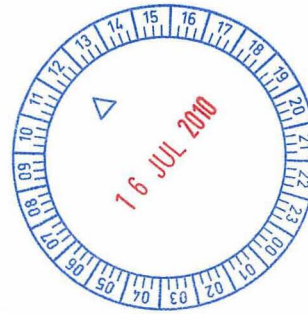


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Kellie Honczar



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Committee Clerk
c/o Standing Committee on the Environment and Public Affairs Committee
Legislative Council
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PERTH WA 6000
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Submission to provide information to assist in the development of policy and the regulation of shack sites on public land in Western Australia

I make this submission as an address to the Terms of Reference of the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs (SCEPA), with regards to the inquiry into Shack Sites in Western Australia.

My submission is specifically in reference to the shack settlement site at Grey, as this is where my family currently has a shack, although I believe that the information I provide is relevant to all such sites in Western Australia and is therefore appropriate to be included in considerations for the development of a general policy and for the regulation of all shack sites in Western Australia.

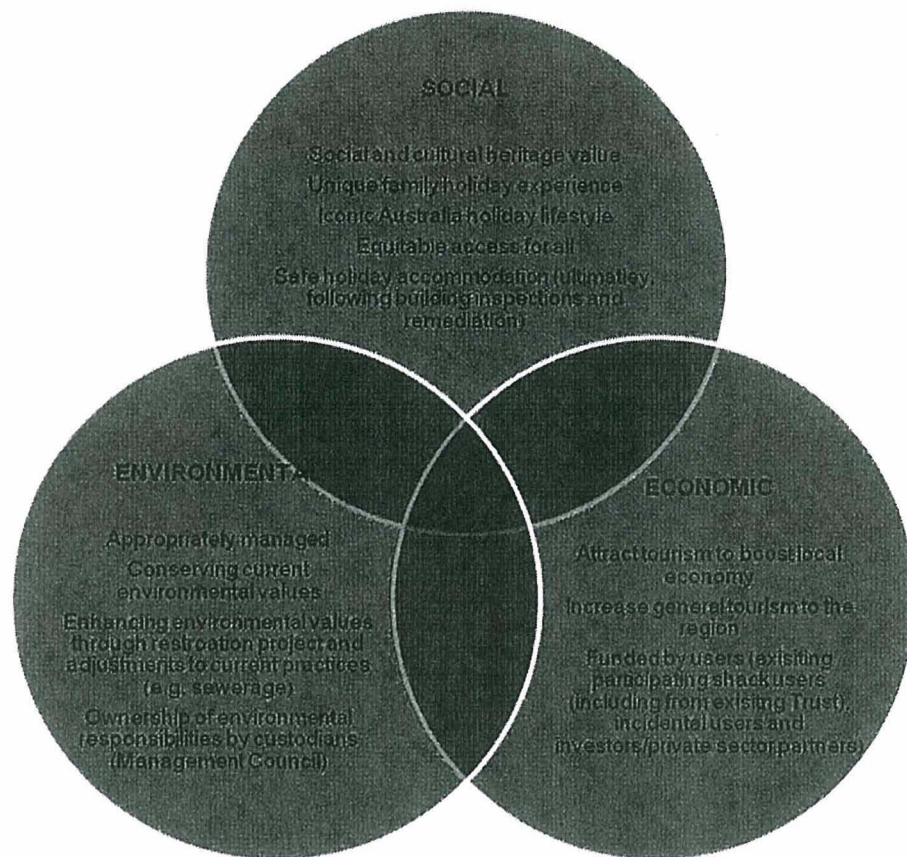
Our shack was built by my Father, Michael Honczar and his life-long friend, Greg Smith in the 1970s. I visited our shack for holidays with my family all my 32 years. I virtually grew up at "the shack" and certainly the fondest memories of my life were made there. I hope to one day be able to take my own children there and for them to be privileged enough to enjoy the unique experience of the holiday lifestyle in this place that is quintessentially Australian. I am doubtful that without this holiday destination over my life, I would have developed the intimacy with nature that I have and that has led me to my career as an Environmental Scientist.

The shack settlement at Grey represents a unique and iconic area with rich social and cultural heritage value. The Grey settlement is all the more significant due to being one of the last remaining, due to demolition of most other such family holiday destinations across Australia. In my opinion, this makes the preservation of the very few remaining shack settlements all the more important. This would enable ongoing experience and appreciation of this unique and iconic holiday lifestyle by others and generations to come.

I strongly support the approach and intent of the Grey Conservation and Community Association (GCCA), Proposed Grey Heritage Village Settlement Model (2010) ("the proposed model"). I believe that the proposed model is an excellent starting point for the development of a sustainable plan that could be achieved through negotiation and collaborative action by the GCCA, relevant Government agencies/authorities and other stakeholders.

I acknowledge that the proposed model in its current form requires significant development and refinements in order to achieve sustainability objectives that balance the social, environmental and economic considerations. However, the GCCA is committed to this process and is seeking any possible opportunity to achieve an outcome that will meet a balanced and sustainable future for the shack settlement at Grey.

To illustrate my understanding of a sustainable balance of social, environmental and economic objectives, in relation to the proposed model, incorporating some foreseeable improvements, I provide a diagram, below.



In reference to the above sustainability model for the development and implementation of an appropriate model (much of which is in direct reference to the key elements of the current proposed model), I recognise in particular that a significantly greater amount of attention will need to be given to appropriate environmental management of the site/s.

As far as I am aware, there are no matters of conservation significance at the Great settlement, with regards to native flora, vegetation or fauna. Therefore, targeted conservation of any such matters is not required. However, I recognise that the conservation of biodiversity as a whole is of significant importance. Additionally, the management of the environment from direct and indirect impacts, resulting from the utilisation of the site as a settlement site, for example existing sewerage systems, vegetation clearing, dune erosion, etc. need to be addressed.

In order to achieve appropriate environmental management of the site and ultimately meet the objectives of sustainability, my understanding is that the following is likely to be required:

- Detailed assessment of the current environmental values and conditions within the site, with regards to (as a minimum):
 - Flora species (and the conservation significance of these, if any);
 - Vegetation communities (and the conservation significance of these, if any);
 - Vegetation condition (and in particular, weeds that may require control and other disturbances that may require remediation);
 - Fauna species (and the conservation significance of these, if any); and
 - Fauna habitats (in particular, habitats for threatened species).
- An impact assessment that assesses the likely positive or negative impacts of the proposed model.

- Preparation and implementation of various environmental management plans, with associated monitoring programs, that address, as a minimum, protection of:
 - Native flora and vegetation
 - Weed management
 - Fire management
 - Native fauna and their habitats
 - Coastal habitats
 - Marine ecosystems (commensurate with existing policy and as relevant to terrestrial impacts)
 - Groundwater (and surface water where applicable)
 - Other impacts such as noise, dust, emissions and visual impacts.
- The suite of management plans (or single composite management plan) will need to be auditable, to assess the success of the implementation of management and implement contingencies and supplementary remediation if necessary.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the environment in its current state could also be incorporated into the Environmental Management Plan/s, such as dune stabilisation, revegetation and contaminated site remediation.
- The Environmental Management Plan/s and the opportunities for improvements to the current environment would be considered and prepared in close consultation with relevant authorities, such as DEC, by an independent external consultant.

Regardless of the shortcomings of the proposed model, or the measures required to improve it to render it acceptable for implementation, I hope that the committee sees the potential in this as a way forward. I can only hope that the committee considers that the opportunities available for the preservation of an iconic destination that enables the continuation of a way of life associated with such rich cultural heritage associated with shack life, are important enough to reconsider a different future for the existing shack settlements than the one we have been dreading for so many years.

Yours sincerely

Kellie Honczar