

DONNELLY RIVER MILL
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

The WA Tourism Commission has appointed the Department of Housing and Works to undertake a study for the Donnelly on the Donnelly River Mill site to determine if any future uses of the site could be considered within budgetary constraints.

To enable the study to be completed a Community Consultation process will be undertaken to allow all concerned individuals and groups to present their ideas on what should be considered for the future of the site.

It has been agreed that the Consultation will occur on Thursday 4 December 2003 between 5.30 and 8.30 PM in the Manjimup Town Hall.

BACKGROUND

The Donnelly River Mill is located within the Shire of Nannup, approximately 250 kilometres south of Perth and is currently vested in the Minister for Tourism.

A brief history of the site is as follows:

- 1949 Donnelly Timber Mill was constructed
- 1978 Mill ceased operations
- 1983 Mill and Donnelly Town site was vested in the Minister for Tourism.
- 1984 Donnelly Town site leased to Briefcase Holdings Pty Ltd by WATC for 50 years (annual lease cost of \$7,500 or 1.5% of turnover if greater).
- 1990 sub lease between Briefcase Holdings and EJ and GD Wearne to develop budget accommodation with Timber Houses.
- 1996 Donnelly Mill listed on the Register of Heritage Places.
- 1997 head lease and sub leases assigned by Briefcase Holdings Pty Ltd to Somerset Holdings Pty Ltd.

Bunnings operated a sawmill at Donnelly River for 28 years until 30 June 1978; at that point timber stocks and mill equipment were progressively removed from the site.

The Donnelly River Mill is situated on Reserve 37707, which comprises 66.7802 hectares of land. The site consists of some 36 cottages a restaurant, general store, school, and various parts of the old Bunnings Timber Mill and several other items.

PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

During 2002 the Department of Housing and Works on a routine maintenance visit to the Mill reported the possible presence of asbestos fibres in deteriorating lagging around pipework within the mill. It was recommended that an asbestos audit be undertaken to identify if indeed a problem existed. The resulting Audit Report confirmed that a serious problem existed both within the building itself and outside.

The Donnelly River Mill site has now been secured and signage has been erected on the enclosure to make it clear that entry is not permitted.

Air Monitoring has been completed. The eventuating report states

“Results show overall that there is negligible, if any, health risk to nearby Donnelly River residents and visitors associated with the presence of asbestos materials while the mill is fenced off and public access is prevented”.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A detailed Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee have been developed and are as follows:

1. To investigate, research and make enquiries relating to the current condition, vesting, future use, asbestos management and ongoing management of the Wheatley Town Site including the proposed Lot 38 Old Mill building and immediate surrounding area.
2. To consult with government, industry, local government and community groups to investigate and evaluate any information that may contribute to the assessment and recommendations by the Steering Committee.
3. To consider and evaluate each submission made through the consultation process on the future use of the Donnelly River Mill. This should include financial viability and the extent of Government funding that would be required to enable and sustain each initiative.
4. To determine the level of residual responsibility (under the Environmental Protection Act and Contaminated Sites Act), which remains with Bunnings from the cessation of their operations and withdrawal from the Wheatley Town Site.
5. To incorporate in the process the Government decision on Tourism that the Western Australian Tourism Commission should divest itself of non-core activities including the managing of Tourism Infrastructure and to refocus on the development, marketing and promotion of the State as a Tourist destination. It will therefore no longer play an active role in the long-term future of the Wheatley Town Site.
6. To assess and prepare a management plan considering the removal of all asbestos cement materials and any other contaminants discovered in this process from within the boundaries of the Wheatley Town Site.

7. To assess the cost of implementing any recommended plan against the proceeds of asset disposal included within that plan. Where there is no disposal or if there is a projected shortfall then financial estimates must be identified.
8. To prepare a report to the Minister for Tourism with recommendations and financial evaluation on the future of the Wheatley Town Site to include its vesting, the management and/or removal of the asbestos cement materials, management and/or removal of any other contaminants at the site.
9. The report to the Minister for Tourism to include a separate report identifying the opportunities for the possible retention, future use or disposal, of the Old Timber Mill.

STRUCTURE/MEMBERSHIP OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee consists of members from

Department of Housing and Works (Chairperson)
WA Tourism Commission (Two representatives)
Department of Planning and Infrastructure (Lands division)
Department of Environmental
Heritage Council of WA
Department of Conservation and Land Management
Shire of Nannup

The Department of Housing and Works acts as Project Managers for the Steering Committee.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Items 2 and 3 of the Terms of Reference clearly indicate that a Community Consultation will occur with this project. It has been agreed that the Consultation will occur on Thursday 4 December 2003 between 5.30 and 8.30 PM in the Manjimup Town Hall.

It should be noted that at this point the Steering Committee have met on 4 occasions to progress issues and consider future options, however it must be clearly indicated that a future use has not been determined and your input into the process could be vital in developing the future use that is chosen as the preferred option by the Steering Committee.

This Community Consultation process will allow all interested people to come along and present any concerns or possible future uses they have for the site.

It would be appreciated if you could complete the attached questionnaire and return in the reply paid envelope to the Department of Housing and Works by no later than 1 December 2003. By completing the questionnaire it will enable the people involved in the Consultation to be aware of the concerns or options considered for the future of the site.

10 November 2003

4B If your proposal could be funded how do you propose the property would be managed and where would the required recurrent operational funding be provided from.

.....
.....
.....

5. Have you visited the Donnelly River Mill in the last 12 months?

Yes No

6. Would a redeveloped mill provide additional Tourism dollars into the Shires of Nannup, Manjimup and Bridgetown?

Yes No

6A If you answered yes to question 5, how do you consider this would occur?

.....
.....
.....

7. Please feel free to provide any additional comments in the section below:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Name:
Address:
.....

Postal Address
(if different to the above)
.....
.....

Home Phone
Work Phone

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire – your comments will be valuable when determining the future of the Donnelly River Mill site.