



Pride in our Place **Port Geographe**

**A report to the Busselton City and
residents of Port Geographe, by the Port
Geographe Landowners Association Inc
outlining areas for improvements to our
community**

September 2018

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Forward

This review by the Port Geographe Landowners Association follows our first report in 2015 entitled *Pride in our Community*, which addressed deficiencies in the maintenance of landscapes, parks, gardens and streets in Port Geographe.

At that time residential development had stalled for several reasons, including a general economic slow-down, the demise of the then-developer, some adverse (and unjustified) environmental grumblings, and the groyne reconfiguration which temporarily turned the centre-piece of our precinct into an industrial site.

Consequently further landscaping after the original developments received a low priority, and shabbiness began to appear. This motivated PGLOA to compile *Pride in Our Community*.

Since 2015 there has been a resurgence in residential construction, both in the early established areas, and in the new Newport development of Aigle Royal.

We are pleased to say that some of the items identified in 2015 were taken up by the City. In this 2018 review we comment on these advances. But primarily we look at new initiatives along with some forgotten items.

Back in 2015 we noted that a sum of \$560,000 resided in the Port Geographe Development Fund (PGDF). Today it is swelled to around \$1.455M with the return by the Administrator of bonds placed by the previous developer. PGLOA understands the PGDF will improve maintenance and renew unfinished parks and gardens and general amenities in the Port Geographe precinct. We continue to remind everyone that our Special Area Rate (SAR) is not applied to parks and gardens, as it is in other SAR areas in the City, but goes to waterways and coastal management around a major community asset which everybody can use. We believe this is untenable in the long-term.

Our long-running campaign over the unfairness of the SAR has resulted in the City reinstating the community contribution of 25% of the SAR collection. That contribution now goes into the PGDF for broader community issues in Port Geographe. While this is welcome it does not offset the need for a fairer collection system towards coastal and waterways maintenance.

The 2018-19 City Budget allocates \$886,000 to new landscaping in the precinct. To what extent this budget allocation is an increment above what we would expect from normal entitlements from standard rates, is not clear.

This report is issued to the City of Busselton and the landowners of Port Geographe.

We expect it will help focus and expedite the priorities perceived by the ratepayers of Port Geographe.

The individual projects are described below from west to east, in no implied order of priority.

Recreational Area – Western Port Entry

There is a need to bring the recreational area at the end of Freycinet Drive on the western side of the Port Geographe entry channel, up to the standard of the complementary facility the end of Spinnaker Drive, on the Eastern Entrance. The latter area has children’s play equipment, BBQs, and several shaded benches. It is a very popular community amenity.



The Western Entrance has a solitary shelter with no tables or seating. We are informed by the City that two gas barbecues are proposed for this area, but the installation has been stalled for some reason.

This is a popular public facility that is well used in all seasons of the year.

Old Western Groyne and Bathers Beach

The line of coffee-rock boulders adjacent to the carpark at the northern end of Freycinet Drive is part of the old western groyne. Following our suggestion, we welcome the installation of a high-quality footpath between the car park and the boulder line, which has certainly enhanced the area.



However the line of boulders still looks messy, as it collects rubbish and weeds. It requires annual spraying to control the weeds.

The charming sheltered safe sandy beach adjacent to the Freycinet carpark is becoming increasingly popular with the community, especially for senior citizens and families with young children. It is complementary to the highly-popular lagoon beach on the eastern entry.

Yet the beach is difficult to access, and the scrub behind the beach is unkempt and a potential haven for snakes. Granted, some coffee rock installed to protect the infrastructure before the reconfiguration of the entrance has now been removed, but more enhancements are required.

A gently-sloping wooden ramp of sufficient width to permit wheel chair access is recommended.

There is no longer a requirement for vegetation like the existing bull-rushes and other volunteer bushes to stabilize and protect the embankment behind the beach.

The vegetation should be removed and properly landscaped. Some lawn areas would probably be welcomed by the adjacent residents, who would happily maintain them.

Wood Waste at Sensations Café

The unsightly and ineffective spread of woodchips in front of Sensation Cafe figured prominently in our 2015 Report. It still remains the same. This area lies on Council ground. We understand the owner of the Cafe is prepared to maintain the area once it is enhanced. Efforts by PGLOA to get the City Council to engage with the owner of the cafe have been unsuccessful.



As bore water is becoming available, and the area is already reticulated. We request the wood waste be removed so the area be turned into grass, and be maintained by the City.

Burgee Close

In 2015 we noted that the area along the canal wall adjacent to the eastern abutment of the footbridge needs landscaping. Although there has been considerable residential development in this specific area, nothing has happened. But we are pleased to note this item is included the 2018-19 Budget, and this area will be landscaped and reticulated.



Street Lights

There remains a general problem with faulty street lights. We understand this is ultimately the City's responsibility, but is done by Western Power. However Western Power will not maintain street lights that are not to their specifications. And it seems that some of the street lighting in Port Geographe was not installed to Western Power standards.

Frequent occurrences of dead-lights remain unattended for many months, despite our written notifications to the City. For example, the first light at the southern entrance of Freycinet Drive, on the eastern side at the limestone wall has been out for two years.

Footbridge – Eastern Side

The undeveloped area underneath the eastern buttress of the footbridge at the end of Lanyard Bvd, is designated public open space. Now that Lanyard Bvd is rapidly filling with new residences, and as its median strip is to be landscaped, it is now an urgency to landscape this area. It is currently a waste-land with unsightly volunteer vegetation. It is used by occasional recreational fishers, and attracts a lot of discarded material and rubbish. For these reasons it is not used by the local community.



Layman Road Intersections

PGLOA is strongly of the view that the new residential developments adjacent to Layman Road in the western part of the precinct have created traffic hazards.

The fence at the intersection of Navigation Way and Layman Road obscures visibility to west-bound traffic on Layman Road, which is the second main entry into Busselton.

The new road called Portage Way accessing the Aigle Newport development requires a slip road for traffic entering and leaving Layman Road. We can anticipate there will be more of these dangerous intersections as developments progress.

And on this specific area, the colourbond fence along the Aigle Royal development should never have been approved. A higher standard of fencing should be required for the next stage.



Lanyard Boulevard

Our 2015 report drew attention to the unimproved public open space adjacent to Layman Road and fronting Lanyard Boulevard, urging that it be landscaped. Historically PGLOA understands that three different sets of plans were put to the City by the developer long before that organization went bankrupt but these were all rejected by City administrators. Well now we see some progress.



The current City budget provides for landscaping of the grasslands around the intersections of Lanyard Bvd with Layman Rd, and work has just commenced.

The City budget also provides for restoration of the median strip in Lanyard Bvd, which several years ago was spread with wood chips and built with ineffective kerbing, It has degenerated as motorists drive over the median strip ignoring the existing U-turn loops. We understand it is destined for mown grass, which is pleasing.

Aigle Royal has installed a deep bore for the purpose of watering parklands in their development area. We understand that at the instigation of the City provision is made for providing bore water for reticulation elsewhere in the Port Geographe precinct.

We are pleased that work has commenced on the arterial reticulation lines from this bore, into Lanyard Bvd and Keel Rte.

Keel Retreat Median Strip

The median strip in Keel Rte is a sufferance for residents. It has been laid out with reticulation for many years, and in previous years has been sprinkled with scheme water. However the water has been turned off for the last two years, ostensibly to conserve water.



Currently it is expressed variably of bare sand patches, scattered weeds and the omnipresent woodchips. The weeds are mowed by the City at various times through the year, but this achieves little in enhancing this residential strip. Now that bore-water is coming available, the water should be turned back on. With ongoing mowing this median strip can be resurrected at little or no additional cost.

Gazebo at Anchor View Park

We have previously advocated a gazebo-type facility for the parkland at the end of Anchor View. A bench and canopy facility is required close to the water's edge overlooking the small beach and the marina waters. This is a very popular area, and a frequent meeting place for residents and visitors.



An existing circular area, close to the water's edge, overlooking the small beach and the wider canal, is considered an ideal location. With increasing usage, this would warrant a BBQ sometime in the future. PGLOA has conceptual engineering drawing for such a gazebo.

Spinnaker Boulevard

For the last two year, the large undeveloped lot at the end of Spinnaker Bvd has become an industrial store yard for various construction enterprises. This is attracting several complaints to the PGLOA Committee, as it is not in keeping with the harmony of progressive developments in this area. The lot is owned by Mr Colin Heath, and is designated for hotel development. But it is unlikely hotel development will proceed. The current use of this lot is obviously non-compliant, and we request orders be issued for removal of the offending equipment. Also at the western end of Spinnaker Bvd, the area around the deep bore and back-washing facility is unkempt.



Layman Entry to Busselton

Layman Road through the Tuart Forest and Wonnerup is the second major entry to Busselton from the north. It is a designated tourist route. Layman Road as it enters Port Geographe precinct should therefore present an attractive entry statement for visitors. The current statement is based on an avenue of Casuarina trees, in rows along both sides and in the median strip. Our 2015 review affirmed this was unsightly, damaging and dirty. After consultation with its members, PGLOA advocated replacing the Casuarina trees with flowering red gums *Corymbia ficifolia*, and the planting of soft understory shrubs, and restoring the reticulation.



So far we have seen the removal of the casuarinas only along the western side of Layman Rd between Keel Rte and Starboard Rd, the restoration of the damaged footpath, and the planting of flowering red gums. But the unattractive entry remains.

PGLOA continues to advocate the removal of the remaining casuarinas, the creation of a homogeneous statement based on red gums and the installation of understory shrubs.

Damage to Pavements

There are numerous examples of damage to concrete pavements and kerbings, primarily due to vehicle trafficking. Whilst this is undesirable for heavy vehicles to intrude on pavements, it is difficult to prevent. However we suspect that some concreting was done to inferior specifications, and is susceptible to cracking. Some occurrences of fractured pavement are a hazard for pedestrians.



An inspection of all footpaths should be made by the City's Works Maintenance team to repair damaged footpaths on both the western and eastern side of the development. Occurrences of broken pavement need to be repaired.

Canal Wall Capping

Canal walls of Port Geographe are built with reconstituted limestone – that is, lightly cemented limestone fragments molded into blocks. Over time, limestone does dissolve in seawater especially where it is agitated by wave action. Consequently the top-most row of limestone block is susceptible to mechanical and chemical erosion. Virtually all private residences have added an extra permissible block, which minimizes the overlapping of the sea



water to occasional winter storm surges, and eliminated the potential problem. Canal walls in sections of public open space have no such protection, and are degenerating quite markedly.

We request that all wall toppings in public open space be inspected and provision made to install the extra block.

Sedimentation in the Canals

Over the last decade there has been a progressive build-up of sand against some canal walls, particularly in southern and eastern terminations and alcoves. This comes from westerly wind-driven waves along the fetch of the canals. In these situations the sand build-up is threatening the navigable waterway in close proximity to private jetties. One prominent example is the “beach” at the public open space at the beginning of Keel Rte. Here sand is spilling over the canal wall and building its own mini-dune system. This is a potential long-term problem, and provision needs to be made for future dredging.



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