

Making Geraldton Recreational Vehicle (RV) Friendly strategy review submissions:

Number	Date	Submitter	Nature of submission	Comment
1	25 August 2017	Libby Mettam. Member for Vasse; Shadow Minister for Tourism	Commented that the trial free overnight RV camping has impacted negatively on the local caravan parks, through reduced returns during the peak season. This has led to these businesses having to reduce the hours of caravan park staff and cut cost in other areas.	<p>The RV strategy was developed to attract RV's that have in the past not stopped in Geraldton due to the absence of free overnight facilities and dump points, stopping instead at locations such as Dongara that already offered free RV parking/camping sites.</p> <p>The strategy was also adopted to mitigate the persistent problem (and associated risks, and costs to the City) of illegal camping by some RV owners in various parts of the City. Provision of free overnight parking bays in the city has demonstrably decreased the magnitude of the illegal camping problem.</p> <p>It is the case that (in the absence of provision of RV-friendly parking space and facilities) a significant number of RV operators were either not stopping in Geraldton at all, or were not staying overnight, and were not utilising caravan parks if they did stop.</p> <p>Statistics released by Tourism WA for the 2016-17 financial year show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 12.7% drop in interstate visitation to WA, and a • 9.7% drop in WA residents holidaying at home. <p>The statistics indicate a significant downturn in local tourism visitation across the State.</p> <p>Accordingly, the City does not agree that there is a demonstrable causal connection between alleged decreases in Geraldton caravan park patronage, and the provision of a small number of free RV parking bays and a dump point in the City.</p> <p>The City view is that any decline in local caravan park patronage <i>probably reflects the domestic tourism downturn experienced across the State in 2016-17.</i></p>

27 June 2017	Phillip Butlin. Sunset Beach Holiday Park	<p>There is no need for the RV overnight facility since caravan parks have the capacity to service these travellers</p> <p>On occasion more than 30 overnight vehicles have been counted on the RV facility. This includes caravans, RV's, whizz bangs, Fifth wheelers and cars</p> <p>The site is inadequately policed and Sunset Beach Holiday Park staff has counted on many occasions vehicles on site for more than the 24 Hours that is allowed by the strategy.</p>	Recommendations in Table 1
4 May 2017	John and Dani Layman. Summerstar Tourist Park	<p>Travellers are using power points, ablutions and showers on the foreshore</p> <p>Tourists are bypassing the "24 hour only rule" by leaving and returning to the overnight facility after 6.</p>	Recommendations in Table 1
22 February 2017	John and Dani Layman. Summerstar Tourist Parks	<p>There are often non self-sustainable RV's and cars staying at the overnight facility which was intended only for self-contained recreational vehicles.</p> <p>There are suggestions that people taking advantage of the free camping are not spending money in town</p> <p>There are currently 2 out of the 5 caravan parks in Geraldton for sale, and the pricing indicates that these seems to be a 'race to the bottom'</p> <p>The submission suggests that the loss of income to caravan park in Geraldton equals \$175,200 over a 2 year period as follows: 12 (Free camping sites) x 0,5 (occupancy on any given night) x 365 (days in a year) x 2 (years this initiative has been operational) x \$40 (Average cost per site)</p>	Recommendations in Table 1

24 May 2017	John and Dani Layman. Summerstar Tourist Parks	<p>This letter raised issues regarding compliance with the <i>Caravan and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997 (WA) (CCGR)</i> and <i>Caravan and Camping Grounds Act 1995 (WA) (CCGA)</i>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Caravan parks are required to have at least 3m between vans in order to prevent fires spreading (CCGR Schedule 7, Division 2, and Clause 8(1)). At the free camping sites, it is common for the vans to be less than a meter apart, which is a significant fire hazard and poses serious risks to those utilizing the facility. It also allows the Council to fit a large number of people in a space that would be unacceptable in a caravan park; 2. There is no person with duty of care after 6pm on the free camping site, whereas caravan parks are required to have someone on or near the facility who is responsible for the supervision of the facility and accessible at all times in the case of an emergency (CCGA, Part 2, Division 2, Section 13). While we understand that the Council's view is that the Ranger can be called, we have called the Ranger at numerous times and reached only an answering machine. This would certainly not be sufficient in an emergency situation and could lead to significant damage/injury; 3. The public ablution block is being used by the free campers which ultimately diminishes its utility and usefulness to members of the general public, and is also not compliant with usual regulations relating to these facilities; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • caravan parks are subject to fire safety requirements, including providing fire safety equipment, such as fire hoses, within a specific distance of each site. This safety equipment is required to be safety checked every six months (CCGR Schedule 7, Division 10, clause 33). There are no such safety features present on the free camping sites, which is particularly concerning in light of the first mentioned point regarding space between vans. 	<p>The relevant clause in the <i>Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997</i>:</p> <p><i>"11. Camping other than at caravan park or camping ground</i></p> <p><i>(1) A person may camp —</i></p> <p><i>(a) for up to 3 nights in any period of 28 consecutive days on land which he or she owns or has a legal right to occupy, and may camp for longer than 3 nights on such land if he or she has written approval under subregulation (2) and is complying with that approval; or</i></p> <p><i>(b) for up to 24 consecutive hours in a caravan or other vehicle on a road side rest area;"</i></p> <p>The overnight free parking bays in the City, with explicit requirement that they may only be utilised as overnight bays, are provided in the manner of roadside rest areas. Other than for provision of a dump point, the areas provide no facilities other than those that might reasonably be provided for a roadside rest area. Access to amenities in the adjacent areas is convenient to that purpose.</p> <p>Recommendations in Table 1.</p>
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			<p>There are significant other requirements not listed above that caravan parks are required to conform with in order to protect the health and safety of its guests, none of which are without cost.</p> <p>This gives the Council a significant competitive advantage over other parks in relation to providing camping as it is simply not required to provide the infrastructure that exists at caravan parks.</p>	<p>The City is not in 'competition' with caravan parks. The provision of RV friendly facilities is a national trend to accommodate mobile travellers for overnight stops when the absence of such facilities would otherwise see travellers not stopping and spending money in regional towns. Caravan parks generally only capture portion of the RV market segment, hence the local economies fail to capture the maximum potential economic benefits flowing from overnight stays. Provision of small numbers of free overnight parking bays, and dump points, helps regional towns capture more of the economic benefits that would otherwise simply drive by their towns. The RV Friendly strategy addresses the market segment that is not being attracted by the caravan parks sector.</p>
	August 2017	Identified by the August 2017 report "RV Camping in the CGG" compiled by the Geraldton Visitors Centre	People overnighiting outside of the designated parking bays	Recommendations in Table 1
			People sleeping in cars and non-self-sustainable RV's	Recommendations in Table 1
			People defecating nearby when the toilet block is closed Are looks messy- especially in the non-self-contained RV section	Recommendations in Table 1
			People staying for longer than the 24 hour designated period	Recommendations in Table 1
			Rangers not always available to contact	Recommendations in Table 1
			Complaints that parks are not wide and long enough	Recommendations in Table 1
			Complaints from RV people about the noise from trains and port operations as well as the rubbish trucks waking people up	Noted, but the RV friendly facility is located in a bustling area of the CGG, close to amenities and a working Port. The noise is unfortunately a by-product of being in a very

				accessible area. Little different from heavy vehicle traffic noise for typical roadside rest areas on major highways.
			People tipping their grey water on the car park	Recommendations in Table 1.
			The unavailability of parking for non-overnighting self-sustainable RV's that want to spend some time on the foreshore. The only parking for them are in the RV overnight spaces, since they are not allowed in the " Car and Boat trailer only" parks and are too big for normal parks. Parking in the RV overnight facilities in turn clog up these for overnight visitors.	Recommendations in Table 1
			Unfriendly Rangers that need people skills	Recommendations in Table 1