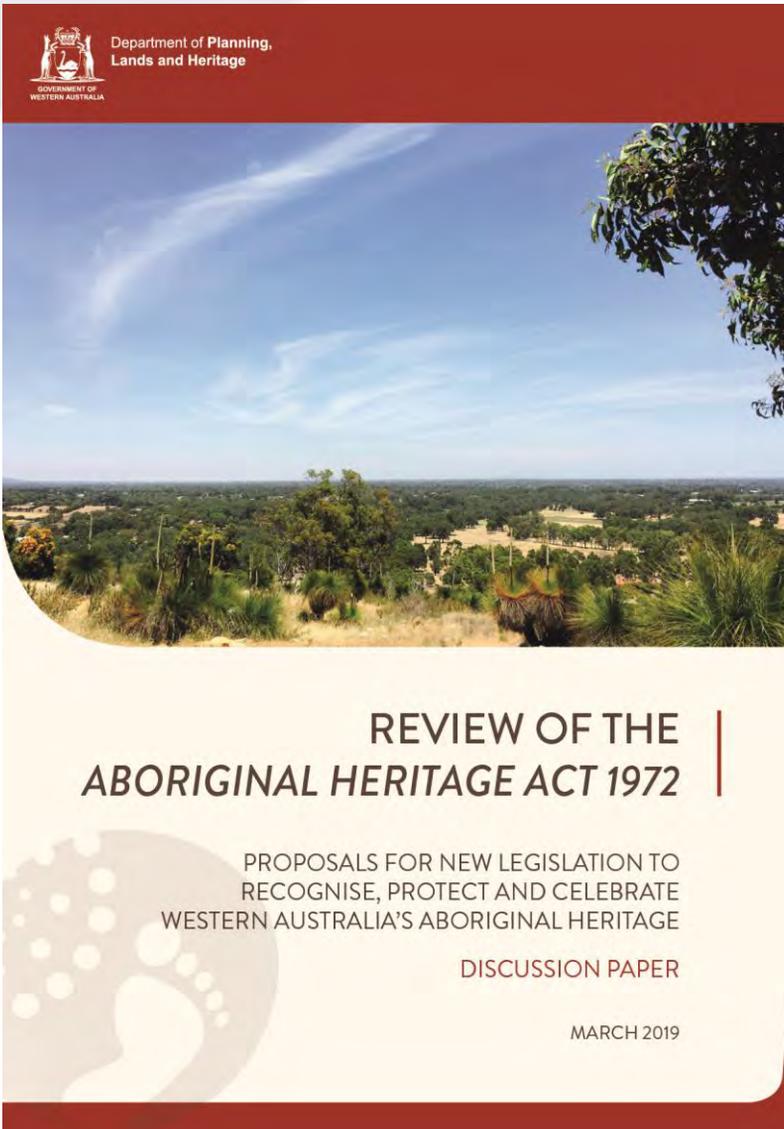




Department of Planning,
Lands and Heritage



AHA REVIEW PHASE 2 WORKSHOPS
MERREDIN - 2 MAY 2019
Facilitator Report

Report on Stage Two Consultations

Review of The Aboriginal Heritage Act

Merredin 2 May 2019

Attendees

Community*

Number of Attendees: 7

DPLH Staff

Glenn Shaw
Harley Coyne
Jeremy Elliott

Facilitator

Robert Reynolds

Consultations were based on a PowerPoint presentation prepared by DPLH staff to ensure consistent presentations were made across the state. This draws on, and summarises information from the March 2019 Consultation Paper which was handed out to all participants in the workshop. The order of proposals differed from the document but all Desired Outcomes / Proposals listed in the Consultation paper were covered.

Issues raised by participants were written down on large sheets of paper displayed on the walls of the venue for the whole length of the consultation where they were checked by participants. These are the official records of the meeting and will be published on the DPLH website. They are also attached at the end of this report.

This was a active group with elders and more senior members of the community as well as younger men. Their experience and involvement with heritage was obvious (one runs Aboriginal Heritage Tours)' Discussions of the proposed changes were often put in the context of real on ground experience and issues surrounding management and protection issues that they had direct experience of. This resulted in very active participation in the discussions.

Details of the discussions are not covered here as the formal responses of the group are those put up around the meeting room and are to be uploaded on the DPLH AHA review website. However, the following general points that underlay the responses to a range of the proposals and came up several times are noted below.

- Generally supportive of proposals which were seen as a big improvement on the existing legislation. But there was some distrust as to whether it will get the necessary resources.
- Recognition of people with real ties to country is important. There are 14 groups in Noongar Country not just the six groups recognised under native title.
- Aboriginal people need more control of their Heritage.
- The correct people must be consulted. These should be those with on ground knowledge and not just ancestral connections.

- Aboriginal people need to be employed in all aspects of Aboriginal Heritage work.
- The role of Local Heritage Services is strongly supported but these need to be provided with sufficient support, both administratively and financially if they are to be effective.

Other Issues

Inevitably issues beyond the scope of the AHA review were raised during the meeting. These acted as real issues on which broader discussions of effective heritage legislation could focus.

However, unless they had direct relevance to the working of revised heritage legislation these were parked and those raising them were asked to bring them up during the break with DPLH Staff. They were written These were noted down at the time and staff also followed them up if they were not raised. These form a valuable part of ongoing engagement between DPLH Aboriginal heritage section and local community members.

Issues raised at the Merredin meeting included

- Mulka's Cave.
 - Needs to be better protected
 - It should be called Mulky's Cave (not Mulka's Cave)
 - Concern that the art work is fading / damaged by Visitors
 - Should be blocked off and only accessed under the supervision of TO's.#
- Merredin Reserve
 - Issues with its ongoing management and protection (ALT Reserve not AHA site)
 - Insufficient resources
 - Wrong people making decisions (Referred to ALT)
- Sharks Mouth
 - Concern about the name
 - Wrong people making decisions about it.
 - Is being neglected

Mulka's Cave

In light of concerns raised about Mulka's cave this was visited by Harley Coyne on their return to Albany that afternoon.

- This is clearly a heavily visited site during the 40minutes we were on the site 3.20 – 4.00pm 5 cars with approx. 13 people visited the site as well as a couch of international tourists (approx. 15 people). This outside the wildflower season, school holidays etc so well off peak tourist season for the area.
- The site was generally in excellent condition with not litter, no graffiti and the signage all in excellent condition (it was installed in 2006)
- Evidence of recent tree planting and environmental work in the vicinity of the site.

- Difficult to assess fading and moisture levels in the air can affect visibility of art work.
- Brief inspection showed no sign of damage to the art work.
- There are no barriers preventing people clambering over the rocks in the floor of the cave (as there is a gap in the rear wall it could be attractive, especially for kids to do so). While barriers could be installed to prevent this they would also impact on the aesthetic and cultural integrity of the cave itself – the steel walkway outside could be seen as intrusive but is necessary to limit further erosion and keep visitors to route)

While it is noted that the visitors from the tour bus were not actively damaging the site their loud behaviour could be seen as showing a lack of respect to the site.

General follow up

As per attendees' request, copies of the presentation and will be emailed to attendees whose e-mail addresses provided.

Robert Reynolds
3/5/2019

BUTCHER'S PAPER NOTES – MERREDIN WORKSHOP

Merredin 2/5/19 (1)

Proposal 1&2 New Act & Scope

- Support a new Act.
- Support the expanded definition.
- Important that Local Government bound by the Act.
- Protection of broader Cultural / Landscape.
- Should also cover desecration of sites (consistency w Fed Act)

Merredin 2/5/19 (2)

Proposal 3A Local Aboriginal Heritage Service

- Important that local people have the say over their local area
 - ↳ Sub groups must be recognised as part of the process.
- Concern that current established structures will try to interfere with the process.
- 14 Groups not just 6 Groups under the SWS

Merredin

2/5/19

(3)

Proposal 3B Aboriginal Heritage Council

- Improvement on the previous system.

Merredin

2/5/19

(4)

Proposal 5 Land Use Assessments

- General Support. Providing T.O.s have control

Merredin

2/5/19

(5)

Proposal 4

Aboriginal Heritage Register

- Support local community having more input
- Financial resources should be available to local community to support the new system
-

Merredin

2/5/19

(6)

Proposal 3E

Directory of Heritage Professionals.

- General Support
- Important that Aboriginal people are included in the role of Heritage professionals
- Should be professionals with ties to particular country.
- Training of local people to meet criteria to get on the ~~Register~~ Directory.

Merredin

2/5/19

(7)

Proposal 3C Minister's Role

- Minister must recognise T/os associated with a specific area
↳ 14 groups not 6.
- Aboriginal representation as part of the Review Body K. S.A.T.
-

7.

Merredin

2/5/19

(8)

Proposal 6 Agreements

- Support the idea of Agreements as a better way to go.

Merredin 2/5/19 (9)
Proposal 7 Transparency & Appeals

- Right to Appeal is a positive change
- Aboriginal participation & inclusion in S.A.T. or other review body.

Merredin 2/5/19 (10)
Proposal 8 Enforcement

- Rangers assist with compliance & enforcement on country.

Merredin

2/5/19

(11)

Proposal 3D

Department's
Role

- Support for Ranger in
Protection & Management.
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Merredin

2/5/19

(12)

Proposal 9

Protected Areas

- Protected Area should mean
Protection.