



Residents of Eagle Bay Association
P O Box 64
Dunsborough WA 6281

27 May 2014

Mr Ian Stubbs
Mayor of City of Busselton
4 Ibis Court
GEOGRAPHE WA 6280

Dear Ian

Re: NVMR Finger Jetty Issue

The Residents of Eagle Bay Association would like to pass on its thanks for your assistance in ensuring that a sensible and logical decision was finally achieved on the issue of the location for a finger jetty on the east side of the Cape, suitable for use by NVMR for the emergency landing of people injured in boating incidents.

Resolving contentious issues where conflicting objectives arise is never an easy task hence our appreciation for ensuring that all parties with an interest or concern had a chance to have their concerns considered at Council debate level. In that regard we would also like to thank Councillor John McCallum who attended various jetty discussion meetings on behalf of Council and allowed a fair and balanced hearing to all sides of the debate presented at these meetings.

There were a number of relevant issues that were raised with Council officers, during the two years of considerable consultation on the finger jetty issue, that clearly provide support to the Councillors ultimate decision to vote in favour of extending the existing finger jetty at the old Dunsborough boat ramp as the best option.

Just to ensure these points are documented for future reference we have noted them as follows :

- At the recommendation of Councillor John McCallum the NVR undertook some time trials in their rescue boats to compare Eagle Bay versus the old Dunsborough boat ramp as potential, suitable jetty locations. From the Swan diving wreck site the time for a rescue boat to reach old Dunsborough was only 3 minutes longer than boat travel time to Eagle Bay. For a boat coming from an area west of Cape Naturaliste the extra boat travel time to reach old Dunsborough rather than Eagle Bay was 6 minutes. The driving time for an ambulance from Eagle Bay to Dunsborough would be at least 12 minutes hence the quickest time to get an injured person to hospital in Busselton is to land them at the old Dunsborough location. In addition, the existing finger jetty at old Dunsborough already has 24 hour lighting, an existing bitumen access to the base of the jetty for an ambulance and a cleared area adjacent to the jetty where a helicopter could be landed, if required.
- In December 2012, COB obtained a grant from RBFS to have a wave study undertaken of the coastal region from Wonnerup around to Canal Rocks. Analysis of this data shows that during the

summer months of November through to March, safe boating access to a jetty would be approx. 46% of the time at Eagle Bay compared to 63% of the time at the old Dunsborough boat ramp location. During the winter months, Eagle Bay would only be available 21% of the time compared to 50% of the time at old Dunsborough. i.e. from a weather and sea conditions point of view the old Dunsborough location is a far better site for extended periods of safe access for landing at a jetty.

- REBA engaged two separate marine engineering consultants to assess the proposal put forward to construct a finger jetty at Eagle Bay. Both consultants concluded that as Eagle Bay is an exposed beach location subject to severe winter storms and swells, a substantial breakwater would be required to protect a jetty structure. Also, due to the seasonal sand movement within the near shore areas of Eagle Bay, a jetty to provide a guaranteed sufficient depth for rescue boats would need to be around twice the length being proposed (i.e. around 120m rather than the proposed 60m).
- During the holiday period from Christmas to New Year in December 2013, REBA undertook a survey of recreational beach users to obtain feedback on their views of the proposed finger jetty at the Eagle Bay beach. Those “not in favour” were asked if they would sign a petition against the proposal. Over that short 6 day period 530 signatures were obtained opposing the jetty and of that number who signed, 180 were actual boat owners. Less than a dozen people were “in favour” of the jetty concept and declined to sign the petition.
We were not surprised at the overwhelming opposition to the proposed finger jetty, but we were very surprised at the number of recreational beach goers that utilise the Eagle Bay beach. Many came from the Dunsborough and Busselton areas, plus quite a few tourists.
- Also during the holiday period noted in the dot point above, we made a number of visits to the old Dunsborough boat ramp and discussed with recreational boating people using the ramp their views on the existing finger jetty at that location. Almost all thought it was a great improvement for boat ramp users but complained that it was not long enough. Only the dog legged section can be used for tying up boats that have just been launched or waiting to be pulled out and this current length only accommodates about 2 boats. Hence the Councils decision to extend the finger jetty at the old Dunsborough ramp not only services the needs of the NVMR, but also provides an added benefit for recreational boating.
(Although the proposal approved by Council recommended a jetty extension of 12m our investigations and research indicated that a jetty extension of at least 20m would be more appropriate to service the needs of the boat ramp users. Perhaps this is still an option that warrants further consideration by Council officers.)
- During joint discussion meetings with NVMR they noted that they expected that a finger jetty at Eagle Bay might be used for an emergency situation about once every 5 years and then it would only be possible if the weather conditions were reasonably calm at the time of the emergency. This hardly seems like a reasonable justification for the initial construction cost and ongoing maintenance cost of a jetty for just emergency purposes.

It is also worth noting that during our two years of research and fact gathering we checked on the actual reported emergency boating incidents in the Cape Naturalist region and we obtained from the Department of Transport (Marine Division) a list of all the reported boating incidents in the southwest region for the years 2007 through to 2012. These incident reports showed that the vast majority of reported incidents occurred on the west side of Cape Naturaliste and the closest point of emergency response to these incidents would have been Canal Rocks. At a joint meeting with NVMR they also stated that Canal Rocks would be their first preference for a rescue finger jetty but a

breakwater protection would be required to ensure all weather availability for a finger jetty at this location.

We would therefore urge Council to give serious consideration to upgrading the Canal Rocks facilities, including providing a breakwater protection, as this would greatly improve NVMR emergency response capability and also greatly enhance safety at this popular boat ramp for the recreational boating fraternity.

Thanks you again for ensuring our issues and concerns obtained a fair hearing and for allowing us to share the above information with you.

Yours faithfully

Don Best – President REBA