



**Waratah
Wynyard
Council**



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PLANNERS

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Plan 2016-2026

Camping Issues Paper



About this document

This document is one of the a series of documents prepared for the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Plan prepared for Waratah Wynyard and Circular Head Councils.

Other documents prepared for this plan include the following:

- Demanding Consultation Findings
- Planning Framework And Core Service Levels
- Off-road Trails Issues Paper
- Community meeting/ hall/ public toilets Issues Papers
- Occupancy Agreements Issues Paper
- Master plan documents:
 - Smithton Sports And Recreation Precinct Master Plan
 - Stanley Showground Master Plan
 - Wynyard Recreation Ground And Precinct
 - Frederick Street Recreation Reserve

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Introduction

Overview

The demand for camping, by local residents and visitors (particularly older adults) is high in both Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head. Camping is integral to the local lifestyle and plays to the region's strength. Demand is, however seasonal, and highly influenced by weather.

Freedom Camping is camping in a self-sufficient capacity¹. Most freedom campers use caravans, motor homes, camping trailers or recreational vehicles with the capacity to sustain themselves. Many freedom campers seek low or no cost places to park over-night and minimalist facilities. Freedom campers also stay in campgrounds. In this paper Freedom camping does not necessarily imply free camping, it is about "self contained" camping requiring parking a vehicle and it does not include tent camping. Embodied in the concept of Freedom camping is also the "leave no trace" philosophy (carry in, carry out), and this is about ensuring that all waste is dealt with appropriately.

Campgrounds may cater for a wide range of accommodation options, from non-powered tent sites to full service cabins and suites and motorised homes and commercial facilities.

Low cost and freedom camping sites are generally managed in accordance with the rules and regulations set by individual Councils or public land management agencies such as, Parks and Wildlife Services.

Camping

Research shows that camping is a favoured pastime of residents; further to this they reside in a beautiful location that is attractive to visitors as a camping destination. As a popular pastime camping is a common way for some families and older adults to experience regional Australia. For residents of the Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head, camping is a pastime that impacts on them in three ways:

1. It provides an affordable recreation pastime for residents (such as at the Montagu Camp site).
2. It provides considerable benefits to the local economy through purchasing local goods and services, and
3. It may be impacting on the enjoyment of locals and visitors by damaging foreshore reserves, providing congestion in some public places and impacting on the quiet enjoyment of others wanting to use public destinations especially those of high scenic quality or adjacent to residents or users space.

There is no evidence to suggest that Freedom Camping is impacting negatively on existing campground and accommodation premises. Some of these provide for Freedom camping.

Being a popular camping destination offers specific challenges to any local government that has commercial, crown, forestry and National Parks campsites and has responsibility for land used for low cost or free camping.

¹ * **Self Contained Camping Vehicle:** Self-contained camping vehicle: means a vehicle including a Motor Home /Caravan or Caravan, Campervan, or Recreation Vehicle which can be used for sleeping overnight and contains facilities for cooking, eating, sleeping and washing, and is capable of meeting the ablutionary and sanitary needs of the occupants for a minimum of two days without requiring any external services or discharging any waste.

Demand for camping

Camping as an industry has consistently grown. Since 2006, the number of site nights for domestic visitors in Australia has increased from 37,335,000 up to 44,383,000 in 2013 (43,442,000 in 2014). International camping visitors have increased from 3,970,882 in 2006 to 5,124,774 in 2014²).

Overall 10% of all visitor nights in Australia are spent in caravan parks. With 90% of all caravan parks being in regional areas this represents a significant economic benefit to local communities. The impact of caravan park income is clearly articulated by the Caravan Industry Association of Australia who state that every \$100 of caravan park income returns \$138 of direct benefit through to the local community. Note: this expenditure figure is limited to participating commercial caravan parks. It does not capture the full impact of low cost or free campers who may visit regions.

Research indicates that the impact of free campers is significant and by virtue of the extended length of their stays, they actually contribute more than other classifications of visitors.

The recreational vehicle market is a further indicator as to the potential impact of the camping market. With \$17.44 billion being spent on camping or recreational vehicles in 2013, there is a clear indication of the numbers of people who intend to access caravan parks and regional areas throughout Australia.

Caravan Industry Association of Victoria suggests that production of recreational vehicles in Australia is showing its best growth in 25 years. Unsurprisingly led by the retiree and family groupings there is an evolving market of camping site users.

Local participation in camping

Participation in camping is identified in the resident's survey conducted by @leisure. Residents identified camping areas as a priority amenity. The survey indicated that 4% of Waratah Wynyard residents identified campgrounds as a facility they most used, similarly 23% of Circular Head residents suggested their use of campgrounds was important.

Demand for camping is highly seasonal. In order to manage the rapid influx of campers, particularly during school holidays (Christmas and Easter) a clear policy position and appropriate local laws are essential.

Key issues

Questions about camping that are faced by the Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head Councils are:

1. Should camping and Freedom be encouraged as an accommodation option in North West Tasmania?
2. Should Council be in the business of managing camping areas? If so, how do they manage these costs effectively with the number of other land managers?
3. What strategies can be implemented to offset the preference of campers for low cost/free camping areas compared to commercial facilities?
4. How do Councils manage visitors to the region and ensure that their actions are appropriate and do not conflict with other users or local residents?
5. How do Councils with limited resources manage and enforce Freedom camping and parking rules?
6. What do communities need to do to maximise the contribution made by visitors?
7. What marketing and communication strategies need to be implemented?

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Caravan Industry Association Submission to the Productivity Commission's-Australia's International Tourism Industry

1. Should camping be encouraged in Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head?

Encourage camping for recreation and economic benefit

@leisure believes there is a good business case to encourage camping, as it offers healthy recreational opportunities, environmental education, encourages physical and social activity and contributes to enhanced wellbeing, and camping has the capacity to deliver good financial return and economic benefits to destination communities.

Within the Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head Region there are disparate views about Freedom camping. Local traders see campers as a positive boost for the local economy. Some recreation reserves are encouraging Freedom campers and therefore it is assumed that they are benefiting from these.

Some residents view camp users as free loading depositors of rubbish taking advantage of their area, and degrading the local environment.

These divergent views with regard to the economic benefits or cost of freedom campers are not unique to residents of Waratah Wynyard and Circular Head. In 2014, the New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) determined that:

- Freedom campers spend more per trip to New Zealand than the average visitor.
- Freedom campers to New Zealand spend about \$260 million per year or about \$4,880 per person on average, compared to visitors who used other forms of accommodation spent \$2,814 per person.
- The greater spending is by virtue of them spending more time in the

country. Their average stay is 48 days on average 30 days longer than other tourists.

- What is not being spent on accommodation is being used to purchase food, retail goods and transport.

If land managers in North West Tasmania could guarantee the quality of the stay experience, at a price point that recovers the costs. It is possible that considerable additional value will come from managing and maintaining campsites and encouraging people to access local goods and services.

There is a clear benefit of the Council promoting Freedom camping on their terms and in locations that are least likely to impact on others and that are environmentally sustainable.

Recommended directions

1. Encourage and promote camping as a recreation activity that benefits the community in areas that are appropriate and sustainable.
2. Encourage others to enhance the condition, quality and services at campgrounds and maximise the potential value of this activity.
3. Promote Freedom camping on Council's terms and in locations that are least likely to impact on others and that are environmentally sustainable.

2. Who provides camping; is it the core business of Local Government?

Camping areas are currently the domain of many stakeholders. A strategic and consistent approach to both the provision and management of sites could reduce costs, provide clarity about camping opportunities and ensure a better service.

Local Government has a role to play in the management of camping because of the potential benefits to its ratepayers, and because they own or manage campground or land where camping is allowed. The role of local government needs to be defined, but should involve strategic planning and marketing. Individual Councils may or may not be involved in the direct operation of sites or have a role to play in managing the use of public land by freedom campers. A consistent level of service at campsites within Council areas would be ideal.

Opportunities to establish partnerships between all levels of government, interest groups and the commercial sector, should be considered, such as:

1. Managing all public land camp sites, (or categories of) together under the one entity at a consistent level of service
2. Outsourcing campground management.
3. Establishing processes that are focussed on equity of usage have clear objectives, levels of service that acknowledge /complement services provided by commercial operators.

In recent years managers of forest areas have determined they are not in the business of recreation and most forest campsites have been transferred to the control of national parks.

In other states there is evidence of well-run campgrounds on public land being able to provide a return to cover the operational costs of the grounds as well as maintain associated

public reserves. A similar model could be explored.

Councils role

Even though there are clear economic benefits of Freedom camping the Councils do not consider they can resource strategic planning, development or management of campsites and do not believe they should influence or compete with the private sector or parks in delivering camping. Council do believe however they have a role in regulating where freedom camping should occur. There are also clear benefits of the Councils' promoting Freedom Camping where it is beneficial and sustainable to do so.

The Council's own or manage a number of parcels of land where camping is permitted or encouraged, including campgrounds. Some of these are in important strategic locations and generally speaking it is advisable that these be retained in public ownership, and If the Councils do not wish to manage campgrounds directly, that they are leased to operators that can manage the sites to Councils' satisfaction and deliver a service that benefits the users and the local community.

- Protect campground sites in public ownership where these are situated on the foreshore and in other scenic or important strategic locations, including those leased to private operators.
- Lease campgrounds to operators that can manage sites to Councils' satisfaction and deliver a service that benefits the users and the local community.
- Promote camping and freedom camping where this activity is sympathetic to environmental values and is sustainable.
- Provide dump points if and where these are deemed necessary.

Recommended directions

4. Encourage the Cradle Coast Authority to engage with National Parks, Forestry, commercial providers, and the crown to develop a model where camping facilities are marketed, developed and managed collectively throughout the region.
5. Establish guidelines for sites for freedom campers to park and stay, and identify selected suitable sites.
6. The Council's role in camping is:
 - Not to directly operate camping grounds, although Council may manage public land where camping occurs.
 - Regulating where camping and freedom camping should occur.

What infrastructure should be provided to support campers?

The infrastructure required by freedom campers is not complex. Generally speaking:

1. Basic Freedom campers require:
 - a) Parking areas for a motor homes/campervan vehicles and possibly access to public toilet
 - b) Capacity to dispose of general garbage, human waste and grey water.
2. Serviced camping areas with space for large motor home /campervan vehicles include:
 - a) Sites with a caretaker and additional amenities as are commonly available in caravan parks such as, picnic tables, power, indoor or outdoor cooking facilities, hot shower and toilets, shelter, laundry.
 - b) Parks with higher levels of facilities such as shop/ café, swimming pool, indoor recreation games room, children's playground, jumping castle etc.

For campground the levels of service may be:

1. Non-powered sites for tents or camper trailers with toilet only, or toilet and shower and free parking. May have fireplace.
2. Modest serviced campgrounds such as: picnic tables, power, indoor or outdoor cooking facilities, hot shower and toilets, shelter, laundry, suitable for tent, trailer or caravan.
3. Higher standard serviced campgrounds with permanent accommodation such as cabins, and optional additional recreation amenities such as shop/ café, swimming pool, indoor recreation games room, children's playground, jumping castle etc.

Campgrounds with the higher levels of service should strictly be the domain of commercial camping operators.

Partnerships should be established with stakeholders and or local communities to enforce appropriate use of camping areas and minimise potential illegal waste disposal.

The strategic location of waste disposal services at commercial or community hubs may encourage interaction with the community.

The Shire of Carnarvon and the Town of Port Hedland in Western Australia have both located dump points at key community sites (aquatic centre and race course). Both of these locations offer easy access to major shopping areas.

Recommended directions

7. Review the strategic location of campgrounds and freedom camping areas (in conjunction with the Cradle Coast Authority, National Parks and local tourism associations) to ascertain whether or not there are sufficient facilities, and in strategic nodes, to provide benefits to the local community.
8. Where beneficial, encourage partnerships with the private sector to manage and promote campgrounds and freedom camping areas.

3. Managing access to sites to minimise damage and conflict with other users

Camping areas need to be managed and their capacity monitored if problems are to be avoided. A holistic approach to the management of camping areas needs to be considered.

Clear parameters are needed in the way of policy principles and regulations/local laws.

Surveillance and enforcement of rules and regulations are paramount to ensuring that sites are not overcrowded and subsequently damaged. To achieve this it is essential that:

- Parameters are developed to define access to and use of specific areas.
- A bookings or notifications process is installed to ensure sites are respected and fees are paid.
- Signage and capacity of sites are enforced to ensure protection of the environment and quiet enjoyment of all users.
- Day use of parking areas also requires regulation and enforcement.

Policy principles and local laws (Freedom Camping)

The policy position or local laws of Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head Councils regarding the management of recreational or camping areas is not clear. Waratah Wynyard have included camping as part of Policy "PR006-Management of Public Reserves Policy" the policy is limited to the provision of directions on parking times in signposted areas.

South Australian Parks have adopted a set of policy principles (provided in Attachment 3.) these provide a focussed management approach for all parties and allow for the development of commercial campgrounds to be developed where demand exists. The policy recognises the value of the caravan park industry and identifies that no/low cost

or free camping areas represent a risk to commercial operators.

A principles based approach similar to the NZ Freedom Camping Act 2011 provides a clear vision for both commercial camping operators, local government authorities and parks management organisations.

The Freedom Camping Act sought to find a balance between the European "freedom to roam" position with the realisation that freedom camping can cause problems for local residents.

A major problem of freedom camping identified in New Zealand was the inconsistent application and enforcement of the laws and regulations by government agencies.

The locations that can be used for camping are also clearly defined within the policy.

A State Government policy on free camping would be advantageous; alternatively, a partnership or a Cradle Coast regional position would be desirable.

A key element of any policy position could follow the examples of New Zealand where free campers are limited in their tenure at sites (generally three days). Due to the limited space in WW and CH this may be best reduced to two days) Absolute clarity is specified about the attributes of a vehicle to leave no trace. See Definition of "self containment" on the previous page.. In New Zealand self contained vehicles need to be registered as such to ensure there are no health and safety implications of this style of camping. This approach restricts environmental damage and areas being utilised for long periods of time at little or no cost.

In the short term the selection of areas for freedom camping should be based on clear policy principles.

The Tasman Regional Council in NZ (Freedom Camping Bylaw 2011-Amended in December 2013) is very clear with regard to its policy position on camping. The Council's policy clearly defines between registered and non-registered camping areas, stipulating beyond

reasonable doubt that non-registered camping areas are only to be used by vehicles that are self-contained with three days capacity for drinking water, toilet waste or grey water.

The locations that can be used for camping are also clearly defined within the policy. For example:

"Freedom Camping is prohibited on the following public places:

- *Within 500 metres of any "no camping," signs on Tasman District Council controlled land.*
- *Any formed roadway*
- *The river side of any stopbank except the area in the vicinity of the State Highway Bridge at Waitapu, Golden Bay".*

(The places where camping is prohibited is more extensive in the policy, the above examples were used to show how prescriptive a policy can be.)

Of similar importance to the management of overnight camping is daytime stopping or parking at tourist areas.

In WW and CH the key issues appear to be parking on foreshores that are public reserves especially the Stanley Foreshores, Smithton Wharf and Boat Harbour. These may:

- a) Affect the condition of the reserve – (ie damage to vegetation and bank / foredune erosion)
- b) Lead to contamination of the area (ie with effluent if the vehicles are not fully self-contained)
- c) Obscure views of attractions/ scenery / landmarks
- d) Take up public space reserved or used for recreation – ie children playing, people picnicking, walking etc.
- e) Affect the quiet enjoyment of the area by pedestrians, visitors, users of the area or neighbouring residents
- f) Create traffic congestions/ obstruction in already tight local roads etc.

Boat Harbour has private operators intending to establish in the locality.

With the potential loss of Wynyard Showground as a freedom camping site another location may need to be found in Wynyard.

Council should consider designating locations for freedom camping:

- adjacent to (within 1 km of) but not at scenic attractions and visitor destinations
- in localities without campgrounds or accommodation premises offering freedom camping
- adjacent to a river or coastal foreshores that don't conflict with public use
- not in a residential area
- not in a park or reserve used for recreation – where children play, people walk, picnic etc.
- with easy access for and suitable for the manoeuvring of large vehicles, and not likely to cause traffic congestion
- on the hinterland side of any road along a foreshore
- not between the closest roadway and within any view shed of a scenic headland, coast or natural feature, historic or visitor destination
- within a short walk or drive of a commercial facility
- with a suitable surface for parking – (ie not managed sports turf or in conservation areas)
- serviced by an off road trail
- already served by a dump point
- not car parks designated for boat trailers or other non-self-contained vehicles in the hours required
- in townships in reasonable proximity to retail areas, points of interest and amenities
- for vehicles that are self-contained
- that specify parking hours that minimise conflict with other users: (for example after 9pm and before 7am)
- that restrict vehicles staying more than two nights stay in the designated area.
- Not in close proximity to existing commercial caravan/camping operations

Recommended directions

9. Establish policy principles concerning the site selection, management and enforcement of sites suitable for campgrounds and freedom camping considering suggestions above.
10. Evaluate the following site for freedom camping:
 - Smithton: Lee Reserve.
 - Stanley: One area (without trees) on the south side of Green Hills Road.
 - Boat Harbour Beach: a small number of sites west along Port Rd.
 - Sisters Beach: along Honey Suckle Ave
11. Exclude prime foreshore, pedestrian and scenic locations from freedom camping areas, opting instead for areas that are close by to but do not obscure attractions.
12. Introduce a local law and install signage to control the movement and parking of camping vehicles.
13. Investigate design options for select designated car parks to make these more functional for large camper vehicles.

Pricing of campsites

Fees for commercial and non-commercial campgrounds vary greatly depending on the local site manager. Even within freedom camping sites there is a lack of uniformity in the cost of an overnight stay. What is required is a consistent and considered level of cost recovery.

A sliding scale of fees from – nothing for some freedom camping parking in select sites with no use of facilities, to freedom camping parking sites with access to some or all facilities should be considered. Currently Council camping charges fluctuate from nil to \$5.00 per person per night. A long-term six monthly rental of a site at the Montague Recreation Reserve is only approximately \$2.50 per night (not a per person fee). This undervalues the experience. The Montague

Recreation Reserve camping area currently has an onsite caretaker during the season. The \$30,000 cost for the caretaker would not be recoverable with the current fee structure.

User groups continue to push for free or low fee options and the popularity of sites is often driven by affordability in Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head. National Parks currently have a permit system for less than \$10 per night.

At traditional commercial campgrounds individuals could expect to pay upward of \$30 for a site and even \$60.00 per night. In regional areas \$32-35 is an average for powered sites with basic amenities. This increases where there is demand.

The minimum fee for an unpowered site along the Great Ocean Rd in Victoria is \$33 a night.

A previously stated position of South Australian Parks is that stakeholders involved with the management of parks or open space should consider all obligations under the Competition Agreement or Competitive Neutrality and prepare full cost attribution model to determine a fair market price.

Duration of stay

In the Tasman Regional Council area, tenure for users of freedom camping sites is two nights out of every four weeks, following which campers must move on a distance of not less than 1 km. If applied in North West Tasmania, with current demand this could be extended outside the main peak summer season.

For campgrounds the price often determines that people don't stay long. In peak periods most campgrounds have a minimum of a week stay, and some a maximum stay.

The three or more month's tenure possible at Council sites such as Montague Recreation Reserve is inequitable. Given the quality of the area and its low cost it would be a positive option to encourage a broader range of users to the site.

In some regional areas a maximum number of permits are let for a limited number of spaces

and permits are sold on line for specific days. This manages carrying capacity.

This clear approach applied consistently across all sites would be a strong advancement in the management of Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head camping areas.

However due the number of options for freedom camping in Parks land and in recreation reserves such as (the Wynyard and Stanley Showgrounds, Irishtown Community Centre etc.) a permit system without the support of an education staff member may not be warranted at this time. Once designating a selection of freedom camping sites Council should seek feedback before introducing additional management.

Recommended directions

14. Consider enhancing the quality of services and infrastructure at campgrounds and increasing the price for serviced areas.
15. Implement a new management approach at Montague Recreation Area that encourages more people to experience the space at an increased price.
16. Introduce a selection of freedom camping spaces for self contained vehicles with conditions, including a maximum stay and seek feedback on these arrangements.

4. Enforcement

Enforcement of rules and regulations is possible if there is clarity and consistency, and that information about the areas is well publicised. Similarly it is possible to discourage any abuse of conditions by having a level of fines that are appropriate but sufficient. The current position of the Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head Councils is that there are limited resources available to:

- Collect fees
- Enforce rules
- Observe behaviour
- Educate visitors
- Promote the acceptable behaviour
- Monitor visitor numbers at all sites.

Adherence to rules and regulations need to be administered, particularly with regard to:

- Length of stay at any particular site
- Specifications of vehicle (are they really self-contained)
- Number of people at particular sites
- Proper disposal of rubbish, human waste and grey water
- Camping/parking in the correct locations.

By providing clear guidelines and signage alongside a commitment to monitor the behaviours of visitors it is possible and appropriate for enforcement of fines for those who transgress.

A strategy of developing partnerships and empowering stakeholders to monitor the rules and regulations will be beneficial to all stakeholders in the Waratah/Wynyard and Circular Head region.

Councils may be able to include enforcement into parking or park ranger duties for example.

Recommended directions

17. Pursue the development of a partnership with stakeholders to manage campgrounds and freedom camping areas.
18. Produce information packages and install signage to ensure all visitors and residents are informed of rules and regulations for each camping site.

5. What do communities need to do to maximise the contribution made by visitors camping?

A study of self-accommodating visitors to North West Tasmania³ identified that every self-accommodating visitor will spend 19 days in North West Tasmania. They will have a preference for free camping and have a flexible schedule, influenced by the weather and events. They will plot their journey using highlighter pens and as professional people or technical specialists they are also likely to have computer knowledge. It is imperative that visitors are provided with one really good 'one-stop-shop' of information in order to discover:

- Camp site options
- Local support services, attractions and events
- What they need to know about areas they are proposing to access

The strategic location of support services such as dump sites, water points and free parking areas are important in connecting these travellers with local services and opportunities to buy local products.

The development of marketing and communication should occur in conjunction with neighbouring Councils to ensure that benefits follow the flow of campers.

It is important that Councils communicate the value of freedom and other camping to residents so that they are welcoming to these visitors.

In other regional areas informal overflow camping sites operate during peak season. In Kununurra in WA for example, the Agricultural Society has historically been able

to operate as an overflow site (for big rigs and pets).

Income generated from the caravan site provides a significant subsidy to the annual Agricultural Society Show. In Irish Town the Recreation Reserve has been used for meetings of Freedom campers.

There may also be opportunities for some local halls to be used as hubs for small community enterprises offering opportunities for Freedom campers.

Circular Head Council is concerned at the cost of providing a caretaker at one of its campgrounds.

An alternative approach could be to provide strategic investment in campgrounds and attract greater use; higher paying customers, and potentially some associated commercial services or investment. Based on current demand and relatively low occupancy, charging market rates should generate a surplus.

One option is to investigate packaging multiple public sites. A regional approach to operating, marketing, maintaining and improving of public reserves and camping areas is a concept that should be encouraged.

An example of the North Coast Holiday Parks is provided in Attachment 4.

Recommended directions

19. Encourage local committee and clubs to encourage freedom camping at select local halls and recreation reserves (See also Halls and public toilets issues paper).
20. Encourage campers to use local services by locating dump and water points adjacent to commercial outlets and service centres.
21. Ensure community group's residents and clubs are educated in value of visitors to the region.
22. Review (in conjunction with the Cradle Coast Authority, National

³ "Off the Beaten Path- Tracking Self-Accommodating Visitors in North West Tasmania-July 2011 Institute for Regional Development and Cradle Coast Authority")

Parks and local tourism Associations) the strategic location of campgrounds, and freedom camping areas.

23. Establish marketing and communication strategies that engage with both current and prospective visitors to North West Tasmania.

6. Marketing of camping and communication with campers

Marketing of camping and communication with campers is imperative if local economies are going to benefit from visitors to their region.

Presently there is no comprehensive one stop shop for information about camping in the NW of Tasmania—nor support services, dump points parking etc. Information about campgrounds on Councils' websites is particularly poor.

Council should work with all other accommodation providers, including Parks and the industry bodies such as RV Tasmania to provide a comprehensive guide to camping and all accommodation options and provide a suite of specific information relevant to WHY.

Councils should provide information about public and private camping opportunities.

Technology should be embraced as a tool to support camping. The Camps app. appears to be the best current resource about campgrounds in North West Tasmania. Technology in the form of a smart phone could be used for:

1. Booking/reserving of sites (therefore regulating the number of visitors).
2. Payment of fees and charges-direct debit/pre-payment.
3. Receipting of payments (evidence of payment, necessary to avoid fines enforcement).
4. Register of visitors in camping areas (risk mitigation at times of natural disaster)
5. Evidence of length of tenure at a specific site.
6. Provision of contact list (local services, government agencies etc.)
7. Monitoring of site usage data.

Recommended directions

24. Work with industry partners to promote camping as a recreational activity, and Freedom camping, within the municipalities of Waratah Wynyard and Circular Head (all camping opportunities regardless of land ownership)
25. Actively promote local retail, visitor services, events and attractions to campers.

26. Provide information to residents, committees and clubs outlining the value of freedom camping, and how local communities can benefit from the use of local services and facilities.
27. Where freedom camping is promoted outline the nearest available shops and restaurants and the other attractions, and utilise electronic media for promotional and informational dissemination and regulatory processes.

7. Summary of Recommendations

1. Encourage and promote camping as a recreation activity that benefits the community in areas that are appropriate and sustainable. 6
2. Encourage others to enhance the condition, quality and services at campgrounds and maximise the potential value of this activity. 6
3. Promote Freedom camping on Council's terms and in locations that are least likely to impact on others and that are environmentally sustainable. 6
4. Encourage the Cradle Coast Authority to engage with National Parks, Forestry, commercial providers, and the crown to develop a model where camping facilities are marketed, developed and managed collectively throughout the region. 7
5. Establish guidelines for sites for freedom campers to park and stay, and identify selected suitable sites. 7
6. The Council's role in camping is: 7
 - Not to directly operate camping grounds, although Council may manage public land where camping occurs. 7
 - Regulating where camping and freedom camping should occur. 7
 - Protect campground sites in public ownership where these are situated on the foreshore and in other scenic or important strategic locations, including those leased to private operators. 7
 - Lease campgrounds to operators that can manage sites to Councils' satisfaction and deliver a service that benefits the users and the local community. 7
 - Promote camping and freedom camping where this activity is sympathetic to environmental values and is sustainable. 7
 - Provide dump points if and where these are deemed necessary. 7
7. Review the strategic location of campgrounds and freedom camping areas (in conjunction with the Cradle Coast Authority, National Parks and local tourism associations) to ascertain whether or not there are sufficient facilities, and in strategic nodes, to provide benefits to the local community. 8
8. Where beneficial, encourage partnerships with the private sector to manage and promote campgrounds and freedom camping areas. 8
9. Establish policy principles concerning the site selection, management and enforcement of sites suitable for campgrounds and freedom camping considering suggestions above. 11
10. Evaluate the following site for freedom camping: • Smithton: Lee Reserve. • Stanley: One area (without trees) on the south side of Green Hills Road. • Boat Harbour Beach: a small number of sites west along Port Rd. • Sisters Beach: along Honey Suckle Ave 11
11. Exclude prime foreshore, pedestrian and scenic locations from freedom camping areas, opting instead for areas that are close by to but do not obscure attractions. 11
12. Introduce a local law and install signage to control the movement and parking of camping vehicles. 11

13. Investigate design options for select designated car parks to make these more functional for large camper vehicles. 11
14. Consider enhancing the quality of services and infrastructure at campgrounds and increasing the price for serviced areas. 12
15. Implement a new management approach at Montague Recreation Area that encourages more people to experience the space at an increased price. 12
16. Introduce a selection of freedom camping spaces for self contained vehicles with conditions, including a maximum stay and seek feedback on these arrangements. 12
17. Pursue the development of a partnership with stakeholders to manage campgrounds and freedom camping areas. 13
18. Produce information packages and install signage to ensure all visitors and residents are informed of rules and regulations for each camping site. 13
19. Encourage local committee and clubs to encourage freedom camping at select local halls and recreation reserves (See also Halls and public toilets issues paper). 14
20. Encourage campers to use local services by locating dump and water points adjacent to commercial outlets and service centres. 14
21. Ensure community group's residents and clubs are educated in value of visitors to the region. 14
22. Review (in conjunction with the Cradle Coast Authority, National Parks and local tourism Associations) the strategic location of campgrounds, and freedom camping areas. 14
23. Establish marketing and communication strategies that engage with both current and prospective visitors to North West Tasmania. 15
24. Work with industry partners to promote camping as a recreational activity, and Freedom camping, within the municipalities of Waratah Wynyard and Circular Head (all camping opportunities regardless of land ownership) 16
25. Actively promote local retail, visitor services, events and attractions to campers. 16
26. Provide information to residents, committees and clubs outlining the value of freedom camping, and how local communities can benefit from the use of local services and facilities. 16
27. Where freedom camping is promoted outline the nearest available shops and restaurants and the other attractions, and utilise electronic media for promotional and informational dissemination and regulatory processes. 16

8. Attachments

Attachment 1. Known camp sites in Waratah Wynyard and Circular Head Councils

Camping facilities available in Waratah Wynyard and Circular Head Councils are as follows:

Reserve/ Facility Name	Location/ Address	Council Area	Owner / manager	Facilities
Arthur Pieman Conservation Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manuka Campground 	Arthur River Tasmania (1km north of Arthur River)	Circular Head	Parks and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable for everything (tents to big rigs) Water available (needs to be boiled) Bring firewood and toilets Mobile phones coverage Tents and Caravans sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peppermint Campground 	Arthur River Tasmania	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tents Cold showers Water (needs to be boiled) Open fire- Bring firewood Toilets Mobile phone coverage Telephone Not suitable for caravans or mobile home and toilets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prickly Wattles Campground 	Arthur River Tasmania	Circular Head		Suitable for Caravans, tents and big rigs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water (needs to be boiled) Bring firewood and toilets Pets allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson Bay Campground 	Arthur River Tasmania	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-sufficient campers only Bring drinking water, firewood, fire pot and toilet Tents and caravans allowed Dump point
Sandy Cape Camping area	Arthur River Tasmania	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-equipped experienced 4 WD only Firewood drinking water and toilet
Arthur River Cabin Park Arthur River Rd	Arthur River Tasmania	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooking facilities Power tents Pet allowed

Black River Campground	East of Stanley (off Bass Highway)	Circular Head	Crown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pit toilets • No drinking water • Suitable for big rigs, campervans and tents • Bring drinking water, firewood and toilet
Crayfish Creek Van & Cabin Park	Bass Highway Crayfish Creek Tas 7321	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Cabins, from luxury spa to budget with ensuites • 5 Onsite vans • Powered serviced sites & unpowered tent sites • Playground • Kiosk • Laundrette • Beach and creek access • Campers Kitchen • Outdoor Gas BBQs
Green Point Campground	Green Point Beach, Marawah (green point Rd and Beach Rd)	Circular Head	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets, Picnic Area, BBQ • Children's playground • Water (boiling recommended) • Ocean front • Pets allowed • Accessible facilities • Outside shower • Mobile phone coverage • Tents and caravan sites
Julius River Forest Reserve	10 km east of Kannunah Bridge	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tents and caravans • Toilets at picnic ground
Julius River Forrest Camping Area	Tarkine Drive	Circular Head	Forestry ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located near Julius River picnic area • BBQ and Toilets located at picnic area • Six gravelled sites •
Montegu Camping Ground	Old Port Road Montegu (15 kms west Smithton)	Circular Head	Crown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping peak and off peak (different rates apply) • Site closed for maintenance October each year • Caretaker on site between Sept and May • Reservations can be made for sites • Boating, swimming, fishing options • Suitable for motor homes campervans and tents • Bring drinking water and fire wood • Brochure available with clear guidelines
Peggs Beach Campground Off Bass Highway, Peggs Beach		Circular Head	Crown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small area, limited sites • Popular with locals • Natural shade • Water (should be boiled) • Shower cubicles for solar showers

Rocky Cape Tavern/Roadhouse Bass Highway, Rocky Cape		Circular Head	Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited powered sites (power and water sites) Un-limited non-powered sites Showers / laundry General store / Post Office Dump point Fifth wheeler sites available
Smithton River Breeze Caravan and Cabin Park	Montegu Road, Smithton Tasmania	Circular Head	Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Powered sites and full Laundry facilities amenities Cabin accommodation BBQ
Stanley Cabin & Tourist Park	Wharf Road Stanley Tasmania	Circular Head	Crown leased to private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26 Cabins 6 Villas 4 self catering motel style units Hostel 65 Powered sites 20 Tent sites Wi-fi Free electric BBQs Campers kitchen Children's playground Fully equipped games room Laundry Conference facilities Campers kitchen (with Foxtel)
Stanley Recreation Ground	Main Street, Stanley Tasmania	Circular Head	Crown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of Recreation Ground assigned to fully self-contained recreational vehicles Walking distance Stanley Town Centre Fees are collected by the site manager
Brickmakers Park – Rest Area	40 km west of Wynyard	Circular Head		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Toilets Camp ground Caravans Open fire Mobile coverage
Tall Timbers Resort (Including Freedom camping Parking)	Scotchtown Road Smithton	Circular Head	Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully self-contained vehicles only Seasonal Oct to May each year Maximum stay 72 hours in 14 days consecutive period Extensive facilities available as part of main resort
Beach Retreat Tourist park, Wynyard	30 B Old bass Hwy, Wynyard	Waratah / Wynyard		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tents Cooking facilities Powered sites Pets allowed Cafe

Fossey River Rest Area	38 km north of Tullah	Waratah / Wynyard		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Suitable for big rigs • Mobile coverage • Pets allowed • Caravans
Hellyer Gorge Rest Area	2 kms south of Yolla	Waratah / Wynyard	Council/ State Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Shade • Picnic tables • Big rigs • Mobile phone coverage • Pets allowed • Caravans sites
Leisure Ville Wynyard 7325	145 Old Bass Highway	Waratah / Wynyard		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Villa units with ensuites • 15 to 20 Powered sites • Free BBQs • Villas have full cooking facilities • Games room • Tennis area • Playground • 4 Tent sites • Cabins with ensuites, • Indoor heated pool and spa • Wireless internet • Opposite beach • Licensed café • Cabins have a microwave and a two hotplate stovette
Savage River Regional Reserve Camp Site Waratah, Corinna Road		Waratah / Wynyard	Park s?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote and relatively inaccessible • Outdoor adventure activities (fishing, rafting, canoeing, etc)
Somerset Beachside Cabin & Caravan Park	Bass Highway, Somerset 7322 Incorporating Two Oaks Cafe	Waratah / Wynyard	Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable for caravans tents • 10 Self contained cabins • 40 Powered sites • 80 Tent sites • Camp kitchen • Cooking facilities • Pet friendly
Waratah camping Ground	Behind Council offices Waratah	Waratah / Wynyard	Crown leased by Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible facilities • Shower/Toilets • Mobile phone coverage • Tents and caravans sites • 30 campsites • 10 powered sites • Suitable for big rigs • Water • Pets allowed • Picnic tables • Electric BBQ's • Laundry

Wynyard Showground	Jackson Street Wynyard Tasmania	Waratah / Wynyard	Crown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can accommodate big rigs • No power • Services limited (showers, picnics, toilets BBQ's etc.) • Some rubbish bins • Stays limited to 24 hours • Pets allowed • Mobile reception • Caravans • Self-contained motorhomes • Not available during sporting or show events.
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Attachment 2. Known dump sites for freedom campers

Location	Address
Wynyard	Waratah Wynyard Council Transfer station, Goldie Street Wynyard
Arthur River	Green Point Look out Airey Street South of the river in Gardiner Street Nelson Bay campground
Smithton	West side Duck River Bridge - West Esplanade
Sisters Beach	Corner Honeysuckle Avenue and Comming Street behind Fire Station
Waratah	Annie Street
Stanley	Wharf Road South of Stanley Cabin and Tourist Park entrance, adjacent to Tatloes Beach public toilets

Attachment 3. Principles adopted from South Australian Parks

The following principles adopted from South Australian Parks may provide a more focussed management approach for all parties and allow for the development of commercial campgrounds to be developed where demand exists.

Compliance—All commercial and non-commercial caravan and camping ground operators (including Councils) should operate within the same regulatory requirements.

Distance from Commercial Parks-Free and low cost camping areas should only be established at distances of more than 20 kms from existing commercial facilities.

Establishment for Overflows-The provision of free or low cost camping at distances of less than 20 kms or within Town limits should only be considered when there is a lack of privately owned facilities i.e. within 20 kms or when peak demand calls for temporary facilities.

National Competition Policy and Competitive Neutrality-Councils or Governments who establish camping facilities within Town limits or where a facility already exists should consider their obligations under the Competition Agreement or Competitive Neutrality, a full cost attribution model should be used to determine a fair market price.

Self-Containment—Where compliant camping areas are established and designated for fully self-contained vehicles only, strict monitoring should occur, any vehicles that are not fully self-contained should be moved on immediately.

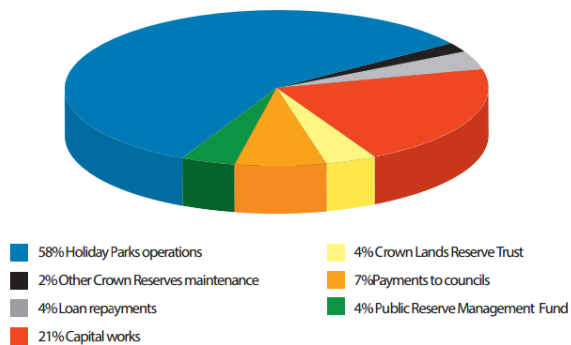
Enforcement – Any illegal camping should be monitored by the local community and Councils. Illegal campers should be directed to use established compliant facilities.

Attachment 4. North Coast Holiday Parks

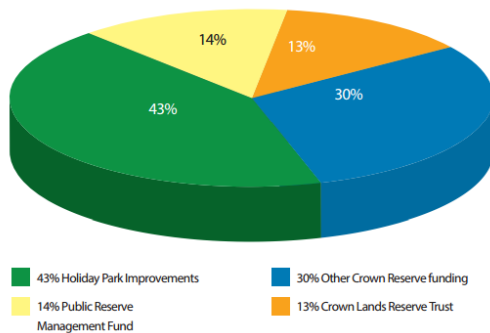
North Coast Holiday Parks manage 32 Crown Reserves covering approximately 280 hectares of highly valued sensitive coastal environments. Included within these reserves are 23 holiday parks covering an area of 110 hectares, and approximately 170 hectares of other Crown Reserves consisting of expansive areas of coastal dunes, littoral rainforests, riparian zones and estuarine foreshores.

How funds are expended, profit distributed and sources of funds are shown below.

Expenditure of Funds (\$)



Profit Distribution



Sources of Funding (\$)

