

YOUR REF    Petition No. 129  
OUR REF     F/ - D14/  
ENQUIRIES  
DATE        24/11/2016



Hon Simon O'Brien MLC  
Parliament House  
**PERTH WA 6000**

Dear Mr O'Brien

**SUBJECT: Petition No. 129 – Esperance Tanker Jetty**

The Shire of Esperance would like to submit a response to the petition which was tabled in the Legislative Council on 24 August 2016 by Hon Dave Grills MLC.

The petition was submitted on behalf of David Eltringham who, at the time, was the Chair of The Jetty Group Inc. The petition requested that a conservation order be placed on the Esperance Tanker Jetty, allowing The Jetty Group Inc time to complete its investigations and engineering study into potentially finding a feasible restoration option. The Shire would like to highlight the following timeline for the Standing Committee with respect to what has occurred since the tabling of this petition (please note this information is summarised and further detail can be found via the hyperlinks):

- [2 February 2016](#): Council resolved to call for tenders for the demolition of the Tanker Jetty
- [5 April 2016](#): Council resolved to advise Heritage Council there is no feasible or prudent alternative except to demolish the Tanker Jetty, as preserving the current structure would impose unsustainable long-term economic costs to the Esperance Community
- 11 August 2016: State Heritage Office advised the archival record for the Esperance Tanker Jetty satisfied the requirements of the Heritage Council
- [23 August 2016](#): Council shortlisted tenderers and extended their tender validity period until 8 November. The Jetty Group Inc were invited to provide the Shire with an engineering report including whole of life costs and other information, by close of business on 31 October 2016
- 9 September 2016: State Heritage Office advises the Interpretation plan satisfies the requirements of the Heritage Council advice in relation to the interpretation plan dated 21 March 2016.
- [8 November 2016](#): Council deemed the option provided by The Jetty Group Inc was not a prudent and feasible option for the Esperance Community and the tender was awarded. Council also called for the creation of a Jetty Replacement Working Group

- [8 November 2016](#): Minister for Heritage “issued a 42-day conservation order on the jetty so the shire can finalise alternatives to immediate demolition. This includes retaining a part of the jetty, preparing a final design for a new or restored structure and securing funding to undertake restoration or replacement work.”
- [15 November 2016](#): Council adopted the Terms of Reference for the Jetty Replacement Working Group. CEO to call for nominations from the Community.
- [17 November 2016](#): Heritage Council released a survey on an ongoing Conservation Order being in place
- [6 December 2016](#): Council appoint the community representatives to the working group. 14 nominations were received, 4 have been appointed with voting rights to the working group and 1 deputy.

The decision to demolish the Esperance Tanker Jetty was a difficult one. Council are charged with the responsibility of ensuring the best possible spend of ratepayers money to provide the most valuable and needed services and facilities to the community. Since the implementation of the integrated planning and reporting framework, Council have been able to identify asset management and long term financial management challenges and have worked diligently towards making the Shire sustainable both now and moving into the future. The financial impost that would be placed on the Esperance ratepayer to restore and maintain the current jetty is not a burden Council are prepared to impose.

The emotion surrounding this issue is very real in the community and Council have consistently endeavoured to alleviate these concerns. All decisions have been open and transparent with information readily available to the community. The majority of the Esperance Community want a sustainable and viable recreational jetty they can enjoy as soon as possible. The Esperance Shire Council is committed to making this happen.

Attached is the Shire's response to the accompanying document that was submitted with the petition. Should the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs (Committee) wish to have any further information please do not hesitate to contact the Shire of Esperance.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Scott  
Chief Executive Officer



## Shire of Esperance Response

### The Jetty Group's Submissions to the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs.

#### Historic Values and Heritage Values

The historical and heritage value of the jetty in Esperance is recognised by Council through an extensive Heritage Interpretation Plan and through work previously undertaken on the [Esperance waterfront](#). An updated [Heritage Interpretation Plan](#) was developed in consultation with the Heritage Council of WA in September 2016.

A summary of the key elements that have already been completed on the Esperance foreshore and which received a [commendation](#) from the WA Heritage Council is provided below.

- Historical images featuring the Jetty are presented in the amenities blocks and shelters as large-scale glass panels.
- Extensive use of recycled Jetty timbers for benches, many of which also feature inset panels depicting extracts from the original construction drawings from the 1930's.
- Use of recycled Jetty timbers in the headland playground for the construction of a play Jetty and a timber boardwalk.
- Use of recycled Jetty timbers for wayfinding and heritage signage along the full extent of the waterfront.
- Use of recycled Jetty timbers for marker posts to denote the location of the underground oil pipeline as an aesthetically pleasing alternative to steel or plastic posts.
- Use of recycled Jetty timbers as inset panels in street lighting poles along the Jetty boardwalk. The inset panels also feature images and information depicting the Jetty's history through the decades, starting with construction in the 1930's.
- The alignment of the previously dismantled section of the Jetty within the headland is represented by a pre-cast concrete boardwalk constructed along the same line and level as the original structure.
- Sections of railway line are set into the exposed aggregate paving at the start of the boardwalk on the same alignment as the rail track that used to serve the Jetty when it was in commercial operation, pre-1960's.
- Use of recycled Jetty timbers as cardinal compass points in the headland artworks 'Directions'.

In addition to work undertaken with Interpretation the Shire has engaged GHD and Hocking Heritage Studio to compile a detailed archival record (in accordance with the Heritage Council Requirements when demolition approval was first sought). A photographic record of the structure was completed to supplement the information already available and a side scan survey of the jetty piles taken in May 2016 to accurately document the locations.



The Shire has also addressed the need to retain the structural footprint of the jetty through discussions with the Southern Port Authority and Department of Transport. Those piles still 'in the ground' will be cut off below sea level, retaining archaeological values of the jetty and providing an opportunity for incorporation into the interpretation strategies as a dive trail or similar.

The Tanker Jetty was a huge asset to this town and ensured Esperance could grow and develop as a port. The historical and heritage links are of vital importance and Council will ensure a replacement jetty recognises the past while it also represents the future. Unfortunately the Tanker Jetty is no longer sustainable for the Esperance Community, the financial burden to restore and maintain is not a responsible spend of scarce community dollars. Council are committed to building a recreational jetty that we can use, meets the needs of both locals and tourists and includes a partial retention that reflects the heritage value and historical significance of the original structure.

### **Economic Values**

This second sentence in The Jetty Group's submission involves an opinion which appears to be stated as a fact, 'The Tanker Jetty is Esperance's most important tourist attraction...'. Esperance is well known and promoted for its natural assets. The Esperance Region comprises some of the most spectacular landscapes in Western Australia. It includes over 400km coastline ranging from gentle undulating bays and picturesque islands of the Recherche Archipelago to the spectacular cliffs of the Great Australian Bight.

When Esperance is promoted as a tourist destination in both print and digital media it is the beaches of Esperance that are used to encourage people to visit our shores, whether it be swimming, surfing, diving or fishing. The jetty is a great additional tourist attraction however it is not the reason people drive 350plus kilometres to visit Esperance and choose to stay. An example of this is Esperance's recent listing as one of the top 25 places to visit in Australia by the Expedia website and as one of WA's Most Instagrammable Places. These are examples of the health of the tourism environment in Esperance.

Tourism figures quoted in the Jetty Group submission state that '...more of the 300,000 visitors that came to Esperance in 2014-15...'. Figures provided on the Tourism WA site indicate that the figure is much closer to 190,400 visitors – this information was sourced from a Tourism WA Fact Sheet titled [Esperance & Coast Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet Years Ending December 2014/2015](#). This data is also used in Esperance Region Economic Development Strategy - a project lead by the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission, with input from the Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Shire. The Shire was not able to ascertain where the figure of 300,000 was obtained from.

No reduction in visitor numbers has been highlighted to the Shire at this stage and we would be very keen to see the data the Jetty Group are using to support their submission. Discussions held with Tourism Esperance indicate no notable difference in tourism numbers to Esperance since the closure of the jetty. The Esperance Chamber of Commerce have indicated that the Esperance businesses have experienced a slight down turn over the last several years and this is not considered to be related to the jetty.



## Engineering Solution

The Esperance Shire Council never stated the Tanker Jetty could not be fixed, they have instead maintained, since 2011, that it was not economically viable or sustainable for our community to refurbish the current jetty and that the most responsible option is to replace. The Jetty is currently 520mtrs in length, 80mtrs was dismantled during the Esperance Waterfront Project and a headland has been created. Recognition of this section is evident in the heritage trail that is visible on the headland.

The Jetty Group submitted a report, the [Bonacci report](#) that contained two options for restoration. The Baseline Case (option 1) involves replacing the substructure of the jetty with steel (piles and frame) and an Improved Aesthetic and Heritage Case (option 2), being a full wooden restoration with the piles wrapped to improve durability. The Bonacci report only provided costing information with regards to the Baseline case, no costing was provided for the full wooden restoration option. An independent peer review was undertaken by [GHD](#) on both the earlier BMT JFA report and the Bonacci Infrastructure (Bonacci) report. The peer review focused on the engineering and whole of life costings of both reports and possible heritage implications.

The costings provided, in the submission to the Standing Committee, to restore a 650metre long structure of \$7.1 million has been deemed to be significantly under estimated. Further information is available in the GHD Peer Review report, however the independent quantity survey estimated the total project cost to be \$14.9 million. The actual length of the Esperance Tanker Jetty is currently 520metre's.

As part of the GHD Peer review the remediation option presented by the Bonacci Report for the existing jetty was assessed against the adopted Statement of Significance to determine the Heritage outcome. The following observation was provided by Hocking Heritage Studio:

It is important to understand the difference between restoration and reconstruction, as defined by the Burra Charter:

- Restoration: returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material; and
- Reconstruction: means returning a place to a known earlier state and is distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new fabric.

Therefore, the two options presented by Bonacci are considered reconstruction options rather than restoration, in accordance with the definitions above. Hocking Heritage Studio then provided the following opinion regarding the proposals put forward in the Bonacci Report "As a summary, the proposals submitted by Bonacci have a low to moderate heritage outcome." An extract from a table in the Hocking Heritage Studio report below highlights the concerns on the construction methods proposed with respect to a timber jetty (a full copy of the [report](#) is available on the Shire website).

