



Parks and Leisure Australia's (WA Region)  
Response to the WAPC's  
Coastal Planning Strategy

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# **1 INTRODUCTION TO PARKS & LEISURE AUSTRALIA**

Parks and Leisure Australia is the key professional Association which provides a broad range of services to members of the parks and leisure industry. Membership ranges across staff and management of parks, gardens, sport, aquatic, rehabilitation; aged hostels and recreation centres, at local and state government levels, students from tertiary institutions, academics, private consultants, private operators of facilities and many more. Our membership comes from all states of Australia and overseas.

Parks and Leisure Australia (PLA) promotes cooperation between people and organisations involved in public parks, botanic gardens, open space environments and recreation and leisure facilities and services. It is also an advocate of the Australian parks and leisure profession to all levels of government and business to maintain a high standard and status for professionals in the Australian parks and leisure industry.

Parks and Leisure Australia provides focus, advice and support across a range of disciplines and represents a broad range of professionals nationally with more than 1600 members, and has local, national and international affiliations.

## **National Body Aims**

To provide a national organisation which promotes co-operation and mutual assistance between persons and organisations associated with public parks, botanic gardens and open space environments; recreation and leisure facilities and services.

To promote the aesthetic, scientific and social development and study of all matters related to and impacting on, the management and operation of public parks, botanic gardens and open space environments; recreation and leisure facilities and programs.

To act as an advocate and representative body of the Australian parks and leisure profession to all levels of government and business instrumentalities.

To promote a conservation ethic within the profession and throughout the parks and leisure industry

To maintain a high standard and status for the professions within the Australian parks and leisure industry.

To assist in the development of parks and leisure professionals through the promotion and support for appropriate information, education and training opportunities

To arrange meetings and opportunities for member information exchange, through formal and informal forums and conferences, as well as disseminate a range of published material relating to all aspects of parks and leisure services.

To encourage the application of appropriate resources towards the development and maintenance of parks and leisure services across Australia.

To stimulate the development of service levels within the industry and the achievement of best practice.

### **Western Australian Regional Council**

The PLA Western Australian Regional Council (PLAWA) acts both independently and in concert with PLA National Office (NO). At present, membership administration and financial management is controlled through NO. In addition, NO coordinates the annual national conference, funds the publication of a quarterly journal, manages the PLA website and facilitates online communication and networking opportunities. At an independent level, PLAWA is responsible for coordinating local events and providing response to local and national issues.

Our objective in providing this submission is to provide positive and constructive feedback to the WAPC and to offer the services of PLA WA in undertaking some of the strategic follow up work identified within the strategy as requiring ongoing work.

PLA WA has no specific allegiance to any area, economic system or local government system. It has the capacity to call on a range of experts on both a paid and voluntary basis and to draw together skilled individuals from a wide range of backgrounds.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The following lists our recommendations for your consideration in relation to the Draft Coastal Planning Strategy and its implementation.

### **1. Coastal Setbacks and Essential services**

It is recommended that the Strategy acknowledge the role of organisations such as surf life saving associations and their need for buildings in side the set back line and provide an exemption for thee buildings.

### **2. Aquatic Activities**

It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure that the range of aquatic activities and their land-based infrastructure is taken into consideration when determining the precincts and their descriptions.

### **3. Adjacent Local Governments and Precincts**

It is recommended that where precincts cross local government boundaries or where different precinct types are adjacent on either side of a local government boundary, further consultation is undertaken with the relevant local governments and their stakeholder groups to ensure that there is agreement regarding the proposed directions of development of the areas concerned.

### **4. Seed Funding for Critical Areas**

It is recommended that that strategy implementation team identify critical areas for the provision of seed funding activities such a development of foreshore management plans.

### **5. Role of Department of Sport & Recreation**

It is recommended that the Department of Sport and Recreation be included within the management framework for the Strategy.

### **6. Role of Other Peak Bodies**

It is recommended that Parks and Leisure Australia be invited to participate in the management framework, especially at the state and regional level (See Figure 4.2 of draft Strategy)

### 3 **OVERVIEW**

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PLA WA appreciates the opportunity provided by the Western Australian Planning Commission to provide comment on the Draft Coastal Planning Strategy.

In developing this response, PLA WA invited staff from the WAPC to discuss the strategy with PLA members, sought input from the wider membership and conducted a workshop with interested members to develop the response, based on feedback from members.

PLA WA acknowledges the size and complexity of the task that the WAPC has addressed. The extensive research, background development and ongoing consultation framework throughout the development of the strategy is possibly one of the most substantial consultative processes ever undertaken by the Western Australian government.

#### **3.1 *Vision, Purpose & Guiding Principles***

The vision statement within the strategy (in the context of the state planning strategy and network city strategy), is described as:

To develop the Perth metropolitan coastal region into an efficient, usable, accessible and sustainable region while preserving and enhancing its unique natural, cultural and physical characteristics.

While we do not wish to focus on semantics, it is not clear to use what is meant by 'efficient' in this context.

The guiding principles described in the document appear to relate entirely to on-land activities and outcomes. It is our view that the development of a coastal planning strategy cannot be taken without giving substantial importance to the activities which take place in the water and are accessed from the adjacent land. This has ultimate impact on both the built land forms and the water based activities.

#### **3.2 *Appropriateness of Precinct Description***

In general, we support the appropriateness of the descriptors for the identified precincts. We do, however, have a number of observations regarding the precincts identified.

##### **1. Identification of precincts**

We note that the 56 precincts have been determined largely through community input and an analysis of major forms on land, either in the built or natural environment. We are of the impression from the documentation that the determination of the precinct types is largely as a result of what exists rather than what may exist. We are therefore concerned that there may be a flaw in the precinct determination process. It is unclear whether the question has been asked "Is this the best use for

this area, and are the different types of precincts appropriately distributed? For example, in the north sector there are no areas identified as active recreation, while in the central north sector there are two and both of these are in the southern half of this section. In the central south sector there is no active recreation precinct identified and in the south sector there is one only, south of Rockingham (precinct 55).

## **2. Precincts and local government boundaries**

We also note that in some precincts, where they transcend local government boundaries (at present) the different local governments may have differing ambitions for those precincts. For example, Precinct 26 crosses into both the City of Stirling and the Town of Cambridge and is designated passive recreation with some conservation. There is a potential danger of two different local governments taking a different view to how best to develop, manage, maintain and conserve the area. We further note that where different precinct types are adjacent, with a local government boundary between, there may be a differing view. For example, Precinct 22 (Marmion, residential) and Precinct 23 (North Beach Mixed use).

## **3. Precinct determination and future structure plans**

In considering the precincts, we also recognise that they are purposefully designed to be somewhat fluid and acknowledge that that is a sensible approach at this stage. We are of the view, however that the determinations in this document will set in stone the guiding principles for future structure plans which may ultimately be to the detriment of ensuring that there is a breadth and spread of activity nodes and precinct types.

### **3.3 *Planning Issues***

The precinct determination has the capacity to impact on future planning issues. This is particularly important in the context of aquatic activities, including such issues as surf life saving, surfing, fishing, boat launching etc. While a precinct's land use may, for example, be determined to be 'passive recreation'; the activities undertaken on or in the adjacent water may require the water based activities to be taken into consideration, for example, with parking provisions boat launching and so on.

### **3.4 *Coastal Vulnerability and Set backs***

We are of the view that while the vulnerability and coastal setbacks issue is of great significance, the ability to locate structures which may be considered sacrificial ( +/- 30 years life) within the set back lines for the purposes of recreation and safety, such as surf life saving clubs, is extremely important, given the role played by such organisations safety, security and supporting recreation activities which lead to a healthy lifestyle.

## **4 IMPLEMENTATION**

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The work undertaken to date in developing a Perth Coastal Planning Strategy is impressive in its attention to detail and wide consideration of a range of issues. In developing the Plan, it is our view that effective implementation, bearing in mind some of the constraints, is of paramount importance. Retaining a flexible approach without sacrificing principles and values will be the key to effective implementation.

### ***4.1 Allocation of Responsibility***

We note that in Figure 4.2 Integrated Coastal Planning and Management Framework (p74), the Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) has not been included as a key stakeholder to be involved in the management framework. In our view, DSR has a key role to play as both an advocate on behalf of the wide range of sport and recreation activities which take place along our coastline and as a significant planner in the development of facilities. It is acknowledged that DSR has had its role recognised in Table 7.7 recommendation 6 ‘Develop a concept plan for major tourism and recreation nodes in conjunction with the Network City activity centres project.’

We are also of the view that organisations such as Parks and Leisure Australia have the capacity to assist in the implementation through the proposed framework. PLA is an independent conduit to the Parks and Leisure industry and as such has the capacity to access a wide range of stakeholders in the development of further specific objectives.

### ***4.2 Prioritising Implementation strategy***

In our view, there are a number of matters which should be prioritised for early action. These include the allocating and development of active open space areas along the coastline. The accommodation for the surf life saving clubs and other beach related activist needs to be confirmed and secured within the context of this planning strategy. The further work on climate change modelling and related investigations is of critical importance to future determinations regarding precincts, activities and development.

### ***4.3 Provision of Implementation Funding***

There is no doubt that the implementation of the proposed actions and priorities will be expensive, in many instances be of an ongoing nature and, in the case of some specific identified actions and priorities, be neither a priority nor an imperative to the agency to whom the responsibility is allocated. For example, either developing new or reviewing existing foreshore management plans (by local government) may be well down the ‘wish list’ for local governments which are focusing



on rebuilding their road infrastructure or meeting resident needs in terms of provision of human services. It is our view that the Strategy needs to identify critical areas and provide some seed funding.

We note that objective vi of issue 4: urban development - acknowledges the need to develop tourism and recreation nodes along the coast in appropriate locations. In our view this is an area of critical need and one where seed funding could be of significant assistance in the development of a coherent planned approach to tourism and recreation.