



MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; CLIMATE ACTION; COMMERCE

Your Ref: A912703
Our Ref: 76-04372

Hon Peter Foster MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council Committee Office
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Mr Foster

Thank you for your letter received in this office on 2 September 2021 regarding Petition No. 011 – Vehicle beach access, Boranup.

I have reviewed the terms of the petition and the submission from the tabling Member, Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC. In the context of this review, I have consulted with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the agency responsible for the management of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park.

The Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park is the most frequently visited national park in Western Australia. The park has many entry and exit points, and much of the coastline contains fragile dunes, limestone areas, or sensitive species that are easily displaced or damaged. These factors, as well as visitor safety and amenity considerations, all influence the management measures put in place to protect the park's values.

Management of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park is undertaken in accordance with the approved *Leeuwin-Naturaliste Capes Area Parks and Reserves Management Plan 81 (2015)*, and DBCA has been progressively implementing the plan's recommendations.

The management plan stipulates that vehicle access to the Leeuwin-Naturaliste coastline will be maintained, but rationalised in accordance with the management plan's vehicle access strategy. This strategy provides for vehicle access to Deepdene beach, Boranup beach, Joey's Nose and Kilcarnup beach. Collectively, these entry points provide access to 15 kilometres of available beach driving on the Leeuwin-Naturaliste coast. The management plan does not provide for vehicle access on the beach at the terminus of Hooley Road.

The draft management plan was released for a two-month public comment period from 10 December 2010 to 18 February 2011. The majority of public submissions for the draft plan relating to vehicle access did not support recreational vehicle access to additional beaches.

There are a number of recorded examples of where vehicles have become bogged, and in some cases submerged on Hooley Road beach, which has a dynamic and ever-changing beach profile. This has caused effluent runoff into the Ngari Capes Marine Park and leaching of hydrocarbons through the intertidal zone. In this respect the prevalence of vehicle stranding and recovery at Hooley Road beach is greater than any other beach on the Leeuwin coastline.

I am advised that work to close Hooley Road access onto the beach was undertaken in mid-January 2021 when DBCA was undertaking other works in the area. I understand that the activities were unexpected to many recreational fishers.

Since 2015, DBCA has progressively implemented the numerous management actions outlined in the management plan, including the provision of safe ongoing public access to beaches within the planning area, while protecting and enhancing the park's environmental values and amenity. DBCA has commissioned unsealed track improvement works to all beaches where vehicle access is permitted, including extensive upgrades to the running surface of Boranup Beach Road, Deepdene beach access, and Kilcarnup and Joey's Nose, to facilitate safe vehicle access onto designated beaches for recreational fishers and the broader public.

Access to South Beach at Hooley Road remains available via a short walk from the parking at the terminus of Hooley Road down to the intertidal zone. Hooley Road will continue to be maintained as a four-wheel drive road to provide public access to the coastline in this area.

I have asked DBCA to ensure that, where similar decisions are required in the future, they are communicated appropriately and timed to minimise disruption to users.

Kind regards



HON AMBER-JADE SANDERSON MLA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

16 SEP 2021