

Hon Matthew Swinbourn, MLC, Chair
Kristina Crichton, Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council Committee Office
18-32 Parliament Place
WEST PERTH WA 6005

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Dear Chair and Ms Crichton

Petition No. 157 (A845604) – Proposed boating facilities at Entrance Point, Broome

I refer to your correspondence of 24 September 2020 to Hon Robin Chapple MLC by email regarding the above petition. I regret not submitting my submission prior to the due date and request that you consider my submission. As you are aware there have been issues with COVID-19 social distancing and contact between people as well as mail delivery issues between the north of this State and Perth.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this submission on relating to my petition regarding the proposed boating facilities at Entrance Point in my hometown of Broome.

I refer to the petition of which 1047 signatures were counted opposing the plans stating that the development would cause significant destruction to reefs, beaches, dinosaur footprints and cause distress to the spiritual wellbeing of local families.

At present, large numbers of people utilise the natural landscape to fish, swim, celebrate and memorialise. These beaches are not only used for launching boats for the few privileged enough to own one - these beaches are some of the most beautiful in the world and cherished by Broome families, many of whom would be devastated at the destruction of them.

For time immemorial this part of the coast has been part of Song Cycles related to the Goolarabooloo, Djugun and Yawuru people who are all part of the Nyulnyulan language groups, whether recognised by the Government or not. There are also stories and spiritual connections practised here by the more recent generations as we continue our right to be one with the land. I, for one, along with many other Broome families – use this beach and its natural landscape to reconnect with a belonging created by my Grandmother and her children over times spent learning about the environment that feeds and sustains us and would appreciate passing this on to my grandchildren one day. A modern continuance of cultural heritage that needs to be recognised. There are reports that the proponent, the Department of Transport (DoT) will apply for a Section 18A Application for a permit to destroy sites; s.16 Excavation of Aboriginal sites and contravene s.17 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 with the support of the Shire of Broome as well as bully Traditional Custodians of this area into supporting the plans. I certainly plan to look further into these claims, in light of recent Culturally Significant sites at Juukan Gorge being destroyed by Rio Tinto – I fear these reports could well be true.

The large number of theropod tracks in a single-track horizon at Entrance Point is also highly significant in its own right. This is one of the highest single concentrations of *Megalosauropus Broomensis* that we are aware of in the Broome Sandstone, and may point to gregarious behaviour among the theropod trackmakers. Rocky exposures of Cable Beach Sand are also at risk of being destroyed.

The proposed carpark extension and boating facility would prevent our enjoyment of spring tide swims, meditative walks and gatherings we locals take time to enjoy at all times of the year, not just tourist season. We do this for our mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing – as we explore the whole coastline moving from ancient rock to ancient rock it reminds us that we are all connected and we can have reprieve from the social and environmental issues that may cause distress. This landscape is unique, at sunrise and sunset, full moon rising and neep tides, this beach is enjoyed by us all. Snorkelling, fishing, connecting with nature and children discovering the biodiversity and a respect of living creatures that live in them.

I am also obliged to mention the lack of adequate funding to support the social issues that are significantly affecting our town as a whole at the moment. To compare, the \$30 million for upgrading Chinatown to the menial \$2 million recently allocated to Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services to support our rising rate of youth suicides is appalling. The streets of Broome's lowest socio-economic areas are in darkness while the Shire of Broome and DoT suggest we spend \$50 million on a boating facility that will only benefit a few. This is not right. The community is not being consulted properly despite the Shire saying we have been. These funding gaps are laughable and not going unnoticed. Our community is divided. I suggest further consultation to fix it. Better yet, have you considered the idea that we have many people in our community who are capable of launching boats in all tidal weather – employ them to launch the boats for those less experienced, spend a fraction of the proposed \$50 million to create long lasting jobs with a boat launching service. It can and should be done. The employees could also caretake the beach and pick up all the litter and harmful plastics left behind when people have been boat fishing – discarded lines, plastic crushed-ice bags and cigarette butts to name a few, something I find myself doing after each visit to the area.

An online survey was conducted by the Shire of Broome back in March 2020 to gain public opinion of the proposed facilities – 1022 participated and only 67.40% were highly supportive, 6.8% supportive, 23.5% not supportive and 2.29% neutral. My petition has 1047 signatures opposing this facility. The media and Shire of Broome have been perpetuating a false sense of support for this Boating Facility and we the undersigned are in support of an alternative to be explored. Many locals were unaware of the online survey and do not access online surveys.

I believe there is enough opposition to reconsider the proposal being put forward by the DoT and the Shire of Broome. To justify permanent destruction of a beach and reefs for a carpark, of which by the way will only be full for three months of the year during peak season, is atrocious and there is no need to make such a development. Where are the statistics of the unsafe conditions that warrant this boat ramp and carpark? Generations of Broome families have been launching boats in Broome with consideration, knowledge and respect for the tides and environment – what has changed that we can't continue this practise or explore the options of a more environmentally friendly solution.

Yours sincerely,

Ngaire Pigram

28 September 2020