



# Minninup Pool Draft Demand and Prefeasibility Study APPENDICES

November 2019

Prepared for The Shire of Collie and the  
South West Development Commission

# APPENDIX 1: Consultation Report

## Consultation Background

Consultation with community and stakeholders was identified as a critical input to inform the feasibility and impact of any proposed options at Minninup Pool. Feedback from key stakeholders influence recommended options with respect to development, funding and management.

The Project's community engagement strategy included consultation and communication with community and stakeholders such as workshops, briefings, meetings, surveys, information sessions and community updates.

Previously, the Shire of Collie had conducted a separate Aboriginal consultation process to consider the significance of Aboriginal cultural activity in the area. The results of the Visioning Report and Aboriginal Engagement and Heritage Assessment study (Dr Myles Mitchell and Rosie Halsmith, 2019), demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm and energy among the Collie Noongar community about a vision for Minninup Pool that embeds the Noongar community in the decision-making process, and upholds three core values and eight key themes:

Three (3) Core Values:

- Minninup Pool is a Noongar place;
- Minninup Pool is a sacred site; and,
- Minninup Pool is a place that brings people together.

Eight (8) key themes arose to guide future plans for the site, as follows:

1. Develop a shared governance model for the Minninup Pool Precinct that embeds the Noongar community in the decision-making process;
2. Protect and celebrate cultural and ecological heritage;
3. Create a centre for Noongar culture with opportunities for education, discussion, interpretation, storytelling, and increased visibility of Noongar cultural values. This may include built structure/s;
4. Create opportunities for intergenerational knowledge sharing. Sharing knowledge and transmitting it to future generations of Noongar and non-Noongar people;
5. Create a range of ongoing employment and business opportunities for Noongar people;
6. Enhance existing community uses by upgrading the day-use areas while maintaining the current ambience of the place and highlighting Noongar cultural values;
7. Continue to explore the possibilities for developing a short-term camping area for local community and tourists; with camping areas clearly separated from the river and day-use area by a buffer of existing vegetation; the vision is to consider camping options after the day-use upgrades have been completed.
8. Manage access for pedestrians, bikes, 2WD, 4WD vehicles to ensure the foreshore and reserve areas are safe for all users and minimise environmental impacts.

The outcomes of the Aboriginal consultation process contained many similar requirements for the potential development of Minninup Pool site to the general community consultation process, in which many members of the Aboriginal community participated in addition to the separate Aboriginal consultation.

Stakeholder and/or community needs, wants and concerns will be paramount during the development of any plans for Minninup Pool, particularly where there are direct or indirect impacts to the local community, businesses and visitors. Community engagement outcomes need to be considered for any design concepts and ascertaining the potential social and economic potential benefits of tourism development.

The purpose of this Consultation section is to summarise key insights, trends and feedback identified from the consultation activities.

## Consultation Methodology

### Consultation Team

Myles Mitchell – Independent Facilitator (Myles Mitchell Heritage)

David Holland – Brighthouse

### Consultation Approach

The consultation approach used the following approach to collect feedback from stakeholders:

Approach	Description
Consultation Survey	<p>An online survey with seven questions comprising a mix of multi choice and free form text fields.</p> <p>An online survey was conducted between 21 April 2019 to 19 June 2019 and a total of 55 responses were received</p>
Guest Book	A free form text field for any general thoughts and comments. A total of 5 responses received in the guest book
Community Forum	A community forum was held on 23 May 2019. The forum was well publicised and open to all interested community members. Approximately 60 people participated.
Round Table Discussion	<p>A round table discussion was held with invited representatives from relevant organisations and departments</p> <p>Participating organisations included: Department of Water, Collie Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Muja Power Station, Ngalang Boodja Corporation, Regional Development Australia - South West, South West Development Commission, Australia's South West, Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership</p> <p>Apologies: WA Indigenous Tourism Operators Council, Bunbury Geographe Economic Alliance, HRE Consulting/Harris River Estate, Collie River Visitors Centre</p>
Shire Council Round Table Discussion	<p>A round table discussion was held with Shire Councillors.</p> <p>Present: Cr Elysia Harverson, Cr Ian Miffing, Cr Leonie Scoffern, Cr Joe Italiano, Cr Andrew Dover, David Blurton (CEO), Katya Tripp, Myles Mitchell (consultant), David Holland (consultant)</p> <p>Presentation of concept designs and discussion</p>
Mick Murray MLA	Meeting with local member, Mick Murray in his office
Collie Golf Club	Meeting with Lesley Motion (President) and Graham Williams (Captain)
Harry Wiggers (re. boat shed)	Meeting between Myles Mitchell and Harry Wiggers about utilizing the old rowing shed for new purposes.
Julie Hillier (Harris River Estate, HRE Consulting)	Meeting with Julie Hillier about Aboriginal Heritage, community involvement, and eco-tourism.

## Key Insights & Feedback

### Consultation Survey & Guest Book

Of the 55 responses to the survey, there was an overwhelming number of people (80%) who thought that there needed to be an improvement in the existing day use facilities and parking at Minninup Pool.

“Minninup Pool is a beautiful place that is highly underutilised and maintained... By bringing a site like this into the public eye, these people are held more accountable and the place is looked after more.”

Another respondent noted that, so long as the developments are eco-friendly and are respectful to aboriginal heritage – it’s hard to see why we shouldn’t increase the facilities that Collie has to offer.

#### Priority of facilities that may be improved

There are various options for the nature and type of facilities that could be developed at Minninup Pool. As such, the survey sought to understand the priority or importance survey respondents placed on particular type of facilities over others.

Respondents were asked to rate the list of facility options as either ‘not at all important’; ‘slightly important’; ‘fairly important’; ‘important’; or ‘very important’. For the purposes of assessment and comparability, each rating was allocated a numbered score.

Rating	Score
Not at all important	0
Slightly important	1
Fairly important	2
Important	3
Very important	4

The higher the aggregate (or total) score associated with a particular facility option, the more important this facility is considered to respondents. Based on the scoring mechanism above, the most important facility options and their associated aggregated score are provided in the table below (i.e. the order of importance has the highest aggregate score as being the most important).

Facility Options	Aggregate score	Average score (per respondent) <sup>1</sup>
BBQ’s, picnic tables and shade	158	2.9
Additional toilets	157	2.9
Facility building for managing hire and storage of mountain bikes, kayaks, paddle boards and other non-motorised watercraft and site information	123	2.2
Inclusion of Aboriginal cultural site identification, activity area and cultural interpretation through signage and perhaps street/trail art	127	2.3
Improved parking and vehicle access tracks	103	1.9
A seasonal pop-up kiosk (or mobile coffee shop) at the site to service food and beverage needs of site visitors	99	1.8
Wayfinding signage and interactive digital information	92	1.6
Facilities for trail users e.g. bike storage, overnight accommodation	96	1.7

The respondent ratings of the facility options above also indicated that:

- The option with the most ‘very important’ ratings was ‘BBQ’s, picnic tables and shade’. 42% of respondents marked this option as ‘very important’.
- The option with the least ‘very important’ ratings was ‘a seasonal pop-up kiosk (or mobile coffee shop) at the site to service food and beverage needs of site visitors. Only 13% of respondents marked this option as ‘very important’.
- The option with the most ‘not at all important’ ratings was ‘facilities for trail users e.g. bike storage, overnight accommodation. 38% of respondents marked this option as ‘not at all important’.
- The option with the least ‘not at all important’ ratings was ‘BBQ’s, picnic tables and shade’. 7% of respondents marked this option as ‘not at all important’.

<sup>1</sup> Calculated as Aggregate Score divided by 27 respondents



Consistent with the strong preference of improved facilities for **BBQ's, picnic tables and shade**, many respondents commented on the importance of improving day facilities at Minninup Pool.

“Improvements for all day use activities would be great.”

The survey also sought to understand the community's sentiment and view on developing and maintaining camping and other accommodation facilities in the area. Key insights and trends on this matter are outlined in the sections below.

#### Preference for campsites and low-key nature-based accommodation

There was a strong preference for any overnight stay developments to be restricted to managed campsites and low-key nature-based accommodation (with 78% of respondents echoing this principle).

“I believe low-impact camping and accommodation sites would be of high value to Minninup... upgrading the current facilities will benefit Collie residents too.”

#### Perceived impact or benefit of any campsites and low-key nature-based accommodation

There was a positive response amongst respondents on whether or not nature-based campsite and low-key accommodation would deliver benefits to tourism and the community (such as new revenue sources and industry development).

64% believed that it would be better for the local businesses and community while the other 36% disagreed.

Several respondents who disagreed expressed concerns about businesses that are already struggling due to the lack of visitation and tourism footprint in the area. The view was that additional accommodation may aggravate the perceived existing supply/demand gap. It was recommended that the Shire should assess the impact of any developments on local businesses (e.g. by knocking on the front doors of these businesses), to ensure it does not adversely affect them.

One respondent expressed concern about how increased campsites in the may risk attracting “nomads camping for months”.

#### Ways to manage the potential negative impacts of campsites and low-key nature-based accommodation

Respondents were asked to consider the most effective way to halt the deterioration of the riverbank and important vegetation, littering and the degradation of significant natural and cultural sites (i.e. where driven by illegal camping and unauthorised vehicle movements).

The **most effective** approach to managing this risk as to have '**increased ranger presence** with a focus on **visitor education** and environmental management'.

Following this, the **2<sup>nd</sup> most effective** (which followed very closely behind the most effective approach) was to have '**designated carparking areas and access tracks with physical barriers** such as bollards to prevent access to sensitive areas requiring protection and rehabilitation'.

Overall, the **least effective response (by a significant degree)** was to have '**resident oversight of public facilities** by campground manager to ensure appropriate care for the environment whilst allowing access to popular areas of Minninup Pool'.

#### Alternatives to the proposed campsites and low-key nature-based accommodation

Respondents were asked to consider whether the Shire should consider a supplementary alternative form of higher impact accommodation. The proposed option included the Shire encouraging owners/operators of surrounding properties e.g. Collie Golf Club to develop other higher impact tourism accommodation options to preserve and ensure sustainability of Minninup Pool primarily as a day use and low-key camping site.

Responses to this proposal were:

- 65% encouraging the Shire to pursue this option;
- 35% discouraging the Shire from pursuing this option; and
- 2% being unsure.

One respondent noted that it would be important to consider how any existing accommodation supply could be filled first. While another respondent noted that there are limited accommodation options for high-end tourists.

#### Other feedback, suggestions and recommendations

Some respondents also provided some alternative suggestions for the Shire to consider:

- Monitoring the use of dinghies in the river to ensure safety (it was noted that there had been some operating dinghies in the river with outboard motors while drinking alcohol)
- Placing any developments on the "other side" of the river i.e. not on the Minninup Side
- Attracting and promoting "adventure-oriented tourist" with businesses providing airwalk, flying fox activities and more bike trails

#### Community Forum

This summary is based on concepts that were put forward and discussed during the forum. Any concepts that were put forward without any negative responses are documented as 'everyone agreed'. Concepts that were widely discussed with positive comments far outweighing negative are documented as 'majority agree'. Concepts which a number of people discussed positively are documented as 'multiple people agreed'. Points only stated by a single person are documented as 'points raised by an individual'.

Everyone who took part in the community forum and round table discussions agreed on the following points:

- Minninup Pool is a place of exceptional Aboriginal cultural heritage values and any future development at the site should seek to preserve, promote and celebrate those values.
- Degradation of the place as a result of current misuse (illegal camping, uncontrolled vehicles, rubbish dumping etc.) is a huge problem for the place and any future development at the site should seek to mitigate such damage as much as possible.
- There is a need to carefully manage environmental impacts at the site.
- There is a need to manage water quality and water levels in the river more broadly.
- There is a need to discourage antisocial behaviour at the site.
- Upgrades to day visitor facilities (including toilets and parking) are warranted and will be beneficial for all user groups.
- Day visitor facilities should be the first priority for any on-ground works.
- There is an urgent need to control vehicle use in the Sandy Beach area to prevent environmental degradation and dangerous interactions between vehicles and pedestrians.

A majority of people who took part in the community forum agreed with the following points:

- The 'old hockey ground' is an appropriate location for a nature-based camping facility because it is set back from the river and day visitor areas and is a previously disturbed area. Nobody specifically objected to this as a proposed location, however at least one person objected to any camping on-site whatsoever. One person raised the point that there is a wetland near the old hockey ground that feeds the groundwater basin and therefore there is a need to recognise and protect this wetland.
- Increased active management and passive observation at the site will help to curb antisocial behaviour and damage to the place.
- The old rowing shed should be utilized as existing infrastructure and a community resource. Ideas were put forward about it housing hire equipment for non-motorized water sports which seemed

well received. People raised the matter of the rowing boats and there is support for them remaining in the building and co-existing with other uses.

- Utilising existing trails network for interpretive cultural walk trails.

Multiple people agreed with the following points:

- Tourism is good for the local economy and the diversification of Collie's economy and sustainability of Collie.
- The rowing club has heritage attached to it, associated with the original members of the club and the boats which are still stored there. A need to keep a space for storage and access by community group/s.
- There is currently no accommodation for mountain bikers and glamping in Collie, while there is lots of motels and camping. Need to provide something Collie doesn't already have as won't create competition with already established businesses and attracts different user groups.
- There is a risk that the problems of unauthorised camping and anti-social behaviour will move to the south side of the river which is largely unregulated and unmanaged due to lack of ranger resources.
- There is a risk of falling water levels due to climate change, decreasing rainfall and future end to mine dewatering activities.
- Solar cabins and wellness facility – while this was not discussed a great deal, nobody specifically spoke against this concept so it appears to have some broad support.
- Eco-Cabins between old hockey ground and Sandy Beach – while this was not discussed a great deal, nobody specifically spoke against this concept so it appears to have some broad support.

Other points raised by individuals:

- Too many tourists taking local camp sites means that the locals get pushed further and further afield and cannot find a camp site locally anymore. Do not need another tourist destination (only one person felt this).
- Opportunity for nocturnal animal tour.

### Round Table Discussion

Phillip Ugle (emerging Noongar leader and representative from Ngalang Boodja Corporation) – expressed his desire to see a built cultural centre at the site, and glamping. He expressed a desire by the Noongar community to develop cultural tourism business opportunities at the Minninup.

Brendan Kelly (Department of Water) – Things to consider such as flooding and seasonal inundation, freshwater and reticulated sewerage, environmental management, acid sulphate soils, water quality etc however these can be considered and addressed in future detailed planning stages. Reduced flow regime due to reduced dewatering and climate change. No showstoppers just consideration of issues that will need to be planned and managed for. Suggested no fill as an idea.

Charles Jenkinson (Regional Development Australia South West) – To receive national funding it needs to be a national attraction. No point in doing little bits, needs to be large and iconic. In favour of a built cultural centre and an art icon to attract people. Opportunity for learning on country – attracts funding. Very enthusiastic about Phillip Ugle's suggestions.

Catrin Allstop (Australia's South West) – Need to marry up the Aboriginal vision with tourist demand especially International tourists who seek an aboriginal cultural experience. Need to target this international market as well as the domestic market.

In general, there was enthusiastic support around the table for a big iconic project that focusses on a Noongar cultural, eco-tourism and cultural tourism. The group was supportive of all the concept plans put forward by David Holland.

## Shire Council Round Table Discussion

Consultants presented concept plans, which appeared to be well received by Councillors.

Council expressed particular interest in the high-end accommodation options, citing that there is a good amount of existing camping options close to town, as well as motels but not much high-end accommodation options.

Councillors expressed an interest in encouraging private sector investment in the accommodation.

Councillors are supportive of the idea for a built form cultural centre.

The issue of unauthorised camping occurring across the river and the need to better control this.

The issue of water level was discussed and the importance of the Roberts Rocks (weir). Need to consider improvement to this structure. Reduced water levels are a risk to the project.

Interaction with the Golf Course was discussed, noting that potential exists and should be considered.

## Other Stakeholder Meetings

### Member for Collie Preston

The local member expressed concerns about potential community reaction to the concept designs. He thought that people might see it as over development and getting away from what had been discussed previously. However, as discussions continued further and the consultants talked in more detail about the concept designs and stakeholder discussions thus far, some of his concerns were alleviated. In the end we resolved to gauge community reaction in the forum (to be held that night) and reassess from there.

### Collie Golf Club

Leslie Motion (President) and Graham Williams (Captain) were both supportive of the concept designs and expressed that they felt having accommodation available at Minnipool (especially high end accommodation) would be very beneficial to the golf club because they are trying to encourage visitors from out of town to come for golfing holidays in Collie. They said that the Club would like to have on-site accommodation but is not in a financial position to build anything, so the proposed Minnipool development would suit the club perfectly.

### Harry Wiggers

Harry Wiggers had convened a community meeting on 21 May 2019 to discuss the future of the old boat shed at Minnipool. On this basis Myles Mitchell met with him the following day to discuss community aspirations for the boatshed. Harry explained that the rowing club had been defunct for a number of years and that to his knowledge there was not enough community interest to get it going again. He had called together a meeting to discuss alternative options for the boatshed. His preferred option is a kayak and watercraft club/group that could utilize the space, probably in collaboration with other community groups such as mountain bikers or the triathlon club. He also suggested some sort of collaboration with the Rotary Club. He said he was aware that other ideas for the space were being proposed such as possibilities for commercial businesses and Aboriginal cultural uses. He proposes that business and community groups could use the space collaboratively. Harry also attended the community forum the following evening and contributed to that discussion.

### Julie Hillier (Harris River Estate/Mila Foundation)

Julie Hillier's interest in Minnipool is two-fold, firstly as a local hospitality business owner and as a founding member of the Mila Foundation which runs Noongar youth support programs and cultural heritage initiatives. She expressed support for the concept designs and was particularly pleased with the Noongar heritage components. She said that as a local hospitality and accommodation provider, the plans to have high-end accommodation, glamping and a range of accommodation options would be positive for other local accommodation providers because it would help to make Collie a more attractive tourist destination. Julie also attended the community forum and contributed comments to that discussion.