

# Making Geraldton Recreational Vehicle (RV) Friendly March 2015



City of Greater Geraldton Council 2015

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Disclaimer**

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### **Defining an RV:**

In the context of this document “Recreational Vehicle” or RV’s refers to and is understood to include:

- Motorhomes
- Caravans and 5<sup>th</sup> wheelers (Up to 14m in Length)
- Trailers/boat campers
- 4 Wheel Drive off road campers
- Campervans and backpacker vans
- Self-Contained vehicles, which are generally described as being those RV’s that can contain within the vehicle fixed shower and toilet, sullage (grey) and black water waste (sewerage) storage and have capacity for carrying multiple days’ worth of drinking water.

Tent campers and those sleeping in caravan park cabins (those traveling by private sedan automobile, bicycle, on foot or otherwise and sleeping in tents or cabins) are not considered as part of this strategy.

## **1. Background**

The City of Greater Geraldton (CGG) identified the need to grow the visitation figures from RV's and a draft strategy ( Making Geraldton "RV- Friendly") was commissioned in 2014 to investigate ways to establish Geraldton as a Regional Resource Hub for RV travellers and identify ways to increase our tourism figures and income from this sector.

The draft strategy was presented to Council on 26 August 2014 and was subsequently circulated to a wide range of stakeholders for comment.

This document is a revised RV strategy which is based on the 2014 draft which was submitted to Council.

It summarises the key points from the draft strategy and also includes updated information and revised strategies on how to make Geraldton RV friendly, after taking into consideration the comments received during the consultation process.

## **2. Overview**

### **The Economic Value of the Caravan and Camping industry**

The Tourism Western Australia's (TWA) Caravan and Camping action Plan describes caravan parks as an extremely important component of WA's tourism industry.

The TWA research indicates that in 2010, an estimated 506,600 people stayed in a caravan park in WA. This equates to approximately 4,209,100 visitor nights with an average stay of 8, 3 nights.

The same report (Tourism WA Geraldton Visitor Snapshot report 2013) indicates that an estimated 25,500 visitors stayed in a commercial caravan park in Geraldton, compared to 25,800 in Carnarvon and Coral Bay, with a combined 40,300 in the localities of Northampton, Kalbarri, Horrocks Beach, Port Gregory, Mullewa and Greenough.

The current value of the caravan and camping sector in Western Australia is estimated to be around \$300 million annually. This is comprised of:

- Approximately \$190 million of direct tourism expenditure by visitors to caravan parks (based on an estimated extrapolation of the 2010 National Visitor Survey figure of \$178 million) plus
- Approximately \$110 million by permanent or long stay residents in WA

In the **City of Greater Geraldton** this is estimated to comprise of:

- Approximately \$14 million of direct tourism expenditure by visitors to caravan parks (based on information of visitor nights using Tourism Research Australia visitor spend) plus
- Approximately \$4 million by permanent or long stay residents in CGG.( BDO Geraldton Caravan Parks Local Economic Benefit Impact report, 2012)

The same study found that commercial caravan parks provide a significant economic contribution to local communities where they operate - for every \$1.00 of commercial caravan park turnover, \$1.38 of local economic activity is generated by the individual park to the local area. If this multiplier is applied to the total direct expenditure by tourist users of caravan parks in the Geraldton region, it equates to over \$19 million of economic benefit to the City of Greater Geraldton local economy and small businesses.

A report titled *“Economic Benefit Report - Spending Patterns of Commercial Campers & Non-Commercial Campers”*, prepared by BDO in 2013, notes that the average daily spend for commercial campers equals \$73, compared to \$53 for non-commercial campers. In addition to spending more in each location commercial campers, on average, also spend longer at each location than non-commercial campers.

Self-contained vehicles, which are described as “those RV’s that can contain within the vehicle fixed shower and toilet, sullage (grey) and black water waste (sewerage) storage and have capacity for carrying multiple days’ worth of drinking water”, make up 12% of the market. (BDO Caravanning Vehicle Registration Data Report) It should also be noted that 83% of domestic travellers are under the age of 65 and unlikely to travel in a motorhome.

#### Existing Facilities in Geraldton:

The City of Greater Geraldton hosts five full-service caravan parks that are located at

- Greenough River /Cape Burney (Double Beach Holiday Village),
- Tarcoola Beach (African Reef Caravan Park),
- Point Moore (Belair Gardens Caravan Park),
- Sunset Beach (Sunset Beach Holiday Park)
- Waggrakine (Batavia Coast Caravan Park).
- S Bend Caravan Park ( Greenough)
- Mullewa Caravan Park

Another caravan park is located just north of CGG in the Shire of Chapman Valley (Drummond Cove Caravan Park) and there are facilities at Oakabella Homestead 25 kilometres to the north of Geraldton.

Three basic, low cost camps (\$5-7 per night) with limited facilities can be found at Fig Tree Crossing (Chapman Valley), Ellendale Pool (campground in CGG) and Coronation Beach (Chapman Valley). These facilities do not have water but they all have a dump point.

### **3. Alignment with existing strategy**

City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Community Plan 2013-2023

([http://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/AM80%20-%20CoGG%20-%202013-2023%20Strategic%20Community%20Plan%20%5BPROOF%5D%20V6\\_0.pdf](http://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/AM80%20-%20CoGG%20-%202013-2023%20Strategic%20Community%20Plan%20%5BPROOF%5D%20V6_0.pdf))

The City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Community Plan 2013-2023 includes a number of community aspirations, which were identified during an extensive consultation process. The creation of a

dynamic, diverse and sustainable economy is identified and this includes the development of Geraldton as a “preferred cultural, environmental and agri/aquaculture tourism destination.

#### Greater Geraldton Economic Development Strategy 2013-2023

[http://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Greater%20Geraldton%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202013%20-%202023\\_0.pdf](http://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Greater%20Geraldton%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202013%20-%202023_0.pdf)

The Greater Geraldton Economic Development Strategy 2013 - 2023 identifies Tourism and events as economic growth opportunities, and notes the need to attract more international, state and interstate tourists.

#### Mid West Regional Blueprint (DRAFT)

<http://www.mwdc.wa.gov.au/Blueprint.aspx>

The economic development pillar of this document recognises the need to attract more domestic tourists, and also increase tourism figures from growing Asian markets. In addition, the recreational vehicle (RV), caravan and camping visitor market is one that continues to grow in Australia and represents an opportunity for increased visitation for the region.

#### Mid West Tourism Development Strategy

[http://www.mwdc.wa.gov.au/Assets/FINAL\\_Tourism\\_Strategy\\_02092014\\_low\\_res.pdf](http://www.mwdc.wa.gov.au/Assets/FINAL_Tourism_Strategy_02092014_low_res.pdf)

Strategic Aims from the MWDC Tourism Blueprint include the attraction of more high-yield visitors and growing the self-drive and RV market. Regional tourism priorities include the development of five coastal campsites between Green Head and Kalbarri which will be highly valued by ‘dedicated discoverers’, ‘family connectors’ RV’ers, and 4WD / fishing enthusiasts, who may account for approximately 50% of Mid West Visitors.

#### **4. Objectives**

This strategy aims to identify ways which will contribute towards the strengthening of Greater Geraldton as an RV destination in order to generate additional revenue for the Greater Geraldton economy by capturing a larger share of spending of RV travellers who currently bypass Greater Geraldton, or by increasing the length of stay of current visitors.

Potential ways to increase the RV visitation numbers were identified as:

- Establishing and promoting Geraldton as The Mid West resource hub for ALL RV requirements with the most comprehensive availability for all RV-related products and services of any place in WA outside of Perth;
- Promoting Geraldton as the final opportunity to stock up on essential supplies, on your way up North;
- Developing RV-Friendly attributes such as easy access, good direction finding signage and dedicated, secure parking near the City Centre, Visitor Information Centre and beaches, for all sizes and shapes of RVs;
- Providing sufficient dumping facilities and potable water for RV travellers;
- Developing an online (and hard copy) resource guide to CGG services for RV travellers;

- Providing low-cost/no-cost, short-term stay-over locations for self-sufficient vehicles;
- Providing non-caravan park, low cost options for short stays ( nature camping) or low cost options within caravan parks;
- Providing an attractions and activities guide (hardcopy and online version) specifically catering to RV travellers;
- Providing free public WIFI at key locations around the City;
- Direction-finding signage specifically designed to assist RVs;
- Develop Geraldton as a destination by encouraging and supporting events that will contribute to visitor numbers;
- Providing information about our tourism attributes through the appropriate channels to RV travellers to encourage them to stay for longer periods of time;
- Achieving RV friendly status for Geraldton and promoting the status in through appropriate channels and
- Encouraging local service providers to provide better customer service

## **5. Consultation and comments**

The draft 2014 Making Geraldton RV Friendly report was advertised and the current strategy developed from that input.

## **6. Key recommendations:**

### **6.1. Obtaining RV Friendly accreditation for Geraldton**

The table below summarises the criteria for a town or city to be accredited as RV Friendly. The table also indicates Geraldton's current status as well as recommendations to make the CGG RV Friendly

Essential Criteria	Does Geraldton qualify for accreditation regarding this objective?	Geraldton's intention	Recommendations
Provision of appropriate parking within the town centre, including access to a general shopping area with groceries or fresh produce.	Yes.	Upgrading of signage and increasing the ease of navigation by means of online information and maps.	See recommendation 6.3.2.
Provision of short term free (24/48 hour) parking for self-contained vehicles within the town precinct.	No	Free overnight parking will be made available	See recommendation 6.3.1.
Access to free potable water.	Yes	Access to potable water is available.	
Access to a free dump point within the town precinct.	No	A free dump point and tourist node is included in the proposal for the upgrading of the Midwest Ports, Connell Road project.	See recommendation 6.5.1.
<b>Desirable Criteria</b>			
Provision of free long	No	The City of Greater Geraldton will not provide	

term parking for self-contained vehicles.		free long term parking due to its commitment to the sustainability of local businesses.	
Access to medical facilities or an applicable evacuation plan	Yes	Information to be included in an online and hardcopy resource brochure to be developed by the Visitor Centre	See recommendation 6.4.2.
Access to a pharmacy or a procedure to obtain pharmaceutical products.	Yes	Information to be included in an online and hardcopy resource brochure to be developed by the Visitor Centre	See recommendation 6.4.2.
Visitor Information Centre (VIC) with appropriate parking facilities within a reasonable distance.	Yes	In place at foreshore car park, near visitor centre, suitably sign posted with disabled bay access.	
Visitor Centre to provide a town map showing essential facilities such as the local hospital, medical services, fuel, shopping area, dump point, fresh water, etc.	Yes	In place and continually improving the format.	See recommendation 6.4.2.
RV Friendly Town™ signs to be erected within the town precinct.	No.	To be erected once Geraldton obtains RV Friendly status.	See recommendation 6.2.4.

## **6.2. Signage**

### **6.2.1. Develop entry statements at all key entry points into Geraldton:**

#### **Action**

- Develop vibrant and visually interesting statements at key entry points into the City. These signs should indicate that Geraldton is RV Friendly.

### **6.2.2. Improve signage that address illegal camping at popular locations**

#### **Action**

- Provide visible signage at camping spots that are perceived as being free in locations such as Cape Burney and Flat Rocks.

### **6.2.3. Identification and erection of signage at official “Road side rest areas”:**

#### **Action**

- CGG to liaise with Main Roads WA to ensure that road rest areas are well signposted and managed.



#### 6.2.4. The provision of signage throughout the City for RV vehicles.

##### Action:

- In concert with the City's signs program, design, create and install additional street signage around Geraldton to direct Recreational Vehicles to specific areas such as the Visitor Centre, dump points, caravan parks, stopover locations and parking areas. The signage should also assist RV's in getting back to the highway.
- Provide information at the Visitor Centre (hard copies and on the website) on RV friendly routes and parking to guide RVs to specific areas in the City where they can park, stay and obtain services.
- RV Friendly Town™ signs to be erected within the town precinct once the town qualifies for RV Friendly status.

### **6.3. RV parking facilities**

#### 6.3.1. Provision of free 24 hour RV Camping areas

##### Action:

- Free overnight parking will be available for RV's at the Francis Street Carpark. refer Appendix 1. It is noted that the aim of this recommendation is to encourage RV travellers that normally do not stay overnight in Geraldton a free opportunity to experience the CGG. This recommendation will be subject to ongoing review.

#### 6.3.2. Provision of 4 hour parking facilities

##### Action

Designated RV parking bays (which provides 4 hours free parking) will be available at the following locations: (See Appendix 1-4 for location Maps)

- Visitor Centre foreshore carpark off Francis Street
- Glenfield IGA ( Facilities to be consistent with Sunset Beach Precinct Plan)
- CGG no 5 carpark - rear, opposite Stirling's Centre/ Woolworths
- Bill Sewell Complex for easy access to Northgate Shopping Centre

#### 6.3.3. Overflow parking facilities

##### Action:

There is no identified need for overflow facilities.

### **6.4. Improve Marketing**

#### 6.4.1. Marketing strategy and material to be developed for appropriate industry publications

##### Action:

CGG will develop information and target appropriate publications and industry bodies such as:

- The Campervan and Motorhome Club (CMCA) of Australia: [cmca.com.au](http://cmca.com.au). Geraldton needs to be listed in the organisations RV friendly town guidebook
- Caravan, RV & Accommodation Industry of Australia Ltd (CRVA).Website: [www.crva.com.au](http://www.crva.com.au)
- Recreational Vehicle Manufacturing Association of Australia (RVMA). Website: [www.rvma.com.au](http://www.rvma.com.au)
- The Caravan Industry Association Western Australia (CIAWA). Website: [www.caravanwa.com.au](http://www.caravanwa.com.au)
- *“Camps7, Australia Wide”*. Importantly, in order to be listed in the book, one criterion is that the base price for overnight camping for commercial sites must not exceed \$24/night. By this criterion, more than 3,900 sites across Australia qualify for listing.
- Wikicamps. Website: <http://www.wikicamps.com.au>
- Caravan Industry Association of Australia. Website: <http://www.caravanwa.com.au/>

#### 6.4.2. Development of a resource guide for RV travellers.

##### Action

CGG to develop a resource guide for RV travellers that will be made available on the Visit Geraldton Website (and hardcopy format), and should be updated regularly.

### **6.5. Provision of dumping facilities:**

#### 6.5.1. Provision of Free dumping point in the CGG

##### Action:

- Geraldton Fishing Boat Harbour -Connell road tourist node and dumping facility

The City of Greater Geraldton fully supports a proposal by Midwest Ports for funding under the Royalties for Regions program to develop and upgrade facilities in Connell Road at the Geraldton Fisherman’s Wharf .The proposal provides for the installation of a free dump point/water supply, café, free Wi-Fi and enhanced parking facilities to support the tourist activity in this locality.

#### 6.5.2. Alternate paid dumping points

- Paying Travellers through the Geraldton region currently have access to dumping facilities (and potable water) at the following Caravan Parks:
  - Greenough River /Cape Burney (Double Beach Holiday Village),
  - S-Bend Caravan Park ( Greenough)
  - Tarcoola Beach (African Reef Caravan Park),
  - Point Moore (Belair Gardens Caravan Park),
  - Sunset Beach (Sunset Beach Holiday Park)
  - Waggrakine (Batavia Coast Caravan Park).
  - Mullewa Caravan Park
  - Drummond Cove
  - Dongara

- For travellers who require more affordable facilities, dump points are also available at Fig Tree Crossing (Chapman Valley), Ellendale Pool (campground in CGG) and Coronation Beach (Chapman Valley). No potable water is available at these facilities however.

#### **6.6. “Nature” Camping:**

- Action Three basic, low cost camps (\$5-7 per night) with limited facilities can be found at Fig Tree Crossing (Chapman Valley), Ellendale Pool (campground in CGG) and Coronation Beach (Chapman Valley). These facilities do not provide access to water but they all have a free dump point.
- Strategic Aims from the MWDC Tourism Blueprint include the attraction of more high-yield visitors and growing the self-drive and RV market. The MWDC Tourism Blueprint’s regional tourism priorities include the development of five coastal campsites between Green Head and Kalbarri, which means the provision of facilities are outside of the scope of this “Making Geraldton RV Friendly Report” report.
- Develop an operational plan for the Ellendale Pool to ensure that it is managed in accordance with the relevant legislation, and that the dump point conforms with Health and Safety regulations.

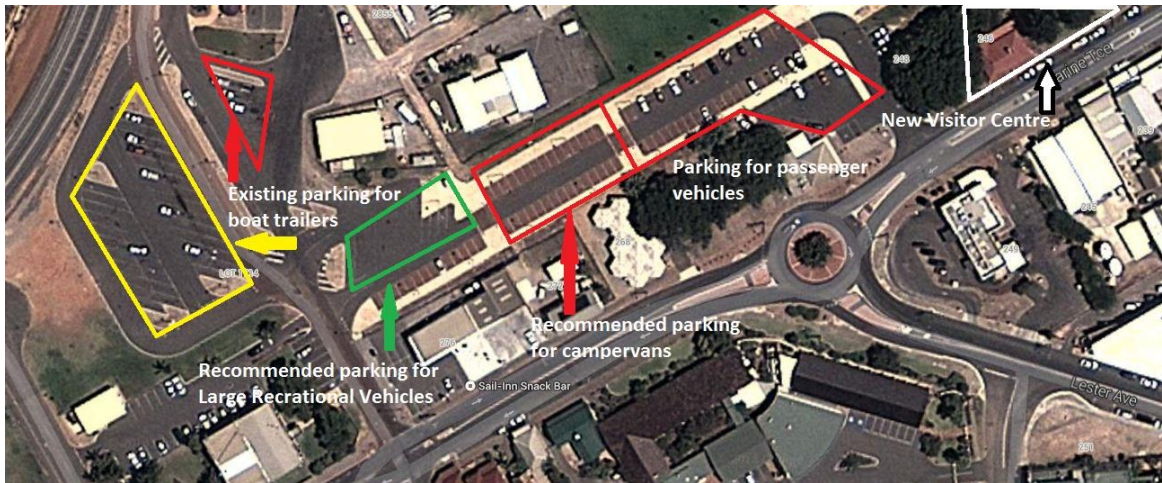
#### **6.7. Free public Wi Fi**

- Free public Wi-Fi is available along the Foreshore including the Visitor Centre, car parking area and library.
- Support possible extension of the free Wi-Fi in the Connell Road fishing harbour upgrade proposal .

## **7. APPENDICES**

**7.1 Appendix 1:**

**Francis Street Overnight Parking:**



**7.2 Appendix 2:**

**Glenfield IGA Proposed Parking (From the Sunset Beach Precinct Plan):**

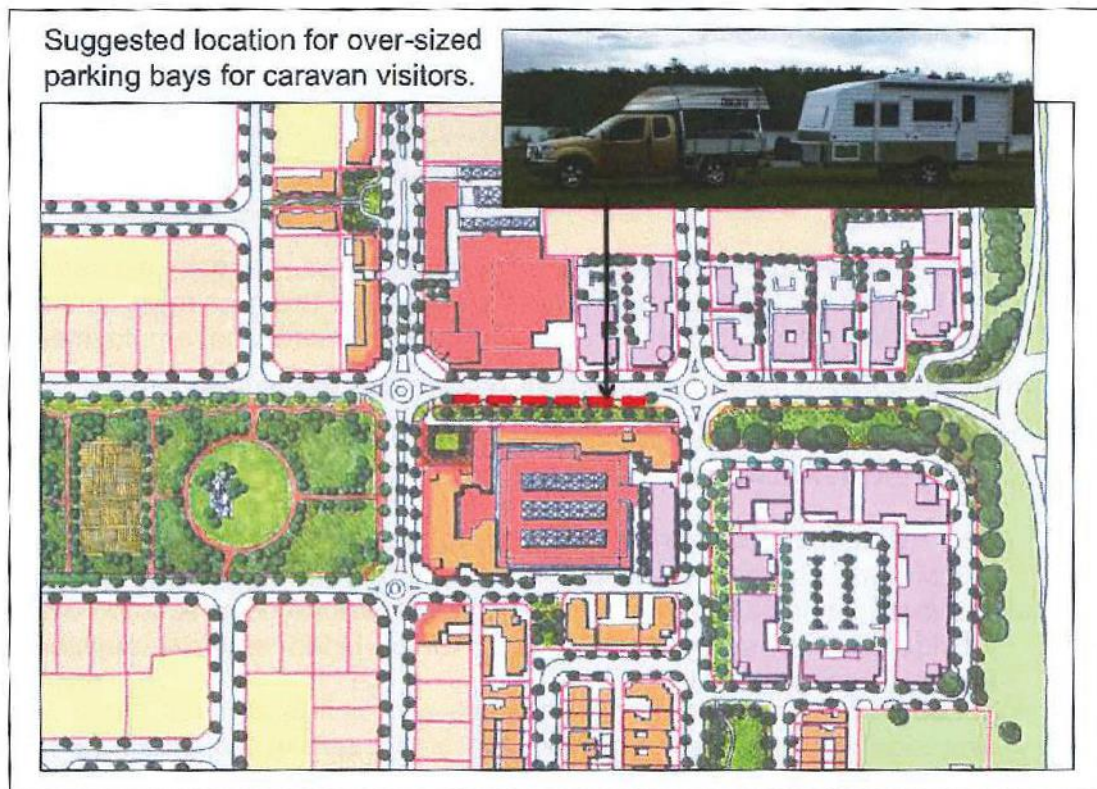


Figure 20: Visitor bays for caravans



**7.3 Appendix 3:**

**CGG no 5 Carpark (Opposite Stirling's Centre / Woolworths):**



**7.4 Appendix 4:**

**Bill Sewell Complex Carpark:**

