



SHIRE OF DENMARK TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

8.5.1

File Ref:	COMM.PATAC
Applicant / Proponent:	Shire of Denmark
Subject Land / Locality:	Paths and Trails of Denmark
Disclosure of Officer Interest:	Nil
Date:	13 October 2015
Authors:	Erica Sayer, Engineering Administration Officer Dale Stewart, Chief Executive Officer
Authorising Officer:	Dale Stewart, Chief Executive Officer
Attachments:	8.5.1 – Denmark Trails Hub Project Assessment Report

Summary:

Council's Paths and Trails Advisory Committee (PATAC) has recommended that Council accept the Shire of Denmark Trails Hub Assessment presented to the Committee on 16 October 2014 and 19 January 2015, as amended in consultation with the consultant and the Committee's Chair.

This report now considers the submissions and Officer comments..

Background:

In 2012, in partnership with the Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Department of Sport & Recreation (DSR) commenced the "Trail Hubs Project" to provide WA communities with a blueprint of how to develop into a trail hub and in particular;

- Identify the critical elements of successful trail hubs world-wide;
- Analyse the community cost/benefits of successful trail hubs;
- Review the level of readiness of identified WA locations in becoming a world class trail hub (mapping against critical elements); and
- Develop a staged strategy for the creation of world-class trail hubs in WA, including concept development parameters, indicative costs, implementation planning and key promotional aspects.

The research in the initial Trails Hubs Project confirmed that the development of trail hubs in WA could:

- Increase active participation;
- Impact positively on physical and mental health issues
- Create regional employment; and
- Increase tourism related spending.

The project was completed with case studies/ assessments conducted for Pemberton, Dwellingup and Margaret River.

Following the success of the initial project, a number of other locations have been identified for in depth assessments and the development of related action plans.

With that, the Department of Sport and Recreation invited the Shire of Denmark to participate in the next round of assessments. Shire staff accepted an offer to have an in depth assessment of the local area to assist in establishing the Shire of Denmark as a potential Trail Hub.

The original letter stated that each in depth assessment will include but not be limited to;

- Executive summary;
- Site/area description and summary;
- Capacity Audit;
- Inventory Assessment;
- Assessment Report;
- Recommendations; and

- Prioritised and costed action list.

The Department of Sport and Recreation engaged the services of Jenny Nichol from NBD Marketing to complete the assessment with a requirement of Shire of Denmark to provide a venue for the community/stakeholder forums and to advocate for the assessment process and participate in the forums.

Council at its Ordinary Meeting held on 16 June 2015, Council moved to advertise the Trail Hub Assessment for a period of 60 days inviting the community to submit feedback relating to the assessment. This feedback period concluded on 21 August 2015.

Consultation:

A workshop was held on 12 May 2014 in the Shire Reception room. Community members, Paths and Trails Committee Members and business owners were all invited to attend. The intention of the workshop was to gain local knowledge of the Shire of Denmark and to contribute ideas to the consultant.

There were 16 attendees ranging from Committee Members through to Local business owners along with interested community members. The workshop ran for 2 hours in which the consultant facilitated a comprehensive question and answer 'type' activity.

At its 19 January 2015, meeting the Paths and Trails Advisory Committee resolved as follows;

"That the CEO request the Director of Infrastructure Services to recommend to Council they accept the Trail Hub Document Created via Department of Sport and Recreation funding."

The Officer has considered the requirement for consultation and/or engagement with persons or organisations that may be unduly affected by the proposal and considered Council's Community Engagement Policy P040123 and the associated Framework and subsequently resolved that additional external/internal engagement or consultation was required.

Council resolved to advertise the Trail Hub Assessment for general public comment for a minimum period of 60 days. This action took place via advertisements in the local and regional newspapers and contact of stakeholders by means of a mail out inviting feedback and comments on the document. Two (2) submissions were received, one from Denmark Tourism Inc., which supported the principles of the Plan and provided commentary as to off peak and tourism data and the second being internal, from the Council's Director of Planning & Sustainability which was as follows;

- a) *It is assumed that this is to be a Shire of Denmark document. If this is the case then it should have the Shire of Denmark logo on the front cover and is probably more appropriate to be referenced as "Prepared for the Shire of Denmark and the Department of Sport and Recreation".*
- b) *Section 1 Project Site (page 3) – currently references relates to Denmark town and surrounding forests and natural landscapes; from reviewing the document it is evident relates to the municipality so should be amended to read ".. constitutes the whole Shire and surrounding"*
- c) *Section 2 Tourism Analysis (pages 4 & 5) – data sources used in this section seem outdated; the author of these comments referred the document to Justine Nagorski at DTI for comment, response from CEO Justine Nagorski is; that accurate in depth tourism data for Denmark is limited however the section on seasonality should change the 'peak season' to include Easter plus December through to March. Remove December and March from the shoulder periods.*
- d) *Section 3 Capacity Audit (Table on pages 6& 7):*
 - i. *In relation to cell 1 under desirable column, it references "gap" in relation to themed trails or tours; in this regard I consider we do have a themed cycle trail that is defined (being Munda Biddi Trail and Denmark-Nornalup Heritage Trail)*

- thus would suggest the reference should be amended to “yes (or some); more needed”.
- ii. In relation to cell 4 under essential column, it references “gap” in relation to directional and informational signage; in this regard I consider there is some signage but acknowledge needs improvement therefore would suggest reference be amended to “yes but more needed” (or similar).
 - iii. In relation to cell 6 under desirable column, it references Bibbulmun Track only; should reference Munda Biddi Trail as this is the State’s premier cycle trail that does traverse the Shire of Denmark.
 - iv. In relation to cell 7 under essential column, it references “yes but more needed” in relation to public transport access; in this regard wonder if this report was done before Noel Phillip’s “water taxi” service was up and running for not certain what else we can do as a Shire in this regard; suggest change reference to “yes”
 - v. In relation to Cell 14 under desirable column, consider should read “... with few seasonal or climatic issues that could ...”
 - vi. In relation to Cell 15 under essential column, consider this should be amended to read “yes but more work needed” to reflect current work of Shire, DPaW, Munda Biddi Trail Foundation, Bibbulmun Track Foundation etc.
- e) Section 3 Situation Assessment (page 7) – should read “Denmark Tourism Inc” not “Denmark Tourism Limited”.
 - f) Section 4 Inventory Assessment Checklist (pages 8 – 16) – nowhere in the document is there a key/guide to the priority, current status or measure scores so it is not clear what each of the scores represents (i.e. is priority score 4 an urgent, medium or low priority??); should ensure final document has the scoring criteria/detail listed.
 - g) Section 4 Cultural Factors Table (page 8) – consider comments against Traditional owners cell should be amended to read “need further identification of aboriginal heritage sites (where appropriate)” noting that they are referenced in the Shire’s MHI, DAA sites and involvement in trail planning has been done for the Munda Biddi Trail etc; more work can and should be done (where appropriate) but to reference none is not quite right.
 - h) Section 4 Existing Tracks & Trails Table (page 10) – in relation to Designated Drive Trails (road or 4wd) commentary of ‘potential for more of this’, do not consider any more 4wd trails (coastal) are needed (consistent with Coastal Management Plan) so unless this is talking about other types of trails/tracks other than coastal consider this comment needs amending accordingly.
 - i) Section 4 Access Table (page 11) – in relation to Scheduled Public Transport Service commentary of ‘second daily bus service from Albany?’, presume the reference to first service is TransWA bus that operates from Albany to Perth (via Denmark)??
 - j) Section 4 Access Table (page 11) in relation to Availability of good maps and travel information commentary of ‘visitor guide only source’, this is not quite correct; is a trails brochure and other trail information produced by DPaW/respective Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail foundations as well – although could be improved; recommend commentary amends accordingly to reflect additional sources.
 - k) Section 4 Services & Amenities Table (page 12) – numerous references to river site; what/where is this site – Berridge Park? Kwoorabup? Depending on what is meant by the reference may need to commentary to change as well accordingly.
 - l) Section 5 Recommendations – what does low, medium and high priority mean in context of this document (ie. high – next 12 months; medium – 12 months to 3 years; low – 3 years +????). Once the priority contexts are known then review of priority recommendations references should be undertaken accordingly.
 - m) Section 5 Cultural Factors Table (page 19) – Row 1; this should be the responsibility of trail owner/manager (i.e. Shire, DPaw, Foundation(s)) as this recommendation relates to existing trails; do not consider should reference PATAC as this is not necessarily within their Terms of Reference (would be referred to them for comment accordingly as an advisory body (if considered relevant) and/or any established trails “committee” but essentially would be undertaken by Shire Administration staff).

- n) Section 5 Cultural Factors Table (page 19) – Row 2; again question responsibility body referenced but not certain who should be either; if relates to existing trails then should be trail owner/manager.
- o) Section 5 Aesthetic Factors Table (page 19) – Row 1; responsibility should change to read relevant trail owners/managers as not all trails are Shire trails; may also need some consultation with DSR (or relevant body with the expertise) for input to what is considered inspirational and demanding to promote.
- p) Section 5 Access Table (page 19) – Row 1; bus service from Albany increased reference???? Not certain DTI would wish to be the responsibility agency here. Shire should be responsible.
- q) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 19) – Row 1; recommend delete reference to PATAC (consistent with comments above).
- r) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 20) – Row 2; consider Trails WA/DSR/community could also be a responsibility here (particularly the potential for MTB park in town); equestrian centre – does exist (Pony Club etc) but underutilised as such (or is this reference to something else in addition??).
- s) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 20) – Rows 3, 4 & 5; consider Trails WA/DSR could also be a responsibility here as they may have expertise in this field given Shire has limited expertise and/or trail users.
- t) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 21) – Row 6; remove PATAC references.
- u) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 21) – Row 7; assume this is a reference to Stage 2 of Denmark Riverside Club as Stage 1 is not necessarily “public access/infrastructure”; not certain Stage 2 is looking at new toilets, parking either so question the reference to this.
- v) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 22) – Row 9; question Shire’s responsibility in dive/snorkel trails.
- w) Section 5 Existing Tracks and Trails Table (page 22) – Row 10; as this relates to Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail specifically this responsibility should be DPaW’s and/or the respective foundations and not necessarily the Shire’s.
- x) Section 5 Access Table (page 22) – Row 1; incorrect reference in responsibility column (currently reads High); amend accordingly to Shire.
- y) Section 5 Access Table (page 22) – Row 2; Not certain DTI would wish to be the responsibility agency here. Amend to the Shire.
- z) Section 5 Services & Amenities Table (page 23) – Row 5; do not consider public showers should be provided at the Riverside Stage 2 development; other locations??
- aa) Section 5 Services & Amenities Table (page 23) – Row 6; question if this is a Shire responsibility; should be Chamber/Industry responsibility.
- bb) Section 5 Accommodation Table (page 23) – Row 1; not solely a Shire responsibility; Chamber/Industry/DTI??
- cc) Section 5 Activities Table (page 23) – Row 1; spelling error in Opportunity cell – should read “through” in 2nd sentence.
- dd) Section 5 Activities Table (page 23) – Row 1; broader than Shire responsibility – DTI? DSR? Events organisers?
- ee) Section 5 Organisation and Management Table (page 24) – Row 1; commentary in opportunities regarding PATAC role and relationship to Council needs review in relation to their role, requirements of ‘Committees’ under LG Act etc. Appears trying to establish new committee structure but should not be a Council Committee with the limitations under LG Act etc – really depends on the charter being sought here to see who/what/how etc.
- ff) Section 5 Organisation and Management Table (page 24) – Row 1; recommendation is for new committee to develop a maintenance schedule with DPaW & Shire – consider this should change to read input into maintenance schedules of DPaW & Shire respectively (noting if there is an external committee body established then way to do this would be via a representative on PATAC – if this function retains as this is avenue to provide advice on management of Shire’s paths and trails).
- gg) Section 5 Organisation and Management Table (page 24) – Row 3; spelling error in Opportunity cell – should read “formalised” in 1st sentence.

- hh) Section 5 Organisation and Management Table (page 24) – Row 3; is this solely Shire responsibility/capability? DSR and/or Trails WA input? Mapping of existing trails – consider current trail owner/manager’s responsibility (i.e. Shire and DPaW); question need for grants to do this – should just do.
- ii) Section 5 Community Engagement Table (page 25) – Row 1; consider likely to be others; bike club?? Maybe reference here should be an example of an interested community group but do not limit it to this group only.
- jj) Section 5 Business Engagement Table (page 26) – Row 5; not certain reference in this table is appropriate given Riverside Club is not a business (previously referenced in Services & Amenities Table).
- kk) Section 5 Business Engagement Table (page 26) – Row 6; question if this is a Shire responsibility; should be Chamber/Industry responsibility.
- ll) Section 5 Priority Action List (pages 29-30) – is this not duplication of tables although does not have responsibilities against it??
- mm) Section 5 Priority Action List (page 30) – Section 4 reference to within existing projects such as Riverside Club; not supported as referenced above.
- nn) Section 7 Appendices (pages 31-33) – Wilson Headland Loop reference (being WOW walk) needs amending as not currently under construction; Moriarty/Forest Trails missing; others????
- oo) General comment: should PATAC references remain in the document, an explanation of this abbreviation should be provided for the benefit of the reader.

Statutory Obligations:

There are no relevant statutory obligations.

Policy Implications:

There are no current relevant policy implications.

Budget / Financial Implications:

The Denmark Trails Hub Project Assessment Report has a number of recommendations (page 18 of the Report) and priority actions items (page 29). Whilst the Bike Plan 2014 talks mostly to ‘construction’ and connectivity of paths and trails, this plan talks mostly about developing an overarching ‘Trail Hub’ Strategy and Master Plan with accompanying brand development and interpretation. The estimated budget for such matters all up is \$115,000, although these elements can be performed to some extent in-house, possibly with grants, and or as smaller components (they do not necessarily have to be done concurrently).

Strategic Implications:

There are significant strategic implications associated with accepting the Denmark Trail Hub Assessment.

Council’s Strategic Community Plan has the following relevant Goals that support the development of a Trails Hub for the Shire;

Recreation: ...monitor all forms of recreational and cultural facilities and services, and take careful account of the level of community support for those determining the improvements or new facilities to be supported together with their relative contribution to personal and community wellbeing.

Tourism: ...acknowledge the importance of tourism to the region, and, by innovative policies, practices and partnerships, facilitates and encourages the greater year-round sustainability of tourism, whilst monitoring and managing its impacts.

Further, the officer is aware of business planning supporting the development of a Master Trails Network for the Great Southern, currently being prepared by the Great Southern Development Commission, which would help underpin opportunities for grants to assist with implementation of the Report.

Sustainability Implications:➤ **Environmental:**

The element of interpretation in the proposed Trail Hub Report will provide opportunity to educate the community about the environmental values the community holds and shares.

➤ **Economic:**

The development and adoption of a Trails Hub Plan will assist provide opportunities to further the tourism product available to the community and businesses that rely on tourism.

➤ **Social:**

The development of a Trails Hub Plan will assist provide a valuable recreation option for locals and tourists alike of all ages.

➤ **Risk:**

Risk	Risk Likelihood (based on history and with existing controls)	Risk Impact / Consequence	Risk Rating (Prior to Treatment or Control)	Principal Risk Theme	Risk Action Plan (Controls or Treatment proposed)
That the Report is in conflict with the Bike Plan 2014.	Possible (3)	Minor (2)	Moderate (5-9)	Inadequate Document Management	Manage by advertising the Plan, receiving submissions from Directorates and the Community, and modifying one or both plans to not be in conflict.
That insufficient funds are allocated to implement the Plan if it is subsequently adopted.	Unlikely (2)	Minor (2)	Low (1-4)	Not Meeting Community expectations	Manage by subsequently adopting the plan with appropriate implementation recommendations.

Comment/Conclusion:

Whilst the document has some minor errors and modifications or clarification required as suggested by the Director of Planning & Sustainability, it also forms the basis of developing an implementation and action plan by the existing Paths and Trails Advisory Committee (PATAC).

Voting Requirements:

Simple majority.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION & OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

ITEM 8.5.1

MOVED: CR SEENEY

SECONED: CR SAMPSON

That the Denmark Trails Hub Project Assessment be received and it, together with the suggested modifications supported by the Director of Planning and Sustainability and Chief Executive Officer, be utilised by the Council's Paths and Trails Advisory Committee as a strategic informing document in conjunction with the Path Development Plan (2007 as modified) and Bike Plan (2014) and the Committee be encouraged to look for in-house and grant opportunities to implement the following priority initiatives;

1. Undertaking a Trails Audit and;
2. Preparation of a Trails Hub Strategy and Master Plan, possibly in conjunction with the City of Albany, Shire of Plantagenet and Great Southern Development Commission and;
3. Development of Trail Branding following part 2.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: 9/0

Res: 311015