

**WILSON INLET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2005 AT THE
DENMARK ENVIRONMENT GROUP MEETING ROOM AT 1.00PM**

PRESENT: George Ebbett, Zac Launay, Sandra Shakespeare, John Xanthis, Geoff Findlay, Matt Thomson, Colleen Donnelly, Jason Froud, Brett Ward, Dianne Harwood (1.20pm)

In Attendance: David Rushton

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1.05pm.

1. OPEN FORUM

Peter Logan. Introduced himself as the representative for the Denmark Classic Boat Association Inc, addressed the meeting and tabled a proposal for the construction of jetties in the Rivermouth Development Area.

The Chairman noted a number of issues - that jetties were the responsibility of Dept for Planning & Infrastructure (DPI), the Denmark Shire Council (DSC) involvement and protection of the foreshore vegetation.

Mr Thomson advised that the DSC resolved to support the concept in principle and had referred the proposal to WIMAG for comment.

Mr Findlay referred to the previous site and if the DCBA had considered moving back to that area as there was available parking and use of the slipway. DPI were concerned with the use of the old sandpiper jetty and lack of parking facilities at the Rivermouth site.

Mr Thomson also noted that the Denmark Boating and Angling Club had a lease agreement on the slipway site, however he was not aware of the arrangements.

Discussion continued and the Chairman noted that all concerned parties would be invited to provide input and a full concept plan would need to be developed. The Chairman thanked Mr Logan for his presentation and noted that discussion would continue further into the meeting.

Fred Scott. Questioned when the next WIMAG vacancies would be advertised. The Chairman responded that WIMAG was in the process of a review including the roles and responsibilities and membership. Mr Rushton advised that the review would be completed in approximately 2 – 3 months.

Bobby Wilson. Thanked the DPI for addressing the navigation lights on the mussel lease and requested that the white lights be expedited asap. Mr Launay stated that earliest time would be July as the lights had been ordered and take approximately 3 weeks to be made. Ms Wilson noted that it would help Mr Launay's standing in the community if they were replaced sooner.

Ms Wilson spoke of the third aquaculture lease proposed by Mr Launay and queried when the next review of the Aquaculture strategy was to take place.

Mr Froud noted that due to staff constraints the matter had been delayed and suggested that Ms Wilson write to the Executive Director of Fisheries requesting that the review be expedited.

The Chairman thanked Ms Wilson for her comments.

Open forum closed 1.25pm

2. APOLOGIES

Brad Kneebone, Bill North

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2005 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 Weed Strategy Report to Council – update Matt Thomson

The recommendation was well received and the weed strategy progressing.

4.2 Letter to Council regarding inlet foreshore clearing and the response received.

Mr Rushton tabled the correspondence (copy attached to minutes).

Wilson Inlet Holiday Park. Awaiting response.

Poison Point recreational fishing facility for aged and disabled (copy of correspondence attached to minutes).

Discussion continued on the foreshore clearing and the need for real estate agents and council rangers to be informed of the best practice requirements for protection of foreshores. Mr Thomson undertook to raise the issue with the CEO.

5. WIMAG REVIEW

Mr Rushton gave an overview of the second and third meetings of the Review subcommittee. Members of the subcommittee are investigating different models and will present their views to the next review meeting. Ms Shakespeare highlighted to members to be comfortable with their decisions and recommendations.

6. FISHERIES PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL

Mr Froud provided an overview of the presentation to Denmark Shire Council on 26 April by Dr Rob Lenanton and Dr Kim Smith from Department of Fisheries. Mr Froud noted that Dr Lenanton will provide a written report for distribution, in due course.

7. PROPOSAL – FLOATING JETTIES AT DENMARK RIVERMOUTH

Discussion continued from Open Forum and Denmark Shire Council seeking WIMAG comments on the Denmark Classic Boat Association's proposal to install 3 floating jetties along the Denmark River.

Members supported the project with the formation of a working group to investigate a suitable site and to develop a concept plan.

Mr Launay advised that he was also purchasing a 12metre boat for his mussel business and would be seeking suitable mooring facilities such as down stream from the railway bridge.

WIMAG to inform Council of decision to set up a working group.

Moved: Colleen Donnelly

Seconded: Geoff Findlay

- (1) WIMAG's preference is to research the slipway area currently being leased by the Denmark Boating and Angling Club as a potential site for this proposal.*
- (2) WIMAG recommends to the Denmark Shire Council that a working party be established by the Shire of Denmark and that working party consist of Matt Thomson - Shire Engineer, George Ebbett – Chairman of WIMAG and Council's delegate, David Rushton and John Xanthis. This committee also recommends that a member of the Denmark Boating and Angling Club and Denmark Classic Boat Association Inc be invited to join the committee.*
- (3) WIMAG does not support the Rivermouth proposal in its current form due to negative environmental impacts and size restrictions.*

Carried

8. RIVERMOUTH MARINE SURVEY

Results from acid sulfate soils (ASS) testing in the Wilson Inlet and Denmark River, conducted as a consequence of the rivermouth boat ramp, jetty and dredging proposal, prompted a channel survey to be carried out as a means of investigating a possible management option for the dredge spoil.

Mr Findlay stated that extensive soil testing by Denmark Shire, DOE and DPI identified holes that dredging spoil could be put into. The holes would not be large e.g. less than 200 cubic metres. Tests concluded there was a risk of soil reacting when exposed to oxygen. The results have not been finalised.

Mr Findlay advised that it was a management issue and low cost simple solutions were available.

Mr Thomson thanked DPI for their assistance.

9. NRM CONFERENCE

The Chairman provided an update of progress by the Conference Steering Committee. Wednesday 5th October has been set aside for a tour and a tour working party has been organised. Ms Helen Hydenrich, Coastal Management facilitator is keen to use this segment as an opportunity to put forward movement of NRM processes into the marine environment.

Contact has not been made with Keith Bradbury however, other speakers have been set. Denmark Agricultural College and dairy effluent management will be included into the tour.

10. WILSON INLET NUTRIENT REDUCTION ACTION PLAN

Mr Rushton gave an update and tabled a report on the progress of the Nutrient Reduction Plan for the Wilson Inlet catchment.

Mr Rushton referred to the bar opening and advised that he was liaising with Mr Gary Duncan – Water Corporation - replacement for Graham Wright whilst on holidays. To date the inlet has not reached the required height for bar opening. Mr Xanthis requested involvement on the bar opening committee. He went on to say that a false letter had been sent to the Denmark Bulletin on behalf of the WIRG President Ron Powley stating that he supported eastern openings. Mr Powley is firmly committed to western openings.

Mr Launay advised that the WISE group stated an eastern opening would be beneficial for the mussel farm and as the operator of the mussel farm he was concerned that he was not consulted prior to publishing of the media article. The Chairman advised that many of the statements were based on speculation and required clarification.

It was noted that a policy was already in place regarding western openings and until community attitude changed or the scientific basis is such that a change is warranted.

It was agreed that no action was required at this stage other than requesting appraisal of the statement by Mr Robb and his group and giving reference to Mr Boughton's computer modelling.

WIMAG to respond to WISE broadly outlining the action that is being taken, make reference to the existing policy and stating that there is no added evidence other than Mr Boughton's computer model. Denmark Shire to be advised of WIMAG's position.

10. MEMBERS REPORTS

Dave Rushton. Have received an invitation for volunteers afternoon tea on Friday 27 May 2005 from 3.0-4.30pm. RSVP by 24 May.

A number of concerning algal species have recently been detected in the inlet at levels in excess of public health guidelines. Health Dept, Fisheries Dept and Denmark Shire have been made aware and a media statement has been released by the Health Dept. Monitoring is continuing. Generally no need for alarm as a quality assurance program is in place if purchasing shell species through shops.

The Health Dept have requested that Mr Gareth James (holder of mussel lease) conduct ongoing monitoring in Albany and Wilson Inlet.

Geoff Findlay. Dept of Transport have adjusted lights on the inlet.

Expect an announcement on recreational boating facilities scheme before the next WIMAG meeting.

Brett Ward. Clearing on the foreshore. Noted that it is not the role of WIMAG to pressure the shire for action.

Zac Launay. Attended aquaculture conference in Bali. Outcome – potentially a large market to Japan for flat oysters.

Have a student from Curtin University to help with growth and survival rate.

Mr Launay expressed concern over the dredging proposal regarding heavy metals. Mr Rushton explained that this issue should be adequately addressed through the Acid Sulphate Soils Management Plan that will be a requirement should the dredging eventuate.

Colleen Donnelly. Membership of Council on WIMAG. Council elected Mr George Ebbett as Council's delegate to WIMAG. Another councillor expressed an interest to become a WIMAG member and was advised that vacancies are advertised in the local newspapers.

Mrs Donnelly requested an update from Mr Rushton on the outcome of the Denmark Learning Precinct meeting.

Mr Rushton attended preliminary meeting whereby endorsement of the learning precinct was sought and the official launch to occur at the NRM conference in October.

Diane Harwood. Awaiting finalisation of the weed strategy.

Sandra Shakespeare. Following on from the WIMAG Review highlighted the need for WIMAG to have continued support and appreciated the efforts of DOE officers.

Announced that it was the last WIMAG meeting she would be attending and thanked the Chairman and members of the group particularly Ms Harwood for their support. Highlighted the need for members to continue to contribute to debate as they had the required expertise to solve the ongoing problems.

The Chairman thanked Ms Shakespeare for her contribution and long standing efforts with both WIMA and WIMAG.

John Xanthis. Windfarm. Council voted against the proposed windfarm and expressed appreciation to Ms Shakespeare and Ms Harwood for supporting the guidelines for aesthetic values.

Bar Opening. WIRG requesting a 40metre opening this year as previous openings have not produced a significant channel. Suggested installation of 2 or 4 pylons to prevent silting at the causeway location.

Mr Thomson stated that a previous working group had established a policy for installation and removal of the causeway, however, they had missed the opportunity to de-silt the channel due to rising water. The Chairman referred to the weather event earlier in the year and a better system was required to remove the sand out in time.

He went on to say that if a structure such as pylons were built to carry general traffic there were certain standards required for safety and public liability. It was agreed that there was a requirement to have a system in place for removal of the sand for next year.

Matt Thomson. Nil report.

Jason Froud. People reporting snapper runs prior to bar opening.

Chairman noted that this issue would be looked at with enhancement of VFI program sponsored by SCRIPT.

Mrs Donnelly wished to provide a response to Mr Xanthis regarding the windfarm proposal and noted that many of the 180 signatures collected were not from the Denmark community. There was very little debate on the issue and the decision was based on numbers only.

The Chairman tabled the Coastal Management Specification manual.

The Chairman tabled papers from Mr Ben Cheuen requesting a letter of support from WIMAG for his project proposal "Implications of environmental change and mortality estimates for sustaining fish populations in south coast estuaries". Members agreed to the letter of support.

Meeting closed 3.55pm.

NEXT MEETING: 20 JULY 2005