a sustainable perspective reliance on legislative minimums is not recommended and a commercial cost benefit approach is supported as the only long term option.

If you have any queries regarding this submission please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



EWEN ROSS
MANAGER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES