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Sent: Tuesday, 5 May 2009 2:04 PM
To: Committee, Economics & Industry Standing
Subject: Peel's Caravan Park Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry[AntiVir checked]
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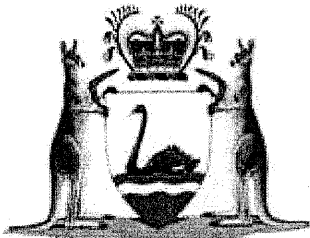
Good afternoon

Please find attached a scanned copy of Peel Development Commission's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry – Provision, use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia.

I will send you the signed hard copy via post. Please accept our apologies for this late submission.

Kind regards

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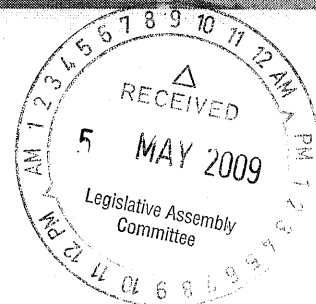
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Dr Loraine Abernethie
Principal Research Officer
Western Australia Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Perth WA 6000



Dear Dr Abernethie

Parliamentary Inquiry – Provision, Use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia

Peel Development Commission is pleased to provide a submission to help inform the Economics and Industry Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Provision, Use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in the Peel Region.

The Peel Region is located immediately south of Perth and lies between the metropolitan area and the South West Region. The Region covers five local government areas: the City of Mandurah and the Shires of Boddington, Murray, Serpentine Jarrahdale and Waroona. Peel is the fastest growing region in Western Australia and the fourth largest regional economy. It is the third largest mineral producing region in WA. It is home to over 90,000 people and includes 130 square kilometres of inland waterways and 50 kilometres of Indian Ocean coastline.

Caravan Parks and Affordable Housing

Caravan parks have traditionally been an important part of the Peel Region's economic and accommodation profile, providing accommodation both for tourists and lower-income residents. Caravan parks have offered a lifestyle or holiday choice that is affordable, relaxing and secure.

It is recognised that caravan parks are primarily intended as short-stay tourism options. However the reality in many areas, including Peel, is that they are filling an important gap in affordable housing provision. The loss of caravan parks impacts severely on this need especially in regions where affordable housing is already limited.

In Peel, rapid population and industry growth have seen a decline in affordable housing. This has meant an increasing population of residents who, by choice or necessity, use caravan parks for permanent residence.

An Accommodation Audit Report undertaken by the WA Tourism Commission for the Mandurah and Peel Region in 2005 indicated that Peel Region then had a total of 1715 caravan sites with only 444 (or 25%) available for tourists. Furthermore within the Peel Regional total only:

- 15% of Mandurah's 920 caravan sites;
- 21% of the 383 caravan sites within the Shire of Murray; and
- 21% of the 140 caravan sites within the Serpentine Jarrahdale Shire

were available for accommodation by tourists with a large portion of occupants of these sites being semi-permanent long term residents (as well as workers, contractors and sub-contractors). There was also concern that the trend toward withdrawal of holiday accommodation and their replacement by full-time residents, including full-time residence by owners who previously owned these as holiday homes, would put a further squeeze on the availability of low cost housing in the Peel Region.

Over recent years affordability and security of tenure for long-stay caravan park tenants have been increasingly challenged. The catalyst appears to be rising land values accompanied by increasing operating costs causing many park owners to close their businesses and sell their parks to land developers or to increase pricing in line with operating expenditure.

Peel caravan parks also serve as affordable accommodation options for workers particularly during intense industry construction periods. With two large mining expansions under construction in the Shire of Boddington and limited local housing options, demand for short-term accommodation has been high not only in Boddington but also in other Peel areas.

The Shire of Boddington is the only local government that owns or operates a caravan park in the Peel Region and has made special provision to accommodate mine workers until more appropriate housing becomes available. Caravan parks fill an important economic need in these circumstances, as individual workers may only be required for several months and would be unlikely or unwilling to secure rentals in the normal market, or accommodation in hotels etc.

There are 22 caravan parks currently operating in the Peel Region offering a mix of camping, permanent and holiday caravan and cabin facilities. Please refer to attachment A for a listing.

Since 2006 the Preston Beach Caravan Park (60 sites) Yalgorup EcoPark (41 sites) have closed for redevelopment. Miami, Timbertop and Belvedere Caravan Parks with a total of 432 sites, have been subject to redevelopment considerations. The closure of all five caravan parks, if it occurs, will result in the loss of around 533 sites leaving around 1200 sites in the region.

Of the remaining caravan parks the trend is a shift away from providing long-term permanent accommodation to focus on more profitable seasonal tourist accommodation. These trends are resulting in the attrition of low-cost accommodation options for those seeking permanent/semi permanent residence and insecurity for current occupants.

The closure/redevelopment of caravan parks has increased the waiting list for public housing, which is already in short supply. The Department of Housing advises that out of a total of 800 applications for new or transfer housing listed for the area, 14 applicants have given a caravan park address as their current address.

Caravan Parks are also used as short-term crisis accommodation by agencies needing to accommodate people who are temporarily homeless, escaping domestic violence in areas where there are no refuges (or accommodation is full) etc. Again this may not be an ideal situation for either the park or the individual, but caravan parks meet an important immediate need which cannot be met at the time in the normal rental or other accommodation market.

In response to housing affordability issues in the region including caravan park closures, the Peel Region Affordable Housing Steering Group was formed in late 2006. Membership of the Steering Group includes State Government agencies, Local Government Authorities, Shelter WA and the Peel Community Development Group. A draft Affordable Housing Plan has been completed by the Steering Group. The Group also recognised the need for a State Affordable Housing Plan which includes consideration of the role of caravan parks in providing affordable housing.

Caravan Parks/Camping Grounds and Tourism

The continued existence of caravan parks and camping grounds as affordable holiday and tourism options is an important part of regional economies. The traditional location of such parks in attractive, accessible areas is part of their attraction and benefit for affordable holidays. However these very locations are often the ones under most pressure for redevelopment. The pressures of competing land uses, particularly in rapidly-growing areas such as the Peel Region, makes redevelopment a financially attractive option for owners and developers.

The only way that this would be reversed would be if government took a greater role in the provision of caravan parks and camp grounds, for example in national parks, or if there were incentives for private owners.

Feedback From Caravan Park Owners

Peel Development Commission has sought feedback from caravan park owners on issues with which they are dealing, and their feedback includes:

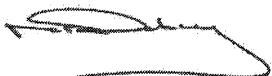
- Concern that the costs of meeting government service charges, standards and regulations are now pushing pricing up;
- A belief that there should be more done by local government to support caravan parks and caravaners, eg parking for vans, unhitching areas so people can leave their van and access attractions on difficult roads, mosquito control, signage;
- Recognition that caravan parks are part of a bigger tourism industry and all parties need to work together to provide attractive retail and entertainment products for holiday makers;
- Concerns about implications of providing social housing by default, ie dealing with social issues and tenure issues;
- On the other hand, permanent sites provide a reliable income.

Recommendations:

- That the role of caravan parks in providing affordable and crisis accommodation is recognized in the development of any policy on caravan parks;
- That options are developed for affordable and crisis accommodation if recommendations are made to limit caravan park use to tourism purposes;
- That consideration is given to private owner incentives and the role of government in providing accessible camping grounds and caravan parks particularly in areas of high land use competition.

Contact:

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Caravan Parks in the Peel Region as at April 2009

#	Status	Name of Caravan Park	# Sites Estimate	In Operation (Y/N)	Description	Permanents	Phone	Address
1	Operational	Dawesville Caravan Park and Holiday Village	80	Y	Holiday Caravan Park/ Chalets	Holiday	(08) 9582 1417	Old Coast Rd
2	Operational	Mandurah Caravan & Tourist Park	93 + 20 tents	Y	40 tourist based, 26 annual (tourist), 13 permanent, 12 cabins	Mixed	(08) 9535 1171	603 Pinjarra Rd
3	Operational	Peel Caravan Park	75 total (29 semi 14 permanent)	Y	Caravan Park	Mix	(08) 9535 4343	Pinjarra Rd
4	Operational	Aqua Caravan Park	150 total (90 permanent & 60 semi)	Y	Pinjarra Road (10 acres); receives 20 calls per day for families needing accommodation	Mix	(08) 9535 1869	647 Pinjarra Rd
5	Operational	Estuary Caravan Park (Now Hideaway Cabins)	100 total (50 park homes & 50 caravan/tents)	Y	Expansion due to complete Aug 2009.	Holiday	(08) 9534 2121	25 Olive Rd
6	Operational	Mandurah Holiday Village	72	Y	Chalets	Mix	(08) 9535 4963	124 Mandurah Tce
7	Operational	Murray River Caravan Park	60	Y	10 for tourists, 50 for semi-permanent/ permanent	Mix	(08) 9537 6140	12 Sth Yunderup Rd
8	Operational	Tathams Caravan Park	50	Y	Semi-permanent - working people, no retirees	Semi Permanent	(08) 9537 6844	Sth Yunderup Rd
9	Operational	Waroona Ensuite Caravan Park	36	Y	Some long-term but not permanent, mainly workers.	Mix	(08) 9733 1518	45 Logue St, Waroona
10	Operational	Lake Clifton Caravan Park	60	Y	15 permanent caravans and 8 semi. Workers, retirees, some families.	Mix	(08) 9739 1255	Old Coast Rd, Lake Clifton
11	Operational	Lake Navarino Forest Resort	13	Y	Mainly short-term, some semi-permanent, some long-term contract workers.	Mix	1800 650 626	Inverell Rd, Waroona
12	Operational	Dwellingup Chalet & Caravan Park	37 caravans + 50 camping sites	Y	No long-term or permanent. Tourist Park	Tourist	(08) 9538 1157	Del Park Rd, Dwellingup

Caravan Parks in the Peel Region as at April 2009

#	Status	Name of Caravan Park	# Sites Estimate	In Operation (Y/N)	Description	Permanents	Phone	Address
13	Operational	Pinjarra Caravan Park	73 total (9 cabins, 7 1 bed chalets, 57 caravan bays)	Y	Some long-term residents, mainly workers.	Mix	(08) 9531 1374	1716 Pinjarra Rd, Pinjarra
14	Operational	Ravenswood Caravan Park	84	Y	25 long-term, mainly workers and some families. Gets lots of calls re long- term.	Mix	(08) 9537 6296	Lloyd Ave, Ravenswood
15	Operational	Pinjarra Park Country Camping	80	Y	No long-term or permanent - tourist park. Does get phone calls re long-term.	Tourist	(08) 9531 1604	Williams Rd, Pinjarra
16	Operational	Boddington Caravan Park	34	Y	Some long-term workers and families, demand has gone down due to mine site accommodation	Mix	(08) 9883 8018	Wuraming Ave, Boddington
17	Operational	Serpentine Caravan Park and Road House	25 caravans + 12 cabins	Y	30 caravan sites and 11 cabins (holiday and semi permanent). Park homes available for purchase	Mix	(08) 9525 2528	South West Highway, Serpentine
18	Operational	Waters Edge Caravan Park	70	N	Semi-permanent sites only - no tourist sites available.	Semi Permanent	(08) 9739 1011	Lot 21 Old Coast Rd, Bouvard
19	Operational	Lucky Caravan Park	27 total (17 permanent, 10 semi)	Y	Permanents (Tradespeople)	Yes	(08) 9535 3313	20 Henson St, Mandurah
20	Operational	Belvedere Caravan Park	192 50% perm.	Y	Holiday Caravan Park/ Chalets.	Mix	(08) 9535 1213	163 Mandurah Terrace, Mandurah
TOTAL in Operation			1,493					

May be impacted by redevelopment.

Caravan Parks in the Peel Region as at April 2009

#	Status	Name of Caravan Park	# Sites Estimate	In Operation (Y/N)	Description	Permanents	Phone	Address
1	Operational	Timbertop Caravan Park	203	Y	May be impacted by Mandurah CBD Revitalisation Strategy.	Mix	(08) 9535 1292	Peel Street, Mandurah
2	For redevelopment	Miami Caravan Park	140	Y	11 permanent residents remaining but need to leave by June 2009	Mix	(08) 9535 2127	Old Coast Road, Miami