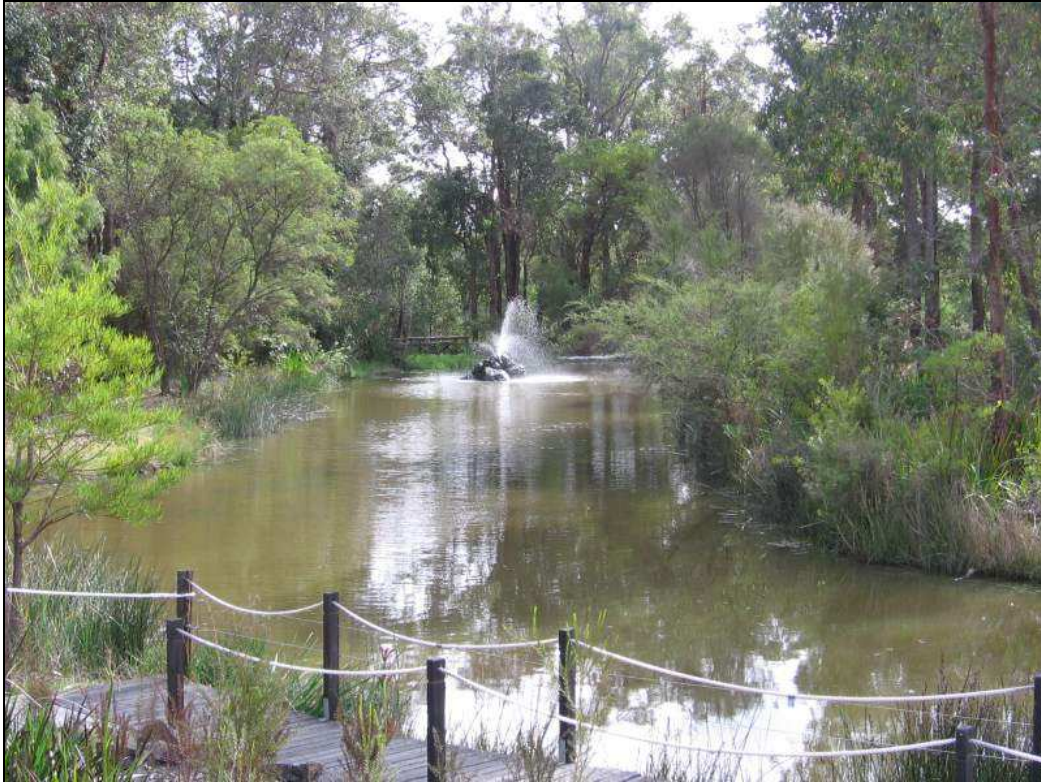


Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park



Management & Development Plan

Prepared by Kate Daniels
February 2006



Contacts:

Gail Ipsen Cutts
Director, Community Services
Shire of Manjimup
PO Box 1
Manjimup WA 6258
E-mail: info@manjimup.wa.gov.au
Telephone: 08 9771 7777

Kate Daniels
Consultant
PO Box 419
Manjimup WA 6258
E-mail: k8d@westnet.com.au
Telephone: 0407 981 805

Index of Contents

Section A: Introduction	7
Section B: The Process	
- Community Consultation and Strategic Planning	9
Consultant's Brief	9
Context	9
Methodology	9
Section C: The Park	
- Background Information	
Location	11
History	11
Natural Features	11
Buildings	12
Outdoor Structures and Exhibits	12
Activities/Events/User Groups	13
Recent Development of the Park 2000- 2005	14
Section C: Management and Development Overview	
C.1 Development Directions	15
Review of previously considered options	15
Key Elements of 2005-2010 Development Plan	17
C.2 Management	18
Current Management Structure	18
Recommendations - Management Structure	18
Recommended Management Direction (Long term)	21
Section D: 2005-2010 Development Plan	
D.1 Objectives	23
D.2 Strategic Plan - Summary and Index	27
D.3 Expanded Strategy – Proposed Actions	33
<i>(Please see additional Index to Strategies and Actions p 27.)</i>	
Appendices	
1. Outcomes Community Planning Workshops	117
2. Contributors to the consultation process	121
3. Summary of Grant Funding for the Park 2000-2005	123
4. Interview - Coach Tour Company	125
5. Background Whaleworld Management Structure	129
6. Interview – Desert Park, Alice Springs	131
7. Concept drawing for Round Building	133
Optional Attachments	
(Available to reference further information upon request)	
2005 Timber & Heritage Park Visitor Survey Report	
Low Ropes Course – Construction of Adventure	
Case Study on Southern Forest Region 2004, Sustainable	
Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC).	
Shire of Manjimup Tourism Fact Sheet 2004 (Tourism WA)	
Glossy booklet for Kauri Museum, NZ	

Executive Summary

Background

This document has been commissioned by the Shire of Manjimup to outline a strategic approach to the future management and development of the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park.

The Management & Development Plan combines the inputs of an extensive consultation process spanning five months with the consultant's previous experience working within the Shire of Manjimup with responsibility for coordinating project development within the Park.

The purpose of this document is to serve as:

- a record of the community's aspirations for the Park (as indicated in community planning forums);
- a guide for the Shire's internal planning and project implementation; and,
- a support document to be used when seeking government funding or corporate sponsorship.

Structure of the document

The Management & Development Plan is divided into four main sections:

- A. Introduction.
- B. The Process – explains why and how the Plan has been produced.
- C. The Park – background information about the existing features and useful information to include in funding applications.
- D. Strategic Development Plan – designed to provide a detailed 'blue-print' to assist with implementation of the Plan.
 - Section D.1
Outlines the three Objectives for future development. (*Page 23.*)
 - Section D.2
Provides a summary of proposed Strategies and the Actions to achieve the desired outcomes indicating also the level of priority and recommended time frame for implementation. (*Page 27.*)
 - Section D.3
Provides a detailed explanation, where each Proposed Action is presented as a mini-proposal outlining the rationale, levels of support and, where possible, resources required for implementation. (*See Index at page 27.*)

Key Recommendations

1. That (in the short term) the Park should be developed to provide a high quality, medium-scale tourist attraction by maintaining and upgrading existing facilities/exhibits to the full extent that this is possible with available financial sources. (*See Introduction, page 7 and Key Elements, page 17.*)

Note: This recommendation is based on clear feedback from the consultation process that the community holds an expectation that *the Park should serve as a tourist facility*, as well as meeting local social/recreational/educational needs.

2. That, in developing general facilities within the Park, priority should be given to initiatives that serve the *dual* needs of the two main user groups – tourist visitors and local community members.

For example: Additional playgrounds, barbecues and seating, along with improved recreational areas and extended pedestrian networks enhance the comfort,

enjoyment and safety of both user groups. *(See Strategies 1.1 & 1.2, pages 33 – 41, and Strategy 2.8, page 95.)*

3. That future development of exhibits and attractions in the Park should present visitors with a panoramic snapshot of the heritage, culture, industries (past and present) and an interpretation of the natural environment of the Southern Forests region. *(See Section D.1 Objectives, page 23 as well as pages 68, 80 & 101.)*
4. That any major developments in the Park should be targeted to meet identified tourist visitor demands with a focus on *unique* or *iconic* attractions that represent the region's heritage, environment and culture. *(See pages 58, 72 & 87.)*
5. That the Park should be actively promoted and professionally marketed with priority given to targeting the key market sectors likely to yield the greatest number of tourist visitors for the least expenditure of resources. *(See pages 65 – 76.)*
6. That the Round Building be developed at the earliest opportunity to serve as both the sole entry point to the Park and as a well promoted gateway into the Southern Forest region. *(See pages 80 and 105.)*
7. That reasonable entry fees should be charged to adult tourist visitors (only) to offset the costs of maintaining the Park as a highly valued recreational, cultural and educational resource with free entry for the local community. *(See page 106.)*
8. That the Shire should embark upon a proactive community engagement process to build higher levels of community participation with the aim of establishing an incorporated, community-based management structure in the longer term. *(See Strategy 1.5, page 47 and Section C.2 Management, pages 18-21)*
9. That the tourism aspect of the Park should be professionally managed as a non-profit business with the Shire maintaining some responsibility for basic maintenance of infrastructure and grounds. *(See Strategy 3.1, pages 109- 112.)*
10. That the Shire should create a full time Park Manager position to provide the human resource required to coordinate the implementation of the development plan.

Note: This final recommendation is pivotal to the successful implementation of the development plan as few of the preceding recommendations can be achieved with the current levels of staffing within the Shire. The Shire Council should be willing to fully subsidise this position until the financial returns anticipated from fee collection allow the position to be self-sustaining. *(See pages 18-21, 106 & 109.)*

Conclusion

Income derived from developing the Park as a commercial tourist attraction will assist the Council in offsetting the costs of maintaining a highly valued community facility.

If the attractions provided in the Park are sufficient to influence the same visitors (target 23,400) to extend their stay in the region by one night, an additional \$2 million per annum could be injected into the Southern Forest region's economy.

Section A: Introduction

Manjimup Shire Council has debated the issues surrounding the future management and development of the Timber & Heritage Park for a number of years.

The Strategic Plan adopted by Council at its meeting in 10 February 2000, stated: "Financial Objectives – 11 ...Timber Park to be upgraded then offered for long term lease, investigation to examine market interest prior to upgrading. Council to acknowledge a financial subsidy may be required over an initial 5 year period."

In 2002, the Community Development Officer presented a discussion paper to the Council that proposed three options:

1. Shire to develop the Park.
2. Shire will develop the Park to a certain standard then pass it over to the commercial sector.
3. Commercial sector to develop the Park.

Given the 'apparent' success of major tourist icons such as the Stockmans' Hall of Fame in Longreach and the Miners' Hall of Fame in Kalgoorlie, in 2004 Council engaged the services of Insight Communications to produce an Interpretation Concept Plan along these lines.

The Mission Statement for the Interpretation Plan was:

For the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park to be a timber industry icon and a major tourist attraction for the region making a significant contribution to the commercial sustainability of Manjimup.

A final draft of the Interpretation Concept Plan was produced in September 2004 and was endorsed 'in principle' by the Manjimup Shire Council.

Viewed primarily from an interpretation perspective, the 2004 Interpretation Plan presented a vision for a major redesign of the Park and contained many valuable and desirable recommendations for the Park's development.

There were, however, serious concerns regarding Council's capacity to generate the funds required to implement the Interpretation Plan's recommendations and whether this level of expenditure would be compensated with the high number of visitors and financial returns anticipated in the report. These concerns appear justified by Tourism industry advisers who caution against overcapitalising in the development of *major* tourist facilities where visitor demand cannot be guaranteed.¹

During its 2005-2006 Financial Year Budget deliberations, there was again debate about the future of the Timber & Heritage Park. In the light of competing demands for Council's limited resources, the need to cut back expenditure across all departments and the ongoing costs of maintaining the facility with no evident financial return, some Councillors considered that the Park should be closed.

Community Services Director, Gail Ipsen Cutts made a presentation to Council in which she provided copies of a Visitor Survey conducted in the Park, along with a summary of comments and origin data of visitors signing the Visitors' Book in the Timber Museum.

Survey data collected during the first five months of 2005 from 118 recipients representing 321 visitors gives a clear indication that the visit to the Park was a positive experience for the visitor and therefore a positive reflection on the region. ²

¹ Verbal comments made by Bill Mabey, Northern NSW Regional Tourism Manager during the course of consultations in preparing this Plan. Supported in principle by WA Tourism advisers consulted in the past 12 months.

² 2005 Park Visitor Survey Report is available as an Optional Appendix to this plan for further reference.

In 2004, 2059 visitors chose to sign the Visitor Book in the Timber Museum, representing only a small percentage of park visitors. 10.6% of these visitors were from the Manjimup area with 32.5% from WA, 37.7% from Interstate and 19.5% from overseas.

Overall the data indicated that tourists visiting the Park from numerous points of origin still find it to be a very interesting and worthwhile destination. Comments in both the Visitor Book and Visitor Survey were overwhelmingly positive with only limited criticism of the deterioration in some areas of the Park. The Visitor Survey also clearly indicated that tourists expect to pay an entry fee for what they experience in the Park.

Ms Ipsen Cutts presented Council with three options for consideration:

- a. Close the Park until funds are available for redevelopment.
- b. Carry out garden, lawn, and general maintenance only until funds are available to upgrade building at the entrance of the park (old bureau).
- c. Maintain status quo, maintaining buildings, gardens and bush land; finalise strategic plan and continue appropriate development as funds become available.

Council resolved to accept Option C, which involved conducting a community consultation process and the preparation of a Management and Development Plan.



Community services director, Gail Ipsen Cutts, consults with blacksmith, George Ciofu (left) and park caretaker, Nick Cicconi, on the one-tree bridge replica in the Park.

Section B: The Process

Community Consultation and Strategic Planning

In August 2005, Kate Daniels was engaged for a four-month period to undertake a community consultation process and prepare a Management & Development Plan to guide the Park's development for the next five-year period.

Ms Daniels was previously employed as the Shire of Manjimup's Community Development Officer with responsibility for overseeing the Timber & Heritage Park for a period of eleven months. Ms Daniels has an extensive background in coordinating community and economic development projects at regional and state levels, with a particular emphasis on community consultation and strategic planning for project development.

Consultant's Brief

The basic terms of reference in the consultant's brief were as follows:

1. Undertake a community consultation process to ascertain future directions for development of the Park.
2. Prepare a Management & Development Plan with recommendations for short, medium and long-term strategic directions.

Context

Mission Statement

The mission of the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park is to be a venue that is focused on the provision of quality experiences that convey the district's rich heritage and diversity.

Objectives 2005 -2010

The following objectives were identified to define the context for consultation and planning process:

- Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.
- Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.
- Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Methodology

Community Consultation

A series of community planning forums were held to identify issues and prioritise strategies for the future development of the Park.

These included:

- Two public forums
 - The Park as Community Resource
 - The Park as Our Cultural Heritage
- Two invitation-only forums
 - The Park as Tourist Destination
 - Key stakeholders - maintenance and upkeep
- A Final Plenary Forum integrating the inputs of all previous meetings and addressing 'big picture' issues such as entrance fees and the uses of the Round Building.

Community planning forums were well attended (26-30 participants in each public forum) with high levels of enthusiasm and a strong commitment to the Park's continuation demonstrated throughout the process.

Participants were provided with a range of discussion topics and, through whole group and small group sessions, identified and prioritised a range of suggested strategies. See Appendix 1 for Summary of Outcomes of community planning forums.

Individual and industry consultations

Members of the public who were unable to attend the community planning forums were invited to complete a printed comment sheet and submit their suggestions.

In addition, key individuals involved in the Tourism industry were consulted and asked for feedback on the viability of the various strategies raised in the public forums.

A list of people consulted in this process is attached at Appendix 2.

Preparation of Management & Development Plan

The terms of reference for Plan preparation were as follows:

- Analyse data collected from various inputs (consultation process, previous reports/studies, Council priorities).
- Seek professional expertise regarding viability of community-recommended strategies.
- Write up the Management & Development Plan including community consultation inputs and consultant recommendations.
- Include recommendations for short, medium and long-term strategies to achieve agreed objectives.
- Present to Council for endorsement.
- Present endorsed Management & Development Plan to community.



L- R: Councillor Robert Taylor, Gail Ipsen Cutts (Director Community Services), Kate Daniels, Nancy and David Giblett at the first Community Planning Forum.

Section C: The Park

Background Information³

Location

The Park is a 9.6682 hectare site (Reserve 26199) formerly known as Alex Jones Wildlife Park.

Its boundaries are Graphite Road, Rose, Edward and Ward Streets. It is situated within the town site, surrounded by residential development and some commercial businesses. The (now inoperative) railway line passes close to the eastern boundary (Giblett St.).

It is managed and maintained on behalf of the community by the Shire of Manjimup and reflects the diverse history of the area, with specific emphasis on the natural beauty of the district, as well as the timber industry, which is a major contributor to the local economy. The Park is in the heart of the Manjimup town site and has been set aside for the local and tourist communities to enjoy. It is a marvellous venue for outdoor activities as it is spacious, attractive and has naturally friendly open spaces.

History

The Park originated as a local wildlife reserve. Western Australia's only Timber Museum was opened on 8 October 1977.

The Timber Park then grew around the Museum. In 1985-86, in a joint Manjimup Shire/Commonwealth Employment Project (CEP), the Park was further developed with the assistance of local businesses and individuals.

The Park contains some very unique buildings. The Timber Museum's architecture represents a stand of Karri trees and is constructed with local materials, and the circular Entry Building is made of mud bricks with a Karri shake roof. Many other buildings situated at the Park have been relocated and most have been refurbished to represent a Forests Department/ Mill Town/ Group Settlement Hamlet.

In 1986, Bunnings Pty Ltd, as part of their centenary celebrations, built the Age of Steam Museum and provided its exhibits. It was then donated to the community.

As well as Bunnings Pty Ltd, the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), the South West Development Authority (now Commission), the Western Australian Tourism Commission (WATC), the Shire of Manjimup and many businesses, service clubs and individuals have made an enormous contribution to the development of the Park over the years. It is the most identifiable landmark in Manjimup and a great deal of 'ownership' is felt by many.

Originally, the Park was developed as a 'museum' to record the history of the timber industry within the district. As the historical collection of exhibits grew, it was noted that the 'museum' had evolved and covered all aspects of life during the early days of the community.

The community recognised that there was a need to change the name of the Park to reflect all the historical exhibits. In late 2002, the area officially became known as the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park.

³ Information in this section extracted from the Shire's 2000 Management & Development Plan, the Insight Communications Interpretive Concept Plan and a presentation made to the Manjimup Shire Council by the Director of Community Services in July 2005.

Natural Features

Land Form

The natural land form gently slopes from the front of Edwards St. at approximately 272m AHD, back to the north east corner, Graphite Rd. and Rose St. at approximately 265m AHD.

Vegetation

The Park is a mixture of exotic gardens, lawn and native vegetation which has been complemented by local wildflowers which create an attractive display.

Waterways

The Park features a constructed wetland area which has been designed to filter the town's storm water run-off before it enters the Wilgarup River system.

Visual Qualities

The Park provides different landscapes within the one area, so that visitors move through the bushland setting, which includes some marshy areas, to open cultivated areas of lawn, children's playgrounds and gardens surrounding the various buildings and outdoor displays.

Buildings

Entry Building (Round Building)

The circular mud brick building, which formerly accommodated the Manjimup Tourist Bureau, creates an impressive entrance through which visitors could enter the Park.

State Timber Museum

The architecturally unique building of the Timber Museum is an interpretation of a small stand of trees. It provides a fitting setting for the only Museum in Western Australia to specialise in the history of the Timber Industry.

Blacksmith Shop

This wooden building has been created as an active display. A blacksmith has leased the area, which is open to the public and practices smithing several days of the week.

Woodturners' Shed

Jarrah offcuts lining the outside of this long shed give a rustic feel to this building which is home to the Manjimup Woodturners' Group. Visitors have the opportunity to interact with hobbyists producing their fine wood crafts and several days of the week.

Age of Steam Museum

This wooden structure was designed and constructed by workers at Bunnings Pty Ltd, Manjimup, as part of their centenary celebrations. It contains an impressive static display of steam machines and historical photographs. This project was donated to the Shire for the community upon completion.

Historic Hamlet

The historic hamlet consists of a number of relocated buildings. These include the police lockup and police station, the school, Dr Williams' surgery and a typical home of the early 1900s.

Tower

The replica fire tower is a wooden structure built by CALM in 1988 and donated to the Timber Park.

Café

Presently operating under the name 'Creative Collectables,' the café/showroom is leased by the Shire to a private business operator.

Outdoor Structures & Exhibits

Rotundas

There are two rotundas in the Timber & Heritage Park. They are circular areas of approximately 10m diameter, roofed with the same style Karri shakes as the Entry Building. The structure near the central pond has large, wooden tables with bench seats attached. BBQs are situated nearby.

Children's Playground

Installed in 2000, the adventure style, wooden playground equipment is designed for enjoyment by all ages.

Exhibits

There are a number of exhibits situated in the grounds of the Park which are acknowledged as being part of the museum collection. These include:

- Willamette Steam Hauler.
- South Australian 'Y' Class Steam Locomotive.
- The Whim.
- Logging Arches.
- Eight Wheel Bogey.
- Ransome & Simms Traction Engine converted to rail "Snortin' Liz".
- Robey Undertype Steam Engine.
- Jinker.
- RD6 Caterpillar Crawler and Logging Arch.
- Snigging Shoes.
- Marshall Steam Engine and Boiler.

Walk Paths

The paths meander around the Park allowing visitors access to the various exhibits.

Walk Bridge

A memorial to the soldiers who served in the timber companies during of WWII.

Federation Island

This island that commemorates the Centenary of Australia's Federation features a single-log bridge, gazebo and wooden walkways through a landscape of native shrubs and wildflowers.

Activities/Events/User Groups

- Cherry Harmony Concert
- Australia Day
- Qualagunga Festival
- Harmony Day
- Volunteer Day
- Outdoor Cinemas

- Christmas Functions (numerous)
- Birthday Parties – Children (numerous)
- Wedding Services & Receptions
- Funeral Services
- Work Functions
- Annual Teddy Bear Picnics

- Schools/Education (numerous)
- TAFE - Woodturners
- Historical and Heritage Groups
- Tour Groups
- Visitors (overseas, inter/intra state)

- Locals (Families and individuals)
- Vintage Vehicle Enthusiasts
- Steam Enthusiasts
- Creative Collectables
- Blacksmith
- Friends of the Timber Park
- Service Clubs
- Landcare
- Ribbons of Blue
- Work for the DOLE
- GreenCorp
- Volunteer Resource Centre
- Corrective Services
- Community Service Orders

Recent Development of the Park (2001 – 2005)

- Federation Island established
- 3 phase Power Upgrade
- Lighting
- Road works
- Woodturners' Shed
- Boardwalks
- Paving
- Pond works
- Landscaping/gardens
- Lions' Gardens
- Blacksmith's Shed upgrade
- Hamlet Viewing Screens upgraded
- Interpretation and signage upgrades
- Interpretation Concept Plan
- Forestry Shed Enclosure and Viewing Panels for Vintage Vehicles
- Forestry shed extensions
- New entrance gateway
- Steam Museum Interpretation upgrade
- Karri Ecosystem exhibit upgrade in Timber Museum
- Identification Markers for Wildflower Garden
- Green Corps 2005 (various environmental management projects)

GREEN CORPS 2005-06: CALM botanist, Ray Cranfield, assists team leader, Mike Beall, and Green Corps team members with mapping significant trees in the Park.



Section C - Management & Development Overview

C.1 Development Directions

Review of previously considered options

In the past five years, the following options have been proposed for the future of the Park.

- A. Shire to develop the Park to a certain standard then lease to the commercial sector.⁴
- B. Commercial sector to develop the Park.⁵
- C. Park to be developed to be a timber industry icon and a major tourist attraction.⁶
- D. Close the Park until funds are available for redevelopment.⁷
- E. Minimal development and general maintenance only. (The current status quo.)⁸

The merits and disadvantages of the above options were taken into consideration before preparing the 2005-2010 Development Plan. A brief summary of the reasons for rejecting the preceding options follows:

- A. Shire to develop the Park to a certain standard then lease to the commercial sector.*
and
- B. Commercial sector to develop the Park.*

When Council has been unable to demonstrate the Park's financial viability with all the advantages of having access to high levels of government funding, corporate support and volunteer labour, it is highly unlikely that any sensible commercial operator would be willing to take on managing the Park in its present form.

If a commercial operator were interested in managing the Park it is likely that they would wish to substantially change the focus or nature of business conducted there, which could conflict with community expectations and possibly generate concerns from government funding agencies that have substantially invested in the Park as a community-operated facility.

Options A&B also raise issues with regard to the custodianship of the community heritage collection and the maintenance the Park's environmental features, including the town's stormwater run-off and filtering.

It may be possible for Option A to be adopted in the longer term with some aspects of the Park's management being leased commercially, but only when it has been demonstrated that these aspects are commercially viable and only under a proscriptive lease arrangement that would ensure the quality of service provision to tourists and local community stakeholders could be maintained at a high standard.

- C. Park to be developed to be a timber industry icon and a major tourist attraction.*

The thinking behind the commissioning of the Interpretation Concept Plan was to develop the Park as a major tourist facility along the lines of a Timberman's Hall of Fame.

In "Section A – Introduction" concerns were identified with regard to the cost of developing a major tourist facility and the strong possibility that actual returns on capital investment may not be as favourable in reality as the appearance of large scale tourist facilities suggest.

⁴ Manjimup Shire Strategic Plan adopted 10 February 2000.

⁵ Community Development Officer presentation to Council 2002.

⁶ Interpretation Concept Plan 2004.

⁷ Community Services Director presentation to Council, July 2005.

⁸ As above.

In addition, focussing only on the Timber industry as the region's heritage is to overlook other key aspects of the area's history that may, in fact, be more unique and provide far more diversity in the audience the Park might attract. See Proposed Action 2.6.1.

D. Close the Park until funds are available for redevelopment.

Closure of the Park for any period of time would be likely to draw considerable community backlash as the Park serves as a repository for the heritage of the district and is the culmination of 40 years of community volunteer commitment.

Although not all local people are regular Park visitors, the recent suggestion that the Park may close met with disapproval from a broad spectrum of the community – well beyond those who actually attended community planning forums.

There is a strong expectation that the Park will remain open and continue to provide:

- a record of the community's cultural heritage readily available for locals to share with their children and future generations as well as personal friends and family visiting from out of town;
- an attractive environment in which to conduct private and community social and recreational activities; and,
- a tourist facility capable of attracting travellers into the town.

In closing the Park, Council would have to take into account the legal and financial ramifications of terminating existing leases and a subsequent loss of revenue. Regardless of whether the Park remains open to the public, Council would still be liable for the costs incurred in ensuring security, maintenance and upkeep of the existing buildings and grounds.

E. Minimal development and general maintenance only. (The current status quo.)

Due to limited availability of human and financial resources, in the past 18 months the focus for the Park has been on basic general maintenance and completion of previously funded developmental projects.

Repairs and maintenance planned for the current Financial Year include repairs to the roof of the Timber Museum (Building Department maintenance) along with replacement of the shingled roof on the Round Building (with funds provided through Grants for Forest Communities).

A team of nine young people involved in a six-month Green Corps project is currently undertaking a range of environmental projects such as weed and fish eradication, mapping of significant trees and weed risk areas, assisting with creating an Indigenous Plant Trail, installing a barbecue area and constructing seating.

Other government-funded projects being undertaken in this Financial Year include:

- Installation of wildflower identification markers.
- Upgrade of the Karri Ecosystem display in the Timber Museum.
- Production of a brochure providing detailed information on the Karri Ecosystem.
- Mapping and tagging Significant Trees in the Park.
- Production of a Significant Trees map/brochure.
- Extension of the pedestrian network to link the Steam Museum and Woodturners Shed.

It is difficult to initiate any new developmental projects while simultaneously overseeing completion of existing projects unless adequate human resources are available for project development, funding submission preparation and coordination of new project implementation stages.

Most government funding also requires that a percentage of the total project expenditure be contributed in 'matching funding' from the applicant. Although the requirement for a matching component can often comprise 'in kind' contributions (such as voluntary labour or regular maintenance items) or might be a balance of State and Commonwealth funding partnerships, some level of capital expenditure is generally required from the applicant.

When Shire funds are often already stretched in meeting statutory requirements (such as road maintenance), as well as the diverse demands of community expectations, it can be difficult to allocate even the comparatively minor Shire contributions to leverage large government grants.

Even so, in the past five years, projects in the Park have received \$287,784 in government grants – funds that would not otherwise have been allocated to the region. Refer to Appendix 3.

With intense competition for limited Council resources, it is understandable that the Park is being managed in a 'holding pattern', however this is not a position that can be maintained indefinitely.

If a policy of minimal development and providing only basic maintenance is continued, the general state of the Park will continue to deteriorate and draw further negative comment from locals and visitors alike regarding the neglected appearance of some areas.

Irrespective of whether it remains open to the public, the Park's general upkeep incurs costs. The facility will continue to be a deficit budget item until it begins to generate compensatory income.

It is clear that an investment of additional resources is required in the short to medium term if the Park is to be developed to a stage where it is partially or fully self-sustaining.

Key elements of the 2005 –2010 Management &Development Plan

Through feedback from Council staff, Councillors and members of the Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee, some generally agreed aims guided the direction of the consultation process and preparation of the Development Plan although not specifically mandated in the consultant's brief. These elements have been taken into consideration in developing the plan for the Park's development in the next five years:

- Engage higher levels of local community participation and visitation.
- Develop a *medium* scale tourist facility via professional management, marketing and presentation of existing features. ("Do the best with what we have.")
- Undertake further development, incorporating those aspects of the Interpretation Concept Plan that are *achievable* with available or obtainable resources.
- Generate income from tourist visitors to subsidise the Park's role as a social, cultural and recreational asset for the enjoyment of the local community.
- Utilise the Park's potential as a tourist feature to attract additional income into the town.

C.2 Management

Current Management Structure

The Timber & Heritage Park is managed by the Shire of Manjimup on behalf of the community.

The Community Services directorate carries responsibility for managing and developing the Park, along with day-to-day maintenance. Lawns are mowed under a contract arrangement through Parks and Gardens department, while the Building department undertakes maintenance involving major capital works and oversees the security contract.

A Park Caretaker is employed through Community Services to open the Park and provides cleaning, maintenance, gardening and landscaping services each weekday morning.

Until July 2005, a half-time Community Development Officer was responsible for coordinating development projects in the Park (along with other community development responsibilities).

The Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee (T&HPAC) meets bi-monthly to guide the development of projects in the Park.

The Committee comprises formally nominated and appointed representatives (and proxies) of each of the following:

- Councillor
- Community Services Directorate
- Manjimup Tourist Bureau
- Manjimup Historical Society
- Wood Turners Association
- CALM
- Gunns (Formerly SOTICO/Bunnings)
- Community member.

As an Advisory Committee to Council, the T&HPAC has the following formal function:

1. To provide advice to the Council on the orderly development, maintenance and promotion of the Manjimup Timber Park.
2. Undertake voluntary maintenance work at the Timber Park.

The Committee has no delegated powers and any advice given to Council is provided the same respect and consideration as all other community input. Members are appointed for a two-year term and changes in representation require endorsement by a Council meeting.

Recommendations - Management Structure

The following changes to the current management structure are recommended (in the short term):

- *That a full-time manager be appointed to staff the Park entry building and coordinate the implementation of the Development Plan.*
- *That the current Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee be disbanded and replaced with:*
 - *Marketing and Development Reference Group*
 - *Six-monthly Key Stakeholders Planning Forum*
 - *Manager's written progress report (quarterly) distributed to key stakeholders as well as Council.*

Rationale

The level of priority assigned to the Park's development and proposed development directions adopted by Council in recent years do not appear to reflect the community's aspirations for the facility. (See introduction to Objective 2.)

While undoubtedly a valuable 'community' facility, allocating management responsibility to the Community Services directorate and providing minimal management resources supports a perception that the Park's development is a 'soft' and non-essential aspect of Council business and overlooks the facility's real potential as an *economic development* engine.

The provision of high quality facilities for the local community is an important incentive encouraging people to want to live and invest in the region. Where the Shire Council provides these services, however, the costs of development and upkeep are usually reflected in Council rates. Unlike most other areas of Council expenditure, if properly developed, the Park at least has the potential to *generate an external income source* (from tourists) and become partially or fully self-sustainable. This reduces the cost to ratepayers for a facility they, too, can enjoy.

As a tourist facility, the Park also has the capacity to draw visitors to spend their money in the town of Manjimup and surrounding region. The loss of potential revenue in Council's failure to fully capitalise on the only existing tourist attraction in the Manjimup CBD is not viewed favourably by a community attempting to recover from the restructuring of its major industry.

While the Timber & Heritage Park is denied the human and financial resources necessary to ensure its further development into a self-sustaining tourist facility, it will increasingly become a depreciating asset and fulfil the perception that it is "nothing but a drain on Council funds".

This misguided perception ignores the Park's full potential to be developed as an income-generating tourism facility in which it might be more appropriately viewed as an integral aspect of Economic Development planning where the Shire has a key role in facilitating a robust economic environment for its residents.

A shift in perception about the Park's positioning within Council's business priorities is required at the senior decision-making level. To meet the community's expectation that the Park should attract tourists as well as serving the local community, Council will need to allocate appropriate resources to facilitate strategic development aimed at future self-sustainability.

Appoint a Park Manager

The appointment of a Park Manager is imperative for the following Development Plan to have any possibility of being successfully implemented.

Until recently, it was assumed that coordinating the Park's management and development could be undertaken by a half-time Community Development Officer whose job description also includes responsibility for administering Community Grants, preparing the Disability Access Plan, developing Arts & Culture as well as general community development. In practical terms, if other duties were given equal consideration, the time available to focus on the Park's management and development would be eight hours per week.

The experience of the last few years clearly demonstrates that this expectation is simply not achievable within the time allocation, as evidenced by the number of incomplete projects spanning the term of three successive appointees to the position.

In the following Development Plan, some attempt has been made to estimate the human resources required to implement the proposed actions. It should be quite evident that the recommended strategies cannot be carried out without devoting the time of a multi-skilled professional to undertake the various tasks that include:

- Managing the Park and Main Entry Building.
 - (Initially) staffing the Entry.
 - Business management of the Entry.
 - Developing merchandising and retail area.
 - Liaising with key stakeholders, lessees and corporate exhibitors.
 - Monitoring the status of the Park's buildings, infrastructure and gardens and coordinating necessary maintenance.
 - Overseeing security, opening and closing of the Park.
- Building networks and developing community participation.
 - Training and supervising volunteers and (in future) paid staff.
 - Attending meetings with relevant stakeholder groups.
 - Developing relationships to encourage corporate sponsorship.
- Developing and managing projects.
 - Developing partnerships and liaising with stakeholders to design projects.
 - Preparing (numerous) funding submissions.
 - Liaising with funding bodies.
 - Overseeing project implementation.
 - Supervising consultants and contractors.
 - Acquittal and reporting on projects.
- Developing and implementing a promotion and marketing strategy.
 - Preparing promotion and marketing materials.
 - Liaising with and making presentations to tourism agencies.
 - Attending relevant trade shows and conferences.
 - Developing and maintaining marketing partnerships with other tourism operators.
- Managing and developing the heritage collection and exhibits.
 - Sourcing interpretive materials and artefacts for any new exhibits.
 - Liaising with historians, designers and local history holders.
 - Overseeing the creative development of new exhibits and displays.
 - Managing the current heritage collection and archives.

Unless the Shire is prepared to allocate adequate human resources dedicated specifically to undertaking these tasks, only basic management and no further significant development is likely to occur in the Park. Although it is likely that the Shire would be required to fully fund this position for a two-year period, it is envisaged the salary and on costs would be compensated by entry fees after this time. See Proposed Actions 3.1.2 and 3.2.1.

Disband the Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee

The Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee (T&HPAC) appears to have outlived the purpose for which it was originally created. As a formal Advisory Committee of Council it is bound by statutory regulations with regard to its composition, appointment of members and term of appointment and may not always provide a full representation of key stakeholders, which tend to change more frequently than the Advisory Committee appointments process enables.

Although the T&HP Advisory Committee has provided a useful conduit for communication between Council and some of the Park's stakeholders, there is also considerable administrative work in servicing such a committee. With the appointment of a Park Manager, the reporting function via the Advisory Committee would be superseded by direct reporting.

The Park Manager would also be in a position to liaise directly with tenants and stakeholder groups, dealing administratively on a day-to-day basis with any issues and concerns and only bringing matters to Council's attention where their decision-making powers are required.

The Advisory Committee has no delegated powers and, therefore, has no particular advantage over other forms of engaging the involvement of stakeholders in influencing the direction of developments within the Park. A more dynamic and informal consultation

process is preferred wherein the Manager would be able to convene meetings with relevant stakeholders according to the development projects underway.

It would be useful, however, if the Park Manager is able to intermittently draw upon the expert guidance of a core reference group that might be composed of Councillors, senior Council staff, a representative from Tourism, representatives of the key funding agencies and corporate supporters, as well as actively involved community members. The composition and convening of these meetings should be based on the Manager's advice and the nature and requirements of projects being developed at the time.

In addition, a planning forum of all key stakeholders (similar to the Key Stakeholders forum that was conducted as part of the consultation process for developing this Plan) could be held twice a year to review progress of the Plan's implementation and recommend any changes in direction.

In the interim period, a written Progress Report could be disseminated on a quarterly basis to a database of key stakeholders to ensure they are kept updated on developments and retain a sense of ownership in the Park's projects. The Progress Report should also be provided to Council.

The decision to disband the T&HP Advisory Committee and adopt the recommended alternative forms of consultation should be put to the Advisory Committee for their endorsement. No major resistance to the recommendation is anticipated at this stage.

Recommended Management Direction (Long term)

Although handing over management of the Park to a commercial operator has been Council's favoured long-term option⁹, this may not be the most effective or ethical solution.

While the management of a tourist facility is not considered to be part of the core business of a local government authority, the issue is complicated by the fact that the land itself, as well as the historical content, was entrusted to the Shire of Manjimup to manage on behalf of the community. Further development of the Park has been assisted by a long history of community volunteerism and government funding granted under the auspices of the Park being a community facility.

Allowing the Park to be managed by a private enterprise agency that will commercially benefit from a facility developed from this strongly community-oriented background raises a number of ethical issues and is likely to be met with justifiable disapproval from the individuals, families and companies that have contributed to its evolution.

Recommendation

If Council wishes to divest itself of responsibility for managing the Park in the longer term, it would be preferable if this were to occur in a manner where the facility remains under some form of community-based management.

This could be achieved by rebuilding high levels of community involvement and encouraging the formation of an incorporated, non-profit, community-based management group.

The advantages of a community based management model are:

- the community would retain a real sense of ownership of the Park;
- an incorporated community association would continue to be eligible to apply for government funding to assist in further development; and,
- a non-profit organisation would be able to provide more affordable services than a commercial operator intent on deriving profit from the facility.

⁹ Manjimup Shire Strategic Plan - February 2000 - Financial Objectives – 11.

Examples of community tourist facilities operating successfully under a similar management model are Whale World in Albany and the Kauri Museum in New Zealand. Refer to Appendix 5 for further details of Whale World's management structure.

Proactive facilitation of community participation would be necessary to re-engage the levels of commitment required to establish a community-management model for the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park. (Refer to Strategy 1.5.) On Council's part, this would also require a willingness to dispose of the expectation that community members should devote their voluntary services to the Park without a concurrent devolution of decision-making power.

The community-building process should be developed in tandem with the strategies recommended in the Development Plan, demonstrating that the Park can be run as a self-sufficient non-profit business providing a high standard of services to visitors and locals and with the long-term aim of handing over management to a community-based group.



Paul Omodei, MLA, addresses community members at the launch for plant identification markers in the wildflower garden.

Section D: Strategic Development Plan (2006 – 2011)

D1. Objectives

An Objective defines WHAT we are aiming to achieve. Three simple objectives were identified to capture the key measurable desired outcomes in developing the Park.

1. Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.
2. Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.
3. Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Although the Timber & Heritage Park may not yet enjoy tourist icon status, through broader feedback received throughout this consultation process it is clear that the Park is firmly established as an icon of considerable significance within the local community's perception.

Some typical comments from locals include:

"We were married there and the photographs by the azalea garden and pond looked wonderful – as good as any we could have had in a Perth venue." (Couple in their late 30s.)

"When the kids were little I'd push the pram down there and take a picnic lunch. I'd relax with a book on a rug and the boys would play for hours and hours on that old steam loco." (Mother of three.)

"It's the only really decent park we have. There's something there for all the family." (Elderly lady having lunch at the park.)

I don't go there myself very often but if I have visitors from Perth and want to get them out of the house for a few hours I always send them to the Timber Park. After all, what else is there for them to see without driving miles?" (Single woman in her 40s.)

"I want my kids to grow up knowing where they come from. Where else will they learn about the town's history?" (Mother of four primary school aged children.)

"We were surprised at just how many people come in here. I've never thought much about coming into the Park before but there's a lot of interesting stuff in here once you know about it." (18 year old Green Corps participant.)

People whose involvement in the Park may be only peripheral still consider the facility an integral part of community life and express deep concern at any suggestion that the Park might close.

In its 2005 Budget deliberations, Council recognised the Park's significance to the local community but stressed the need to increase the community's sense of ownership and participation in its future development.

At this time, the most frequent local visitors to the Park would be those who are concurrently utilising the café as social or meeting venue. These include families with small children; particularly mothers with toddlers or those enjoying an after school play area where they can share coffee with friends in a pleasant ambience. The café veranda has also become a popular spot for small business meetings.

To a lesser extent the park attracts local people with children using the playground equipment and families using the outdoor rotunda and barbecue area for social gatherings such as family picnics or weddings.

Community participation in the maintenance and development of the Park, particularly people volunteering to undertake works or provide services, is at a lower level than has been experienced in the past.

The strategies and actions proposed in this plan aim to:

- Expand the services offered to typical local visitors;
- Foster young people's interest in the Park by exposure through the schools;
- Provide additional services to expand the Park's functionality for social and recreational use; and,
- Facilitate greater levels of community engagement in running the Park through proactive community building initiatives.

Key Performance Indicators:

The performance indicators for this objective should be measured by a percentage increase in local visitors once a single entry point is established and visitor numbers can be monitored.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

The first community planning forum was entitled "The Park as a Community Asset" and discussion topics were aimed at discovering ways in which local usage and participation might be increased.

Given this specific focus, it was surprising that many suggestions were directed at ways to increase *tourist* visitation and the allocation of priority ranking followed this trend. This is an indicator that the community holds a strong perception of the Park as a tourist attraction, along with its role as a community facility.

There has been a long-held view that the town of Manjimup should serve as the commercial and service centre for the region and that Tourism should be left to other towns like Pemberton and Walpole. This perception appears to be gradually changing.

During the debates preceding the restructure of the Timber industry, the suggestion that Tourism might become an alternative industry was never well received. However, five years on from the Timber industry restructure becoming a *fait accompli* and with increasing concerns for the future of horticultural and agricultural industries, the region inevitably has to consider *any* alternative industries that might contribute its economic recovery.

The following information on visitors to the Shire of Manjimup from Tourism WA's 2004 Fact Sheet¹⁰ is worth considering as background to this Plan:

Domestic

- 203,500 domestic visitors stayed overnight in the Shire of Manjimup accounting for 90% of total visitors to the Shire.
- 69% of these domestic visitors were intrastate visitors, 21% were interstate visitors.
- Domestic visitors stayed 565,500 nights in the Shire of Manjimup. On average they stayed 2.8 nights.
- 71% of domestic visitors travelled to the Shire of Manjimup for holiday and leisure purposes.

International

- 23,300 international visitors stayed overnight in the Shire of Manjimup accounting for 10% of total visitors to the region.
- International visitors stayed 48,000 nights in the Shire of Manjimup. On average they stayed 2.1 nights
- 96% of international visitors travelled to the Shire of Manjimup for holiday/leisure purposes.

Note: All figures are based on a two year average over 2004 and 2004

Research from the Sustainable Tourism CRC¹¹ estimates the average expenditure per tourist per day in Southern Forests region as \$89.70.

If the proposed development of the Timber & Heritage Park as a tourist attraction meets its baseline target of 23,400 visitors per annum¹² and this same number of visitors were to extend their overnight stay in the region by just one night, an additional \$2 million dollars could be contributed annually to the region's economy.

The region's key tourist attractions are its natural resources.¹³ People come here to experience our forests, wildflowers, wildlife, beaches, coastline, water catchments, farmland and fresh produce. Many of these are reflected in the visitor experience within the Timber & Heritage Park. The Park is, therefore, in an ideal position to serve as an interpretation locus for many of the existing natural attractions visitors experience in their travels throughout the region, as well as presenting the human heritage of the district.

The Development Plan aims to increase tourist expenditure in the Park (and town) by identifying a number of key strategies and actions likely to result in capturing a greater share of the existing visitor traffic passing through the region and targeted marketing to the sectors yielding high volume visitor numbers.

Key Performance Indicators:

The performance indicators for this objective should be measured by a percentage increase in tourist visitors once a single entry point is established and visitor numbers can be monitored.

¹⁰ Shire of Manjimup Tourism Fact Sheet 2004 (published by Tourism WA) available as an Optional Attachment to this Plan upon request.

¹¹ Case Study on Southern Forest Region 2004 produced by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) based at University of Canberra is available as an Optional Attachment to this Plan upon request.

¹² See Proposed Action 3.1.2

¹³ See Proposed Action 2.10.2.

Objective 3.

Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

The Timber & Heritage Park is firmly established as a facility that adds cultural, social, recreational and aesthetic value to the community. The Manjimup Shire Council (and subsequently, ratepayers) inevitably incurs costs in maintaining the upkeep of a facility of these dimensions.

The Development Plan proposes a number of means by which increasing financial benefits can be generated from tourist visitors to offset the ongoing costs of maintaining the Park for the values it provides to the local community.

Within the scope of this five year plan it is not anticipated that a profit will be generated, but by following the proposed actions a course will be set for the facility to become increasingly self sustaining in the future.

Key Performance Indicators:

Current financial inputs are restricted to building leases on the café, woodturners' and blacksmith's sheds. Annual targets will need to be set and reviewed as the plan progresses to measure the degree to which this objective is being achieved.

Section D.2. – Summary & Index of Strategies & Actions

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Code: P = Priority; T = Timeframe; \$ = Cost; H = High; M = Medium; L = Low; Og = Ongoing.

Strategy	Action to Implement	Priority/ Timeframe / Estimated Cost	Detail Page
1.1	Develop a cultural and heritage 'precinct' in the vicinity of the Park incorporating Community Centre and adjacent parkland.		33
1.1.1	Introduce heritage relics into the play areas of the adjacent Apex Park to integrate this area into the heritage theme.	MP / MT /L\$	33
1.1.2	Explore opportunities for extending shaded parking areas and drive-thru parking for caravans in the parkland area known as the Peace Park between the Timber & Heritage Park and Library.	MP /MT /H\$	33
1.1.3	Consider siting the proposed Performing Arts and Cultural Centre within the park in the area directly north of the Round Building.	MP / LT /H\$	34
1.2	Provide more family-oriented recreational facilities.		37
1.2.1	Install gas/electric BBQs	HP / ST /L\$	37
1.2.2	Construct a stage suitable for live performances and movie projection.	HP / MT /M-H\$	37
1.2.3	Provide more shade & seating.	MP / MT /M\$	38
1.2.4	Create a small fenced playground area for tiny tots visible from the café.	HP / ST /L-M\$	39
1.2.5	Extend existing playground.	MP / LT /M\$	40
1.2.6	Construct a climbing wall and flying fox utilising the Fire Tower for supervised adventure experiences for teens to twenties visitors.	MP / LT /M-H\$	41
1.3	Offer the Park as a venue to host existing events.		43
1.3.1	Farmers' and Ticketiboo Markets in the Park	MP / ST /L\$	43
1.3.2	Cherry Festival in the Park	MP / ST /L\$	43
1.3.3	Promote the Park on Open Garden scheme	MP / ST /L\$	43
1.4	Encourage the community to conduct new events and activities in the Park.		45
1.4.1	Hold a special event focused on the Park and recreating "A Step Back in Time".	MP / MT / M\$	45
1.4.2	Encourage and support groups wishing to stage live performances, films, exhibitions and other cultural events in the Park.	MP / ST /L\$	46
1.5	Initiate and facilitate a proactive community-building program to encourage participation and enhance a stronger sense of community ownership in the Park.		47
1.5.1	Recruit, train and support a volunteer workforce for the Park.	M-HP/ST/L\$	47

1.5.2	Facilitate and support a machinery restoration group.	M-HP/ST/L\$	48
1.5.3	Facilitate and support a Horticultural Heritage group.	M-HP/ST/L\$	50
1.5.4	Continue to support projects in the Park that expand awareness of Indigenous heritage.	M-HP/ST/L\$	50
1.6 Develop stronger relationships with local schools to expose young people to the educational and recreational opportunities in the Park.			53
1.6.1	Encourage schools to use the Park as a venue for events or teaching activities.	MP / ST /L\$	53
1.6.2	Develop education resources – designed to be child and teacher friendly.	MP / ST /L\$	53
1.6.3	Students ‘adopt’ an area to maintain (e.g. gardens) or work on a project in the Park (e.g. machinery restoration).	MP / S - MT /L\$	54
1.7 Utilise the Park as a facility to educate the community about our heritage and environment.			57
1.7.1	Conduct a series of ‘awareness’ workshops or guided walks focusing on the aspects of our history and environment represented in the Park.	HP/ST/L\$	57
1.7.2	Provide safe storage for historic records and locate a publicly accessible database of the region’s history in the Park.	MP/S-MT/?\$	58



Wildflowers in bloom on the approach to the Blacksmith’s Shed.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Code: P = Priority; T = Timeframe; \$ = Cost; H = High; M = Medium; L = Low; Og = Ongoing.

Strategy	Action to Implement	Priority/ Timeframe/ Estimated Cost	Details Page
	2.1 Draw the attention of passing traffic on SW Highway and Graphite Road with an iconic entry statement.		59
	2.1.1 Erect a highly visual sculpture atop a de-limbed tree trunk at the north east corner of the park. (Dick Sprogue dancing concept)	HP/ST/H\$	59
	2.2 Improve signage on the highway and within the CBD.		63
	2.2.1 Install signs on South West Highway.	HP/ST/L\$	63
	2.2.2 Replace log signs on Giblett & Rose Streets and in front of entry building.	MP/ST/L\$	63
	2.2.3 Erect a sign at the Visitor Centre directing tourists to the Park.	MP/ST/L\$	64
	2.3 Develop and implement a professional promotion & marketing strategy.		65
	2.3.1 Develop a package of promotional materials.	HP/Og/L-M\$	65
	2.3.2 Upgrade the Timber & Heritage Park's presence on the Internet.	HP/ST/- \$	66
	2.3.3 Ensure current listings in all tourist trade magazines and web directories.	M-HP/Og/- \$	67
	2.3.4 Explore opportunities for feature articles in tourist glossies and other publications.	M-HP/Og/- \$	67
	2.3.5 Consider changing the name of the Park to reflect the evolving content and target market.	VHP/ST/L\$	68
	2.4 Actively target the coach tour market.		71
	2.4.1 Provide promotion/information packages to coach companies including commentary notes for tour drivers/guides.	VHP/ST/- \$	71
	2.4.2 Invest in improving and promoting the wildflower gardens.	VHP/ST/L\$	72
	2.4.3 Re-explore options for providing sewerage-dumping facilities for coaches.	MP/ST/?\$	74
	2.4.4 Professionally promote Park to travel agencies and tour booking companies.	HP/M-OG/M\$	75
	2.4.5 Negotiate packages and deals with travel agents, coach companies and other compatible tourist operations.	MP/M-OG/- \$	76
	2.5 Clearly identify a single entry point to the Park with an experience that makes a highly positive impact and sets the tone for the experience within.		77
	2.5.1 The Round Building should be the main focal point and entry to the Park – open daily all year.	HP/ST/?\$	77
	2.5.2 Utilise the Round Building for purposes compatible with its primary function as Entry Building for the Park.	HP/ST-Og/\$H	80

2.5.3	Construct a covered veranda between the Café and the Round Building	MP/MT/\$M-H	83
2.5.4	Provide access to toilets from within the Park when multiple entries are closed.	MP/MT/\$M-H	84
2.6 Develop a unique experience on the tourist map with a definite 'point of difference' from other tourist venues.			87
2.6.1	Reconstruct a Tobacco Shed to house the story of the district's unique horticulture history and reinforce the theme of this community's 'resilience' in adapting to change.	HP/S+MT/H\$	87
2.7 Provide a higher level of interpretation experience utilising existing exhibits and resources.			89
2.7.1	Upgrade the WA Timber Museum to include a chronological history of forest management and reflect changes in forestry during the past 30 years.	HP/MT/H\$	89
2.7.2	Convert the Machinery Shed into a meaningful exhibition area.	M-HP/S+MT/?\$	91
2.7.3	Use new technology to develop a 'whole park' audio interpretation.	MP/MT/?\$	93
2.8 Provide a higher level of visitor comfort.			95
2.8.1	Improve disabled access – pedestrian networks	MP/OG/H\$	95
2.8.2	Identify innovative solutions to visitor comfort issues.	MP/MT/?\$	95
2.9 Increase the human element and provide a friendly welcome and high level of service.			97
2.9.1	Introduce mandatory "Aussie Host" or similar in-house short course training to all personnel having interaction with the public in the Park.	HP/Og/M\$	97
2.9.2	Provide guided tours.	M-HP/MT/L\$	98
2.9.3	Explore the possibility of obtaining more timber cottages to house more human activities.	MP/MT/?\$	98
2.9 Tap into niche and ecotourism tourist markets.			101
2.10.1	Promote the Indigenous Heritage Trail when completed.	MP/MT/L\$	101
2.10.2	Increase the Park's capacity to serve as an interpretive centre for the region's natural attractions.	HP/Og/?\$	101
2.10.3	Reintroduce some native fauna into the Park for Ecotourism.	MP/MT/?\$	103

Objective 3.

Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Code: P = Priority; T = Timeframe; \$ = Cost; H = High; M = Medium; L = Low; Og = Ongoing.

Strategy	Action to Implement	Priority/ Timeframe / Estimated Cost	Detail Page
3.1	Reintroduce entry fees collected through a single entry point.		105
3.1.1	Establish the Round Building as the sole entry point.	HP/ST/+\$	105
3.1.2	Collect entry fees from adult tourist visitors only.	VHP/ST/+\$	106
3.1.3	Negotiate a resolution of entry issues with Café to ensure single entry point through the Round Building.	HP/ST/+\$	108
3.2	Run the Park professionally as a business.		109
3.2.1	Employ a manager.	VHP/ST/H-nil\$	109
3.2.2	Employ staff and/or train and engage volunteers.	MP/MT/?\$	110
3.2.3	Charge a fee for services.	HP/MT/+\$	110
3.2.4	Establish a small retail outlet and produce items for sale.	HP/MT/+\$	111
3.2.5	Administer a mail order catalogue of locally produced items.	MP/MT/+\$	112
3.3	Generate income from leases and hire fees.		113
3.3.1	Lease buildings.	HP/Og/+\$	113
3.3.2	Lease/hire venue and display areas.	HP/Og/+\$	113
3.4	Stage fundraising events and concerts in the Park.		115
3.4.1	Organise concerts, movies and outdoor entertainments.	MP/ST-Og/+\$	115
3.4.2	Conduct a Heritage/Vintage Day event as a fund-raiser.	MP/MT/+\$	115



A Victorian couple (who fit the typical visitor profile) enjoying the rustic ambience.

Comments on their experience of the Timber & Heritage Park.

This Park was a delightful oasis we found after driving across the Nullarbor in our mobile home. We loved being able to just wander around at our leisure enjoying the peace and beauty here. It was a privilege to see the Red-tails in flight and feasting on the Marri nuts.

The displays gave us an understanding of the guts and determination the people who forged this country must have had to overcome the incredible challenges they faced. We felt the Park gave us a real appreciation of how this part of the country was developed and the spirit of this community.

Yvonne Jennings, 2006 Victorian Rural Woman of the Year and Rural City Councillor, Swan Hill, Victoria.

Our eldest boy ran away over here when he was a teenager and he still raves about Fonty's Pool, the forests and the history he discovered here. He told us we really have to come this way and see it for ourselves.

I enjoyed seeing all the old machinery and it's sad to see you can't afford to keep it looking good. Even though it takes time and money, we really have to keep places like this Timber Park running so our kids grow up knowing where they've come from.

Barry Jennings, Director, Murray Mallee Machinery, Swan Hill Victoria.

Section D.3 - Expanded Strategy

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.1 Develop a cultural and heritage 'precinct' in the vicinity of the Park incorporating Community Centre and adjacent parkland.

Proposed actions:

1.1.1 Introduce heritage relics into the play areas of the adjacent Apex Park to integrate this area into the heritage theme.

Rationale/Background:

In order to develop a sense of a 'precinct', the Apex Park could be brought into the heritage theme by adding some child-safe machinery relics – for example, a stabilised wooden cart or buggy.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. If these are placed on the Giblett Street side of the park it will also serve to draw the attention of passing tourists into the heritage precinct area.

Resources required:

Materials & equipment: Utilise any machinery available in the park or items donated by the community.

Cost: Possibly transportation or relocation costs.

Potential funding sources available:

N/A

Timeframe:

Long term

Priority:

Medium.

1.1.2 Explore opportunities for extending shaded parking areas and drive-thru parking for caravans in the parkland area known as the Peace Park between the Timber & Heritage Park and Library.

Rationale/Background:

This area has already become an informal overflow parking area when parking areas at the Park are full. During summer the existing trees provide shade to vehicles, which is an incentive for visitors to extend their stay in the Park if they know their car will remain relatively cool.

The existing parking area at the front of the Round Building and café is both difficult to negotiate with larger vehicles or towing caravans/trailers and confusing for newcomers (being one-way). This can greatly increase congestion, particularly when the Westrail bus is parked outside the café.

There are also times when parking along Mount Street is not entirely adequate for events or meetings held at the Library and Community Centre.

By providing a drive-thru parking area utilising existing shade areas, this would enhance the connectedness of the Park and the Community Centre, integrating the two areas into more of a 'precinct' concept.

Providing shaded parking areas that are readily negotiated by cumbersome vehicles will improve traffic flow and provide an incentive for coach and caravan tourists to visit the Park.

Level of community support:

Not raised in forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes. Parking, particularly for caravans, is a key factor to attract tourists to the Park.

Resources required:

Urban design and planning staff time.

Cost: Unknown.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Medium 2-5 years.

Priority:

Medium.

1.1.3 Consider siting the proposed Performing Arts and Cultural Centre within the Park in the area directly north of the Round Building.

Rationale/Background:

A Performing Arts and Cultural Centre has been identified in the Shire's Principal Activities Plan as a desired future goal. A number of potential sites have been tentatively discussed in relation to this facility.

Should the Shire proceed with construction of a Performing Arts and Cultural Centre, the Timber Park would provide an ideal location. The environment would be very aesthetically pleasing, being centred in a park looking out over grassed areas, ponds, gardens and natural bushland. A Cultural Centre would be very consistent with the other themes represented in the Park and consistent with the 'precinct' concept mentioned above.

There is also the opportunity that the new centre could be multifunctional and provide conferencing and training facilities.

The building style should be sympathetic with the existing Round Building and connected to entry and catering buildings via a series of verandas and wooden walkways, similar to the existing boardwalk.

With clever design, it would also be possible to utilise the side of the building facing out into the grassed areas to create a stage and outdoor performance area for summer entertainment and larger outdoor events. See also Action 1.2.3.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. This would provide a focus to bring mainstream cultural activities into the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes, visitors from outside the area could be expected to attend performances and conferences held in this facility.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Community Culture Facilities Fund.

Timeframe:

Long Term.

Priority:

Low (in relation to the Park's development.)



Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.2 Provide more family-oriented recreational facilities.

Proposed actions:

1.2.1 Install gas/electric barbecues.

Rationale/Background:

The community and the Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee have identified the need for gas or electric barbecues for a number of years. Installation of barbecues is seen as a means of attracting local families to hold family functions in the Park. The purchase and installation of barbecues has been included in the current schedule of works to be implemented in the Park in the next six months.

Level of community support:

High (Combined total of 35 votes in Community Forums 1 & 2.)

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes, see page 28.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

With the high level of community support indicated, this initiative is likely to achieve the objective of increased social activity in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2 - tourists are also likely to find barbecues an attractive feature to extend their stays.

Resources required:

Human resources:

- Council staff to coordinate procuring of materials, arrange paid contract labour or expert volunteers and liaise with Green Corps coordinator to ensure adequate supervision of unskilled volunteer labour. (Estimate minimum 6 hours.)
- Labour from experienced tradesperson supported by community volunteers and Green Corps project.

Materials: Purchase of barbecues, brick, paving and landscaping supplies.

Cost: Approximately \$500 per BBQ.

Potential funding sources available:

Included in funding proposal to Grants for Forest Communities.

Timeframe:

Short Term. (Within six months.)

Priority:

High

1.2.2 Construct a stage suitable for live performances and movie projection.

Rationale/Background:

The lack of a covered stage or sound shell for live performances represents a serious limitation to the potential for staging outdoor events and concerts within the Park. The wisdom of siting a sound shell in Manjin Park instead of the Timber & Heritage Park has been questioned and continues to draw negative comment within the community. In recent years, performances in the Park have been conducted on the back of a semi trailer or truck, which is hardly ideal from either an aesthetic or safety perspective.

During the summer months, the Park provides an ideal venue for outdoor events such as movies and concerts and attendances have been high at previous events. With the addition of a stage, the Park

would offer a venue that could attract some high attendance income-generating events such as the annual Leeuwin Concert, as well as lower key family events.

Perimeter fencing offers the opportunity for enclosing and providing security to events where an entry fees is levied; as well as ensuring children are unable to stray into traffic areas. The installation of a covered stage area would provide protection for valuable electronic equipment as well as elevating performers to a suitable height of viewing for a seated or dancing audiences.

Level of community support:

Medium. This action was recommended in the Community Planning Forums and received 12 votes.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes, in general terms to support entertainment recommended page 28.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. The provision of a stage would greatly expand the venue's potential for all manner of events and live performances to be enjoyed by the local community.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes. Meets Objective 2 in that the staging of larger concerts and live performances would attract visitors from out of town.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Community Cultural Facilities Fund.

Timeframe:

Medium to longer term, dependent upon available finances.

Priority:

High.

1.2.3 Provide more shade & seating.

Rationale/Background:

Due to the expanse of areas to be covered in traversing the Park and multiple functions of areas throughout the Park, there is a need for a range of different forms of seating including:

- More bench and table seating adjacent to barbecue areas and under shaded areas surrounding grassed area.
- More seating adjacent to the existing playground.
- A seat on the front veranda of the Settlers' Cottage.
- Intermittent slab-type seating providing rest areas along bush pathways.
- Slab seating on the perimeters of the shingled rotunda in the north western area of the Park where Indigenous cultural interpretation may be erected.

Wherever possible natural shade should be utilised but, where this is not available, minimal shade sails should be provided in areas where children are likely to play.

Using chunky timber seating retains a consistent style and provides greater opportunity for donations of timber materials for construction.

There is an additional opportunity for the back supports of seats to be used as a mounting for signs/plaques sharing the stories of our founding families and historic figures. Surviving family members may be willing to contribute to the costs of developing interpretive signs/plaques to commemorate their ancestors.

Level of community support:

High. In Community Planning Forums, the need for shade and seating was combined with a request for extension of the existing playground and received 29 votes. The need for seating at the Settlers' Cottage and on bush paths was raised at the Key Stakeholders' meeting.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. With the proposed installation of barbecues, the Park will become a more popular family picnic area. The provision of additional bench and table seating surrounding the grassed areas will enable this increased demand to be met.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2 - Tourist visitors will also benefit from additional picnic seating and more elderly people are likely to visit the Hamlet and undertake bush walks if there is seating on which to pause along walkways.

Resources required:

Volunteers to assist in construction and erection of seating.

Timber & construction materials (various costs dependent upon donations of materials). Possibly cost of producing interpretive signage. (\$500 - \$1000 sign).

Potential funding sources available:

Potential for sponsorship from timber companies and local families.

Timeframe:

Short term for some and then ongoing.

Priority:

Medium.

1.2.4 Create a small fenced playground area for tiny tots visible from the café.

Rationale/Background:

Many parents of young children seek opportunities where they can socialise with their friends while their children play nearby in a safe enclosure. The north-facing veranda at the café is the only venue in Manjimup offering the kind of alfresco dining that has become extremely popular in cities throughout Australia. Many of these venues in other locations expand their clientele by offering safe play areas for children's enjoyment within view of parental supervision.

There is currently no children's play equipment within clear view of the café. The Park's pond areas, while offering an extremely attractive vista, represent a safety hazard for young children not under close supervision.

Andrew Stuart, Youth Officer with the Shire of Manjimup, has considerable experience in designing and assessing adventure play equipment of the timber and low ropes type of construction. Andrew has indicated an interest in assisting to design some simple play structures throughout the Park. Please see Optional Attachment for a more detailed report from Andrew Stuart on options for low ropes and adventure playground construction.

Level of community support:

Community planning forums indicated a need to extend the existing playground and provide more shade and seating. The consultant prefers this option in the short term as it utilises existing seating/entertainment area and provides a safe containment area for 'littlies'.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. It is envisaged that the safe play area adjacent to the existing café will greatly expand opportunities for parents of young children to socialise in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. The installation of a safe play area will become an attraction for tourists. Once it becomes a known feature, it will provide travellers with an incentive to break their journey for refreshments and a chance for children to stretch their legs and play.

Resources required:*Human Resources:*

Council officers to:

- Design play modules assuring Australian Safety Standards compliance.
- Write funding submission.
- Liaise with potential sponsors/donors of materials.
- Liaise with Green Corps or other volunteer provider agency.
- Coordinate delivery of construction phase along with volunteers team leader(s).
- Acquit project funding.

(Estimate minimum 16 - 30 hours. Top scale if funding application required.)

Labour from experienced tradesperson supported by community volunteers and Green Corps project

Materials: Timber, ropes, woodchips for soft fall areas, fencing materials, gate.

Cost: To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Youth Spaces Program (up to \$25,000). Matching funding requirement could be met by donation of timber construction materials and contribution of labour from Green Corps project, service clubs or Volunteer Resource Centre/ Work for the Dole.

Timeframe:

Short – medium term.

Priority:

High



The existing playground area within the Park.

1.2.5 Extend existing playground.

Rationale/Background:

As this suggestion received a high level of support in Community Planning Forums, it has been included in the action plan with some additional recommendations. Some of the need expressed in the request to extend the existing playground may be met by the construction of a tiny tots enclosed play area closer to the café. (See Proposed Action 1.2.4)

In addition it is recommended that, rather than expanding the existing playground, a number of 'low ropes' play modules be constructed along with seating at various points on the perimeter of the grassed areas.

Continuing the timber theme, the modules could be of a slightly higher level of challenge than those in the tiny tots area in order to meet the needs of primary school age children. This would meet the expressed need for more play areas adjacent to seating for parents, and older children could run between the spaced out modules if they wish to try a new experience.

Level of community support:

High. In Community Planning Forums, a request for extension of the existing playground was combined with the need for shade and seating and received 29 votes.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Scattering play modules around the edges of the grassed areas, along with bench and table seating will create opportunities for families to picnic while children are entertained close enough for direct supervision.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes. Upgrading and integrating picnic, barbecue and play areas will also attract more tourists who, if entry fees apply, will contribute to achieving Objective 3.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Play areas provide travellers with an incentive to break their journey for refreshments and a chance for children to stretch their legs and play.

Resources required:

Timber, ropes, construction materials, woodchips for soft fall areas.

Cost: To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Could form part of a combined application with Proposed Action 1.2.2 and 1.2.6 (below) through the Youth Spaces Program (up to \$25,000). Matching funding requirement could be met by donation of timber construction materials and contribution of labour from Green Corps project, service clubs or Volunteer Resource Centre/ Work for the Dole.

Timeframe:

Medium

Priority:

Medium



Example of a low ropes playground.

Please see Optional Attachment on Low Ropes Construction for further examples.

1.2.6 Construct a climbing wall and flying fox utilising the Fire Tower for supervised adventure experiences for teens to twenties visitors.

Rationale/Background:

There are limited social and recreational activities available for 13-30 year olds in Manjimup and the Park currently holds little attraction for this section of the community. The construction of an adventure style playground for young adults would provide an activity that would draw more young people into the Park and expose them to the other attractions therein.

An adult eco-adventure play area would provide opportunities for accessing another segment of the tourist market; that is, young travellers with an interest in combining nature and adventure activities.

The availability of this type of activity within the Park in central Manjimup would complement the proposed Forest Slide and would be likely to attract tourists to stop off within the town en route to the higher profile tourist icon.

Climbing walls and adventure playgrounds for adults appear to be commercially successful in areas where there is a high enough turnover of young adults to justify financial outlays.

Backpacker hostels, which cater to this type of traveller, will soon include an 80-bed facility within 200 metres of the Park, a 50-bed facility 15kms from Manjimup and a 45-bed facility in Pemberton. Most of these facilities anticipate a reasonably high turnover of visitors, particularly during peak periods, which would provide a changing audience for any young-adult-oriented activities beyond the more static market of the local population.

Due to the existence of the Fire Tower and some ideally placed mature trees that could be utilised in the design, initial expenditure to construct the proposed adventure play areas would be relatively less expensive than having to start afresh in another location.

There are some limitations in managing this kind of facility in that it would require high levels of supervision, safety compliance and security that enabled the activities to be locked up when not under supervision. On the other hand, if the Shire were to undertake this project as an enterprise 'incubation' and youth work training exercise, it would also be providing opportunities for future employment for young adults in undertaking the supervision and facilitation of team building activities for future paying participants.

Level of community support:

Not raised in Community Planning Forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

This initiative would provide a source of recreational activity for local young people and an opportunity for training and part-time employment for youth workers.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2: Highly complementary to other developing Backpacker, Adventure and Eco tourist activities in the region.

Objective 3. Backpackers are tourists that are known to contribute a high percentage of their income directly back into the local economy.

Resources required:

To be explored as part of a pre-feasibility phase.

Potential funding sources available:

Timeframe:

Medium

Priority:

Medium



Please see Optional Attachment on Low Ropes Construction for further information.

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.3 Offer the park as a venue to host existing events.

Proposed actions:

- 1.3.1 Farmers' and Ticketiboo Markets in Park**
 - 1.3.2 Cherry Festival in Park**
 - 1.3.3 Promote Park on Open Garden scheme**
-

Rationale/Background:

All of the above are successful events held in other locations in Manjimup. The opportunity exists to provide greater exposure for the Park to local people and visitors by encouraging existing event organisers to use the Park as a venue to conduct these events.

The fenced venue offers event organisers an opportunity to increase their potential profits by charging an event entry fee, some of which could be passed back to the Park as a hire fee.

Consultation with Farmers' Market coordinator revealed that the Farmers' Markets have a distinct charter to market fresh local produce and they do not believe that these aims are compatible with Ticketiboo Markets where a range of items and produce from undefined sources is available for sale.

Consultation with Cherry Harmony Festival coordinator indicated that the organisers of this festival are content at this stage to hold their evening concert in the Timber Park and daytime events in the Park would conflict with set-up for the concert.

While there may be the opportunity for some compatible smaller events or activities conducted in the Park to coincide with Cherry Harmony, there would be major logistical problems with relocating such a large event into the smaller space of the Timber Park. It was noted that the lack of a stage was one of the factors that made the Park an unsuitable event venue. (See Proposed Action 1.2.3.)

Cherry Harmony Festival organisers indicated that retailers in the CBD would be likely to oppose relocating the focus of the festival away from the main street and into the Park as this would reduce the financial incentives for their support of the festival.

Level of community support:

Community Planning Forums supported these suggestions as follows:

- Combined Markets in Park (52 votes)
- Cherry Harmony Festival in Park. (7 votes)
- Promote on the Open garden scheme. (7 votes.)

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Recommended the venue be used for markets, festivals and events.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Holding events such as these in the Park will expand the opportunities for local people to experience other aspects.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Outside visitors are likely to be attracted to attend events in the Park, particularly the Cherry Harmony Festival.

Objective 3. Venue hire fees for larger events would contribute to financial upkeep.

Resources required: Nil.

Potential funding sources available: Not required.

Timeframe: Short Term

Priority: Medium.

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.4 Encourage the community to conduct new events and activities in the Park.

Proposed actions:

1.4.1 Hold a special event focused on the Park and recreating "A Step Back in Time".

Rationale/Background:

During Community Planning Forums it was frequently suggested that a special event with an historic theme be held in the Park. There were numerous ideas about the form and content of the event and general support indicating that such an event would be successful in involving locals and drawing out-of-town visitors. Some of the suggested activities included exhibitions of vintage machinery and vehicles, pioneers mock-ups, demonstrations of horse works and ghost walks in the evening.

A very successful Heritage Day event is held in Bridgetown every second year and attracts a large crowd (approximately 3,000 people) with many being out-of-town visitors. The event is very well organised by a private group of 12 people who have an extensive contact network in the veteran car and machinery restoration interest areas. The Veteran Car Club and the Bridgetown Agricultural Society provide assistance on the day and financial support in advertising the event has been granted through Lotterywest.

The commitment levels required for staging such an event should not be underestimated. As well as the volunteer support levels mentioned above, the Bridgetown event requires the commitment of an almost full-time volunteer coordinator for the 12 months preceding the event. Similarly, the Cherry Harmony Festival involves three coordinators contributing approximately 4,000 hours in preparation for the event and then a minimum of 20 volunteers over three days at the time of the festival.

It would not be possible to create an event in the Park of the scale of either of these two existing events due to the physical limitations of the areas available for displays and exhibits. A smaller scale event may be feasible, but should not be attempted unless the community's enthusiasm for the concept of the event is matched by a willingness from many to commit to actively participating in its coordination and implementation.

Should a group of interested community members emerge who wish to organise an event, contact should be made with the Bridgetown Heritage Day organising committee to ensure that the events are staged in a manner that will complement and enhance one another's success and not compete for a limited audience.

Level of community support:

High. This suggestion raised a combined total of 42 votes in Community Forums 1 & 2 being the fourth highest in popularity.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. An event of this magnitude would require a high level of community involvement, volunteers and sponsorship. It would also serve to educate the local community about their heritage.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes. This type of event is likely to attract a high number of external visitors and entry fees could contribute to financial inputs for maintaining the Park.

Resources required:

Volunteer event coordinator

Team of devoted volunteers to help stage the event.

Cost: To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Lotterywest will often support events of this nature but it should be noted that only a 'donation' can be requested for entry to events supported from this source.

Timeframe: Medium term.

Priority: Medium.

1.4.2 Encourage and support groups wishing to stage live performances, films, exhibitions and other cultural events in the Park.

Rationale/Background:

There were a number of different and interesting cultural events suggested by participants at the first planning forum focusing on the Park as a community asset. Some of these suggestions included:

- More and ongoing concerts in the Park.
- Summer movies in the Park.
- Recitals and art exhibitions in the Round Building.

As suggested in Proposed Action 1.2.3, the provision of a stage area would greatly enhance the venue's suitability for live performances and other events.

Level of community support:

High. Combining totals for all suggestions involving staging cultural events (particularly utilising the Round Building) the community allocated 51 votes.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes, see page 27.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. All social and cultural events that bring people into the Park will increase the community's awareness of other features within the facility.

Meets other Objectives:

Possibly, dependent on the nature and likely drawing-power of the event.

Resources required:

It is recommended that the Shire and park management personnel limit their involvement in these events to providing encouragement and support to community groups unless an event is specifically staged as a fund-raiser for the Park.

Potential funding sources available:

Various - Lotteries and Country Arts.

Timeframe:

Ongoing. Summer periods for outdoor events.

Priority:

Medium

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.5 Initiate and facilitate a proactive community-building program to encourage participation and enhance a stronger sense of community ownership in the Park.

The creation, development and maintenance of the Timber & Heritage Park has historically been a partnership between the Shire of Manjimup and community members who felt a desire to invest their personal energy, skills, time or funds into a project that would serve the community well into the future. Throughout the last three decades numerous individuals and agencies have provided input to enable developments in the Park that would, otherwise, have been unaffordable.

As economic demands draw more people into the paid workforce, it becomes increasingly difficult to support projects that are heavily reliant upon volunteer labour. Where examples exist of successful volunteer and community-sponsored projects, these rarely *'just happen'* – they are usually the outcome of a coordinated community engagement process that demonstrates a high level of support and (non financial) reward to those who contribute their labour, goods and services.

Successful community engagement must be a reciprocal arrangement that benefits both parties. Where an agency like the Shire of Manjimup wishes to derive the benefits of a high level of community participation, this can be facilitated by:

- Including contributing individuals and agencies in decision-making processes (such as the recent community planning forums);
- Obviously valuing, respecting and affirming the contributors (particularly those with a long history of service);
- Visibly acknowledging corporate sponsors and government funding bodies (on a gratitude board or some other public expression);
- Providing a high level of comfort and support in volunteer work conditions;
- Honouring and celebrating the contributions made or completion of projects in which there has been volunteer and/or community input. (For example, celebrating the 'launch' of completed projects, nominating volunteers for community service award, providing commemorative plaques or sharing individual's 'stories' within the Park.)

Many of the proposed actions in this plan are reliant upon the voluntary contributions of individuals, agencies and corporate sponsors within the community. Time must be invested in cultivating and maintaining these relationships and this endeavour needs to be recognised as integral to the Park's success as well as the building of a healthy and cohesive community.

1.5.1 Recruit, train and support a volunteer workforce for the Park.

There are a range of activities in which the utilisation of volunteer workers would greatly enhance the implementation of this plan – most importantly as hosts, guides and storytellers. The role of guides as a vital enrichment of the tourist visitor experience is addressed at Proposed Action 2.9.2, however the development of a volunteer program is also very relevant to achieving our first objective – increasing local participation in the Park.

Deep concern was expressed during the community planning forums that "few local people really *know* their local history". This was reflected in this statement receiving 26 votes, even though it was not an action that could be implemented. There is also concern that many of the custodians of our local history are now aging and their knowledge dies with them unless it is passed on to a new generation.

Developing a program where more local people are trained as volunteer hosts, guides and story-tellers and having them perform these roles within the Park would serve to increase the awareness not just of

those trained in the roles but also other local people who visit the Park and can interact with the volunteers.

A successful volunteer program requires reciprocal input from the Shire (See introduction to Strategy 1.5). The General History discussion group at the second community planning forum identified the following requirements that would assist to build a strong volunteer force:

- Need a paid coordinator
- Register of volunteers
- Uniform
- Training (history and hosting)
- Community Involvement.

Volunteers would also need to attend the Shire's formal induction process and some form of hospitality-tourism training before representing the Park in interactions with the public.

Level of community support:

High. The need for a coordinated volunteer program received 22 votes in the second community planning forum.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Tour guides were recommended.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Members of the community will have a revived sense of ownership in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. The availability of personal interaction is a key element in providing a quality visitor experience.

Resources required:

Shire staff member to recruit, train and coordinate volunteer workforce. (Estimate minimum 2 hours per fortnight for general coordination and 4 hours for each training session required.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short term - 2006

Priority:

Medium-high.

1.5.2 Facilitate and support a machinery restoration group.

Rationale/Background:

Over the years community members and industry have donated a substantial collection of machinery to the Park. Some of the larger pieces in the steam collection have been reasonably well maintained in the past, but the majority of the machinery is in need of at least repainting while some valuable items have been allowed to deteriorate due to neglect and exposure to the elements.

As custodians of heritage items donated by the community, the Shire has a responsibility to either adequately maintain the items or dispose of them via sale or return to the original donor families. Community members who may have donated further items of interest and/or value are hesitant to do so while monitoring the Shire's performance in this custodial role.

In the second community planning forum, "The Park as our Cultural Heritage", a small but keen group of machinery enthusiasts demonstrated a very strategic focus regarding the management and restoration of the Park's machinery collection.

The machinery interest group members indicated a high level of willingness to 'put themselves on the line' to assist with the implementation of the following:

- Form a register of machinery expertise within the community (with those present at the planning forum forming the initial core group) to act as an advisory group for machinery projects in the Park.

- Provide expertise to assist with undertaking an audit and preparation of a report on all machinery in the Park documenting:
 - Manufacture and make details.
 - Use in the industry.
 - Current status as to whether worthy of restoration or disposal.
 - Recommended suitability for operational display, static exhibit or outdoor display.
- Identify worthy restoration projects and suggest alternate engineering methods for simulating operation or movement to bring displays to life.
- Form the core of a working group able to assist and guide volunteers in future restoration projects.

This level of community interest needs to be harnessed at the earliest opportunity by providing coordination and administrative assistance to ensure willing members of the community can join forces to contribute their skills and expertise to the Park's benefit.

Level of community support:

Very high.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Not specifically, although the creation of an industrial machinery zone was recommended.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Members of the community will have a revived sense of ownership in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. See Restoration of Machinery Shed project at 2.8.2

Resources required:

Shire staff member to liaise with machinery interest group; facilitate meetings initially; record agreed actions; and provide administrative support for the audit of machinery. (Estimate minimum 2 hours per each meeting and 10-15 hours to assist with machinery audit.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

2006

Priority:

Medium-high.



One man's junk is another man's 'treasure'.
Max Hargreaves and David Giblett inspect the neglected machinery collection.

1.5.3 Facilitate and support a Horticultural Heritage group.

Rationale/Background:

With its earlier focus on the Timber industry, the Park has neglected to represent other key industries on which the local economy has been based. The community has indicated a strong interest in the concept of constructing a replica tobacco kiln and housing within it an interpretation of the region's rich horticultural and agricultural heritage. See 2.7.1 for further details.

By bringing the stories of 'Life on the Land' into the Park through this proposed initiative, we have the opportunity to involve the participation of a large portion of the community whose family histories have not, to date, been recognised.

As with the Machinery Group, bringing this project to fruition will require a commitment of staff time to coordinate a community engagement process to bring together people, stories and artefacts. The rewards for doing so will have positive community-building outcomes beyond the gates of the Park.

Level of community support:

High.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Not specifically, although the importance of the region's horticultural heritage was noted.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Members of the community will have a revived sense of ownership in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. See Proposed Action 2.7.1.

Resources required:

Shire staff member to facilitate initial meetings of horticultural heritage group and assist with sourcing funding. (Estimate at minimum 2 hours per each meeting and 10-15 hours per funding submission.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short term – 2006 and ongoing.

Priority:

Medium-high.

1.5.4 Continue to support projects in the Park that expand awareness of Indigenous heritage.

Rationale/Background:

For several years the introduction of Indigenous food and medicinal plantings and a traditional Aboriginal shelter has been discussed. These projects will soon be commenced as part of the 2005-06 Green Corps project under the guidance of Walgenup Aboriginal Group and with assistance from the Education Support Unit students. Also proposed is the installation of some interpretive signage in the shingled rotunda in the north western section of the Park. It is understood that Walgenup and the Education Support Unit will continue to maintain these areas and that other elements depicting Aboriginal life may be added in the future.

At the second community planning forum, the Indigenous Heritage discussion group proposed a number of initiatives aimed at building relationships to facilitate the sharing of Indigenous history and raising community awareness. As part of the community-building process the Shire needs to liaise with Walgenup representatives and support further development of the Indigenous heritage projects in the Park.

Level of community support:

High. At the second community planning forum: "Relationships need to be built to share information" - 26 votes, Indigenous Walk Trail – 12 votes.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes. The interpretation of Indigenous heritage was recommended for this zone.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Members of the Indigenous community will have their heritage recognised and develop a sense of ownership in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. See Proposed Action 2.10.1. Indigenous Walk Trail.

Resources required:

Shire staff member to liaise with Walgenup and assist with development of projects. (Estimate at minimum 2 hours per each meeting.) See proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short – medium term - 2005 onwards.

Priority:

Medium-High.



The shingled rotunda and bushland in the north west corner of the Park have been earmarked as areas to present interpretation of Indigenous heritage.

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.6 Develop stronger relationships with schools to expose young people to the educational and recreational opportunities in the Park.

Proposed actions:

1.6.1 Encourage schools to use the Park as a venue for events or teaching activities.

Rationale/Background:

It has been noted that local schools have not had as high a level of participation in the Park as has been experienced in the past. Educators and parents were invited to attend Community Planning Forums to advise on how schools might have a greater involvement in the Park. Some valuable suggestions were offered in the forums:

- o Incorporate the Park into school curriculum.
- o Incorporate into school events.
- o Regional school sporting events in the Park.

All of these suggestions are valid and workable but require that the Shire takes some initiative in building relationships with school staff and presenting opportunities for schools to incorporate the Park into planning of curriculum, projects and excursions.

To be effective, cooperative relationships must be developed *and maintained* to ensure schools (with a tendency to staff turnover) continue to have high levels of participation in the Park. Provision of adequate human resources in the Shire to maintain these relationships and coordinate any activities is essential to the success of these initiatives.

Level of community support:

High. 21 votes in first community planning forum.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

It is important that the Park be experienced and enjoyed by the young people of the community as well as adults.

Meets other Objectives:

Early exposure and developing a sense of 'ownership' of the Park and our heritage could be sowing the seeds to a new generation of volunteers and supporters who will ensure the Park's future sustainability.

Resources required:

Council staff able to maintain relationships with school staff, provide ongoing liaison and assist with coordination of any school events or activities conducted in the park. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short term and Ongoing.

Priority:

Medium

1.6.2 Develop education resources – designed to be child and teacher friendly.

Rationale/Background:

When visiting the Park, young people benefit from being provided resources that will direct their journey and translate the interpretive experience into a form that appeals to their level of understanding.

There are already a number of student-oriented quizzes and some educational resources in the Timber Museum, however these are extremely outdated and not suitable for reproduction. What is required is for these materials to be reviewed and updated in collaboration with educators who can advise on where to 'pitch' resources for the various age levels.

Updating resources could be a cooperative project between the Shire and local schools however this would require staff time being available in both sectors. Alternately, this may be a project that would be of interest to a tertiary student studying Education.

Level of community support:

Medium

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Resources developed for and with local schools would also be available to entertain and educate the children of visiting tourists, thus prolonging the time parents may enjoy the interpretation at an adult level.

Resources required:

Human resources to liaise with educators, assist with design of resources and activities and coordinate production of materials. (Estimate minimum 20 hours for each resource or activity produced.) See proposed Action 3.2.1.

Cost: Estimated minimum \$500 in photocopying.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown

Timeframe:

Short term (commence school year 2006)

Priority:

Medium

1.6.3 *Students 'adopt' an area to maintain or work on a project in the park.*

Rationale/Background:

In the past, high school students have been involved in projects such as the shingle roofing of the Round Building and creation of the Eight Wheel Log Trailer near the Timber Museum.

These previous collaborations have been mutually beneficial. Students have the opportunity to learn more about their heritage while making a valuable contribution to the community. Working on projects within the Park is also likely to engender a greater sense of ownership which could be helpful in discouraging peers inclined towards vandalism.

The success of initiatives of this nature would once again rely on productive relationships being formed between Shire staff and teachers to explore possibilities for how projects in the Park might be worked in to teaching programs. One possible project is for manual arts students to assist in restoring machinery in the Machinery Shed under the guidance of the machinery advisory group. (See Proposed Actions 1.5.2 and 2.7.2)

Level of community support:

Not indicated.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. Student volunteers could undertake some projects that might reduce Council's expenditure on paid labour.

Resources required:

Human resources to liaise with educators, identify project opportunities and coordinate and find resources for volunteer activities. (Estimate minimum 16 - 30 hours for each activity coordinated. Top scale if funding application required.) See proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

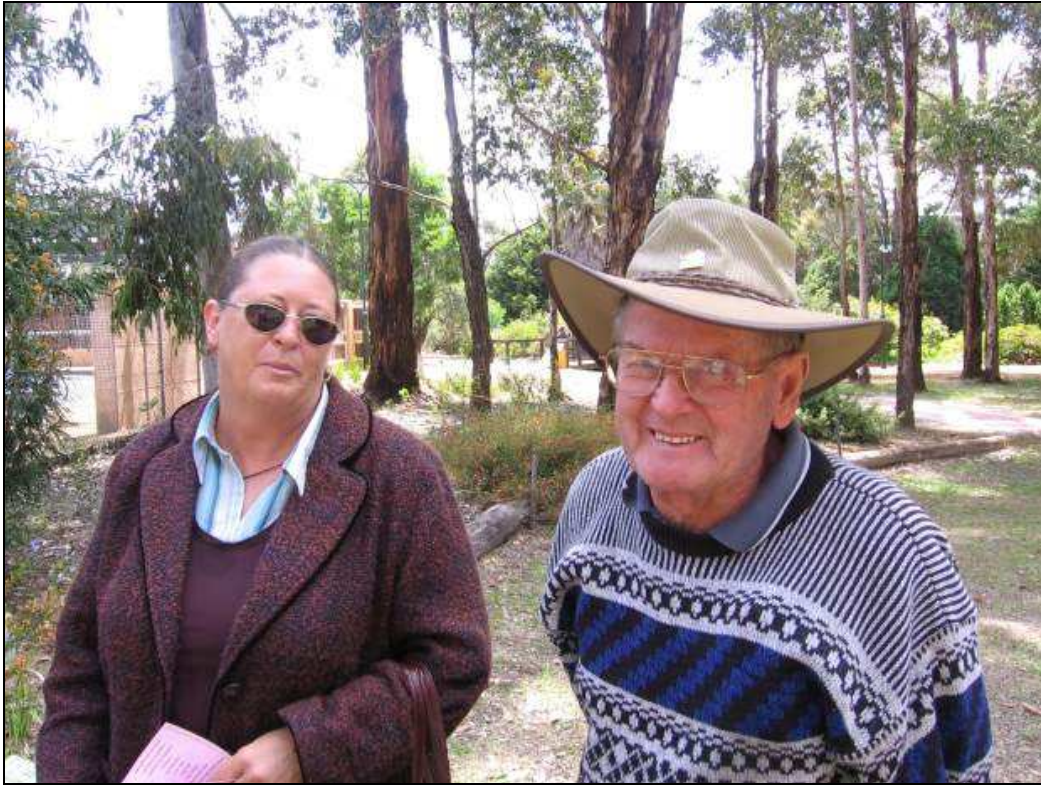
Short term - 2006 school year.

Priority:

Medium.



Education resource bookshelf (right) in the entry and looking into the Silviculture display in the WA Timber Museum.



CALM Interpretive Officer, Jacki Baxter, enjoys an informative exchange with local historian and Timber Park 'old hand', John Stuard, during a wildflower information workshop held in spring 2005.

Objective 1.

Increase local visitor rates and ensure greater participation in and enjoyment by the community of an existing social and cultural resource.

Strategy:

1.7 Utilise the Park as a facility to educate the community about our heritage and environment.

Proposed actions:

1.7.1 Conduct a series 'awareness' workshops or guided walks focusing on the aspects of our history and environment represented in the Park.

Rationale/Background:

Deep concern was expressed during the community planning forums that, despite the existence of such a rich source of historical material in the Park, many local people are unfamiliar with the region's heritage.

The Park also provides a 'snapshot' of the broader environment with bushwalks, purposefully planted local wildflowers and trees, a constructed wetland which is also recycling the town's stormwater and soon to be complimented with an Indigenous food and medicine plant trail.

There are many features and opportunities for community education within the Park, the majority of which the general population of Manjimup have never experienced because they have not been packaged and promoted.

With the cooperation of key stakeholders already represented in the Park, it would be relatively low fuss and low cost to run a series of informative short workshop sessions or guided walks on a weekend afternoon to provide the public with opportunities to experience a deeper understanding of the Park, our heritage and our environment.

Sessions might include 'Get to know your local... wildflowers, trees, birds, weeds, bush tucker, wetlands and water and land management' topics. Workshops with an historical focus could cover a range of topics including Timber history, Steam and Machinery, Indigenous history, Group Settlement, Tobacco industry or legendary figures of the region. Wood turners, blacksmith and some machinery buffs may also be prepared to offer demonstration sessions as part of the series of workshops.

Level of community support:

High, based on 26 votes in community planning forums for the concern raised: "Many local people do not 'know' their region's history"

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

This type of initiative is an excellent way to engage the community's participation at a deeper level of interest than just wandering through the Park without expert guidance.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. If people attending workshops take an ongoing interest in the Park, this could provide an excellent means of recruiting additional volunteers, which may reduce expenditure.

Resources required:

Human Resources:

Volunteers offering to share their expertise and deliver the workshops.

Council staff to coordinate the exercise. (Estimate 2 hours per workshop once established.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Materials:

Photocopied handouts and advertisements in Public Notices.

Potential funding sources available:

A small registration fee (\$5) could be charged to cover costs of producing handouts and advertising.

Timeframe:

Short term. Could be implemented early in 2006 to take advantage of increased community interest in the park following planning forums.

Priority:

High.

1.7.2 Provide safe storage for historic records and locate a publicly accessible database of the region's history in the Park.

Rationale/Background:

An issue raised both during the community planning forums and through the Timber Park Advisory Committee is concern about the safety of the collection of historical records and artifacts that are currently stored in the Park in a timber cottage occupied by the Historical Society. What is required is a safe, fireproof, damp-free storage area in which to house the district's archival collection.

Although this may be seen as a problem for the Historical Society to address, it is an issue of importance to the whole community when we are discussing a collection that includes a significant proportion of the town's historical records.

The Historical Society has been compiling a database of the materials contained within the archive. Should a staffed entry building become a reality, it would be appropriate for the public to be able to access the archival database in a computer situated in the Park.

Level of community support:

High. Received a total of 42 votes in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Ready access to historic records would aid research into future interpretation of the Park directed at tourists and aid visitors undertaking family history research.

Resources required:

Human Resources: The Historical Society have already volunteered countless hours in compiling and archiving historic information.

Materials and Equipment: Fireproof storage area. Could be incorporated into Cultural Centre – see Proposed Action 1.1.3. Computer capable of running database for public access.

Cost: To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Lotterywest Heritage Grants (\$15,000)

Timeframe:

Short to medium term for storage. Long Term for computer access to database.

Priority:

Medium and Low.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.1 Draw the attention of passing traffic on SW Highway and Graphite Road with an iconic entry statement.

There are no figures currently available on the number of tourists *passing* Manjimup on South West highway, however there is no doubt that the town of Manjimup is missing out on a vast proportion of the tourists visiting other attractions in the Shire and adjacent areas such as Albany and Margaret River.

Many of the Shire's visitors drive right through the town on South West Highway, as there is currently little incentive to draw them off the main road and into the CBD.

The Timber & Heritage Park is situated across the railway reserve parallel to South West highway, with Giblett Street (the main street) on its eastern boundary and Graphite Road on its northern boundary.

If the Forest Slide is developed as an icon of major significance in the Glenoran-Donnelly area, it is anticipated that there would be an increased flow of traffic turning off the South West highway and travelling towards the Donnelly area along Graphite Road.

There is no signage alerting passing traffic to the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park just off the highway. The Shire of Manjimup policy restricts highway signposting to a standard design with 18 letters/spaces, so signposting within the current policy would make little impact on passing traffic.

Proposed actions:

2.1.1 Erect a highly visual sculpture atop a de-limbed tree trunk at the north east corner of the park. (Dick Sprogue dancing concept)

Rationale/Background:

The possession of a highly visible icon, entry statement or drawcard has consistently been identified as an essential element in successful tourism, the absence of which significantly detracts from the Park's potential to draw passing travellers into the town. This need was identified as the highest priority by the Community Planning Forums and is well recognised in the Tourism industry.

Tourism WA's *Pathways Forward: Strategic Plan 2004-2008* identified the need to "develop and promote tourism around key iconic experiences". Although the Timber & Heritage Park may not qualify as a 'key iconic experience' such as the Tree Top Walk, it has potential to compete at a secondary attraction level and the same marketing principles apply with regard to the need for a highly identifiable and unique associated icon.

The north-eastern corner of the Timber & Heritage Park is visible to passing traffic on the South West highway across the railway line and would provide an ideal location for some form of high profile iconic drawcard to attract people into the town.

One concept that has been suggested would be to utilise a vertical karri log as the base for a high level sculpture depicting one of the legendary timber characters who was involved in de-limbing and taking out the crown of fire look-out trees (including the Diamond Tree).

The Legend: *The Man Who Danced on Karri Trees.*

Dick Sprogue's spirit of dare-devilry is frequently mentioned in recounting local legends about his feats of strength and courage in scaling and de-limbing giant karri trees in preparation for their use as fire towers.

In her book, *The Timber People*, Jenny Mills describes Sprogue:

Most people in the Manjimup area had heard of local man Dick Sprogue who, completely fearless and with no safety precautions, would lop the crown of the tallest karri as a party piece at bush picnics, standing triumphantly on the naked stump while the tree whipped in the air as the branches crashed to the ground.

A sleeper cutter, Sprogue was often called in to be the first to scale the tall karri, using only spiked boots and ropes to make his way to the top where he would pull up a saw and proceed to take out the crown.

One story tells of an occasion when Sprogue was offered a wager to *dance* on the top of a karri after dropping the crown and it is this story that really captures the playful, and yet courageous, spirit of this character. The Dick Sprogue legend personifies the strength, courage and spirit of adventure of the people who forged our timber industry and developed our region.

The Interpretation Concept

It is envisaged that the icon would take the form of a cast metal sculpture of a figure poised with arms outstretched and one knee bent to simulate dancing mounted on top of a timber log at the maximum height allowable within the constraints of transport (20 metres), structural engineering logistics and safety requirements.

The icon would be located in the northeastern corner of the Park where it will have the highest visibility. 'Teaser' signage announcing "The Man Who Danced on Karri Trees – come inside to find out more" should be erected in the area external to the park fence on the corner of Graphite Road and Giblett streets so that it is legible and has major impact to traffic entering town over the Graphite Road railway crossing.

At the foot of the icon within the Park, there should be additional interpretive signage that explains the Dick Sprogue legend, links him to other icons such as Diamond and Gloucester tree lookouts and also explains how Sprogue was but one of the courageous characters who peopled this region's history. There are a number of photographs still available of Sprogue standing on the stump of karri 30 metres or so up in the sky and these could be reproduced in large scale and integrated into the interpretation.

Level of support from industry:

The need for an icon highly endorsed.

Level of community support:

Very high. The lack of a visible drawcard has also emerged as the highest priority strategy identified in two community planning consultative forums recently held in Manjimup (165 votes) and second highest priority in the final forum (53 votes, with 41 of these specifically supporting the Dick Sprogue statue concept.)

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes. The need for an iconic drawcard was identified on pages 11, 13 and 28.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Extremely high. This is the priority action and most likely to achieve the outcomes desired in this objective.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. In interpreting the admirable characteristics that pioneered this district and reflecting this back to the community, local people are likely to gain an increased sense of pride and ownership in the park and their own heritage.

Objective 3. Tourist industry research indicates that an icon is most likely to attract visitors to pay an entry fee.

Resources required:

Internal Staffing: Funding applications (minimum 20 –30 hours per application). Coordination – average half a day per week over a six-month period. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Artwork: Estimate \$25,000 - \$35,000 for life size figure, preferably cast in aluminium for lightness and ease of erection.

Engineering consultancy: Cost to be explored.

Concrete footings: Will require extensive concrete footings to secure a log of these dimensions. Require advice of engineering report.

Supply, falling and transporting of log: See below under 'in kind support'.

Cost: Under \$100,000

Potential funding sources available:

The Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage offers grant funding under a program called *Sharing Australia's Stories*. Funding (\$5,000 - \$50,000) is available for creative projects such as promotional signage or displays that tell the story of our nation and the characteristics that defined it.

The construction of a monument to Dick Sprogue, as just one of the legendary men of the timber industry in our area, seems to fulfil all the criteria of this funding program. Funding applications are usually received in October; however, a review of the program has meant that applications will be submitted later in 2005-06.

This project would also meet the criteria for the Regional Development Scheme funding program available through South West Development Commission (\$25,000 - \$40,000). Applications for this program will be received mid 2006. Production of interpretive materials to support the project may be eligible for assistance through Lotterywest Heritage grants.

In kind support:

The success of government funding applications can be increased if the local community demonstrates a significant contribution of matching or 'in kind' support for the project. Should the Manjimup Shire or CALM be able to contribute a karri log (of around 20 metres) this could be costed at the equivalent value the log would fetch as timber product. Tentative discussions with a local timber company have indicated a willingness to provide in kind support in the form of falling and transporting the log from forest to Park.

Timeframe:

Short Term – within 18 months.

Priority:

Very high.



A magnificent Blackbutt in the Park.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.2 Improve signage on the highway and within the CBD.

Proposed actions:

2.2.1 Install signs on South West Highway.

Rationale/Background:

The Timber & Heritage Park is a member of the Working Life tourist trail, a body that has been provided with marketing assistance from the South West Development Commission. Part of the assistance provided is the provision of Main Roads-approved brown tourist signage indicating that the Park is "Another Working Life Site".

Normally these signs would be attached beneath the venue's own main roads signs and the additional sign would link the site to the Working Life trail and associated promotional tools (web site and brochure).

In the case of the Timber & Heritage Park there is *no signage* on South West Highway indicating the site's presence just across the railway line. This omission needs to be rectified at the earliest opportunity.

It would be appropriate to place another sign at the T of the central railway crossing to direct visitors (especially those towing caravans) north along Giblett Street towards the Park.

Level of community support:

Very high. The lack of highway signage noted as a major issue at each of three community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Not specifically recommended.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. How will we attract visitors to the Park if we don't tell them where it is?

Meets other Objectives:

Resources required:

Refer to Design Services

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short term.

Priority:

High.

2.2.2 Replace log signs on Giblett & Rose Streets and at front of entry building.

Rationale/Background:

In response to the question in the 2005 Visitor Survey regarding how people heard about the Park, a number indicated that they "just saw it driving through town" rather than referral from the Visitor Centre, publication or other source. It is, therefore, important to retain high visibility signage for the Park in the main entries to town.

A number of the existing timber log signs have badly deteriorated over time and need replacement. The log signs at the front of the Round Building need to be renamed.

It is recommended that, when replacing the signs, the style of existing timber log signage is retained as this is consistent with the era and themes of the Park. Visitors are attracted to a Heritage Park to experience a 'step back in time' and, although attractive in a modern urban setting, modern-look signage and fittings are not as appropriate in relation to the Park. (Note: Please see Proposed Action 2.3.5 regarding proposed name change for the Park.)

Level of community support:

High. The need for appropriate signage both on the highway and within town was identified as a high priority in Community Planning Forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

The use of a consistent style of signage throughout the Park was recommended.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Highly visible signage within town is essential to direct visitors to the Park and to avoid confusion for motorists unfamiliar with street layout.

Meets other Objectives:

N/A

Resources required:

Timber logs are available to the Shire from roadside clearing. Routing of signage might be done via community contribution or at minimal cost. Transporting and painting costs would be incurred.

Cost: Low.

Potential funding sources available: Not required.

Timeframe: Short term for Giblett Street log at least.

Priority: Medium.

2.2.3 Erect a sign at the Visitor Centre directing tourists to the Park.

Rationale/Background:

As the only real tourist attraction within the town of Manjimup, the Manjimup Visitor Centre refers most of its visitors to the Timber & Heritage Park. The installation of a promotional sign for the Park and suitable high profile placement has been discussed for some considerable time and is supported by both the Visitor Centre and Timber Park Advisory Committee. Only a lack of funding has prevented this from occurring to date.

Level of community support:

Supported by the Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee for a number of years.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. As the main source of visitor referrals at the present time, the Park should be featured strongly at the Visitor Centre.

Meets other Objectives:

No.

Resources required:

Shire staffing: Identify funding sources, write submission for funding, coordinate design and production, supervise erection of sign. (8 -15 hours.)

Cost: \$1000 - \$1770.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Short term.

Priority:

Medium.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.3 Develop and implement a professional promotion & marketing strategy.

Proposed actions:

2.3.1 Develop a package of promotional materials.

Rationale/Background:

With an absence of funds to develop promotional materials and an urgent need for at least some form of brochure and directional guide to negotiate the Park, an A3, fold to pocket size map-brochure was developed 'in house' in 2004.

The inclusion of a directional map on the reverse side of the brochure serves as a navigation tool for visitors to find their way to the various attractions in the Park. This is necessary because the current signage within the Park does not clearly outline a course between features or label the attractions. The production of a small hand held map was significantly cheaper than updating all signage in the Park to improve navigation.

Although designed for colour production, with no funds allocated for printing, the brochure has been photocopied in black and white and copies made available in the Park and at the Manjimup Visitor Centre.

This basic brochure has served the immediate purpose for which it was produced but it was designed to serve as a short-term measure only and should be upgraded at the earliest opportunity.

As a design feature, the pocket size non-standard fold was a major mistake because brochures cannot be mechanically folded and require manual folding by volunteers. Even when attempting to supply just the Park itself and the local Visitor Centre, it has been difficult to meet the demand (approximately 100-150 brochures per week locally) so it will also be necessary to increase levels of production.

The following approach is recommended with regard to the development of promotional tools:

1. Short term - immediate and urgent

- Ensure sufficient supplies of the existing photocopied map brochures are available in the Park (Timber Museum and Café) and distributed to local Visitor Centres within the Shire.

2. Short – medium term (6- 12 months - when new roof is on)

- Allocate funding for promotion.
- Redesign and upgrade map/brochure.
- Change design to A3 DL fold for mechanised folding.
- Include updated features (Round Building with new roof, Wildflower Garden and \$5 entry fee.)
- Distribute within the Park and to a broader sweep of outlets such as Visitor Centres (extend to Albany & Bunbury areas), coach tour companies and all local commercial tourist operations.

3. Longer term (2 years and beyond)

- Ensure the basic map-brochure is regularly updated to include any new features in the Park.
- Ensure regular distribution to outlets as above.
- Produce a package of additional promotional tools using current technologies (Power Point slide presentations, CDs etc) suitable for use at trade shows and presentations to tour operators.

Level of community support:

Map-brochure received positive feedback in Visitor Survey. Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Navigation tools were recommended.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Without the basic map-brochure, there are no promotional tools at all. Until Park signage is improved, navigation within the Park is confusing and many visitors miss the features in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. Promotional brochures provide a tool for referral that will result in increased volume of visitors that, in turn, will contribute significantly to income stream from entry fees.

Resources required:

Stage 1. Shire staff and volunteer time to produce and cost of internal photocopying.

Stage 2. Shire staff to supply text and images and coordinate design and printing process. (10-16 hours.) Cost: Professional designer - \$700; Print in colour- \$2300 per 5000 copies.

Stage 3: To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Stages as above.

Priority:

Very High for Stage 1.

2.3.2 Upgrade the Timber & Heritage Park's presence on the Internet.

Rationale/Background:

An ever-increasing number of tourists are planning their travel itineraries by researching attractions on the Internet.

The Timber & Heritage Park has a one-page listing on the Shire's web site containing only two paragraphs of text and two small photographs. The Park's listing on the Southern Forests website is similarly scant and continues to promote the Tourist Bureau in this location. The Kingsley Hotel web site has a more impressive feature page on the Timber Park with more extensive descriptive text and better photographs, however some of the text requires updating/editing.

By not fully utilising the opportunities offered by the Internet, The Park misses out on a major source of 'free' advertising.

People like to 'see' (virtually) the places they are planning to visit and be able to get a good 'feel' for what the place is about. A picture paints a thousand words and the Shire already has a collection of attractive electronic images of the Park that could be displayed on the website. Text could be more favourably descriptive and provide more detailed information about the attractions in the Park. Additional linked pages could be added to feature aspects of the Park likely to be of interest to certain groups, for example, the museums and hamlet, machinery, recreational facilities for families, wood turners, and blacksmith.

Web traffic (number of visitors or 'hits') can be increased significantly by ensuring links to the Timber & Heritage Park site are provided on other websites such as Southern Forests promotion, Working Life promotion, Holiday WA, Australia's South West, Visitor Centres and all local commercial tourist operators.

My Southwest Internet services have offered to provide free hosting and assistance with web design for members of the Working Life promotion. However, the Shire already operates its own web server and has staff capable of upgrading web pages, so this action could be achieved 'in house' using My Southwest for advice on linking and listing in search engines to maximise exposure.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Plan did not focus on marketing strategies.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium – high.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. Will contribute to the number of paying visitors.

Resources required:

Shire staff: Estimate 8 hours initial upgrade with occasional 30-minute updates. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

Not required although professional web support is available from My Southwest.

Timeframe:

Short term.

Priority:

High – with minimal staff input utilising existing resources in the short term, this could result in a reasonably high increase in visitors over an extended period of time.

2.3.3 Ensure current listings in all tourist trade magazines and web directories.

Rationale/Background:

Although there has been no organised promotional strategy for a number of years, the Park is already listed in many tourist guides and directories and on a number of web sites. Information available at these sources is often outdated and does not reflect the current situation in the Park. For example, many refer to the Park as the Timber Park and do not include 'Timber & Heritage' and most still mention the Tourist Bureau as being located here.

It is important to ensure that any publications and web sites which carry listings for the Park are provided with updated text and images that paint a favourable impression of the facility. A directory needs to be established to keep track of current listings for the Park and regular updates disseminated whenever there are changes.

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Plan did not focus on marketing strategies.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Complimentary and accurate information through other sources is important.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes.

Resources required:

Staff time: dependent upon the number of sites updated and the amount of original new text supplied 15 –25 hours per annum.

Cost: Nil. This action refers only to directories and publications where listing is free.

Potential funding sources available:

N/A

Timeframe:

Ongoing.

Priority:

Medium- High.

2.3.4 Explore opportunities for feature articles in tourist glossies and other publications.

Rationale/Background:

The May 2005 edition of Scoop Traveller magazine featured a double-page spread with the Timber & Heritage Park described in detail and illustrated with attractive photographs. Presented in full gloss colour in a feature article, even local business people did a 'double-take' and asked: "Is this really *our* park?"

This article was actually produced through a telephone interview with a staff member and all images supplied electronically via e-mail. To the best of our knowledge, the feature writer did not actually visit the Park. This example illustrates that it is possible to gain very favourable publicity by making the effort to produce and distribute promotional materials of high quality and visual appeal.

There are many more opportunities available for the Park to be featured in travel publications if there is a staff member with both the time and skills to make the contacts and supply all the content to make a journalist's job easy for them to write the story.

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Plan did not focus on marketing strategies.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Complimentary and accurate information through other sources is important.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. More fee-paying visitors will be attracted to the Park.

Resources required:

Staff time: Approximately two-three hours per article. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

Not required.

Timeframe:

Ongoing.

Priority:

Medium.

2.3.5 Consider changing the name of the Park to reflect the evolving content and target market.

Rationale/Background:

The current name of the park (Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park) will not adequately describe the broadened content proposed in this plan and nor does it engender a sense of ownership across the wider community of the Shire of Manjimup.

While the Park's name includes "Manjimup" it will tend to be seen as a facility that serves only the major town in the Shire and will perpetuate longstanding inter-town rivalries. The success of this development will be vastly enhanced if it can be presented as a more cooperative venture to which the *whole* Shire community contributes and is able to recognise the *shared* long-term benefits.

A far greater sense of whole-community ownership is likely to be derived from replacing the word "Manjimup" with "Southern Forests" – a title that does not imply exclusion of the other three towns in the Shire.

"Southern Forests" is the name used to describe this region in existing tourist promotion and marketing supported by the state government. There are, therefore, considerable advantages to using a title for the Park that will already have a high level of tourist visitor recognition.

Should this plan be implemented, the Park will longer have its primary focus just on "Timber", because it will also provide education and interpretation about horticultural heritage and the forests and the natural environment of which the timber industry was a part.

It will no longer simply present our "Heritage" because initiatives proposed in the plan have responded to a strong community desire to see the Park as a venue to promote the region's *current* industries and attractions.

It is therefore proposed that the words "Timber & Heritage" be replaced by a single word that will capture more accurately both the broad content and the diverse elements presented with the Park.

Some suggestions (in order of the consultant's preference) include:

- Southern Forests Panorama
- Southern Forests Focus Park
- Southern Forests Perspectives Park
- Southern Forests Outlook Park
- Southern Forests Snapshot Park
- Southern Forests Interpretive Park

Note: Decisions regarding a possible name change for the Park need to be made in the short-term time frame in order to avoid having to reprint or republish any promotional information.

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Plan did not focus on marketing strategies.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Complimentary and accurate information through other sources is important.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Higher levels of support can be anticipated if communities beyond the town of Manjimup are included.

Objective 3. More fee-paying visitors will be attracted to the Park through better association with promotion of Southern Forests region.

Resources required:

Replacement of some signs around town and contact to sources currently listing the venue under the old name.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored re: replacement of log signs.

Timeframe:

Short Term.

Priority:

High.



Banksia grandis located near the gate for Woodturner's Shed. Now identified and marked on the new map-brochure *Significant Trees of the Park*.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.4 Actively target the coach tour industry.

The increased volume of visitors that can be anticipated from targeting the coach tour market represents the most effective investment of time, energy and money in marketing the Park.

The coach tour market offers a number of advantages over the self-drive tourist market in that:

- Access can be gained to a large number of travellers via specifically targeted and highly professional marketing to a relatively small number of agency contacts.
- Successfully capturing a proportion of the coach tour market would provide the economies of scale likely to contribute the most in producing the income flow for the Park requires to attain financial self-sustainability. (See Objective 3.)
- Coach visits can usually be pre-arranged, which allows for adequate preparation of services to be provided.

When consulted for input into this Plan, the owner of Perth's largest coach tour company¹⁴ advised there are an average of 10 coaches travelling *past* Manjimup daily. If we were able to draw even a small percentage of these coaches off the highway and into town, the following are estimates for some of the financial inputs that could be expected:

<i>Short stay</i>			
Shopping	average spending per hour	\$50 per person	\$2000 per coach
<i>Overnight stay</i>			
Accommodation	average	\$2000	
Restaurant meal		\$250 – \$300	smaller coach
		\$600 – \$800	regular coach
		\$1500- \$1700	58-seater
Entry Fees to Park	average	\$150 per coach (discount rate)	

When asked what would attract coach tours into Manjimup, the first and repeated response was:

"You must have an icon. Something big. Something unique. Something that has a story which drivers can relay and that will appeal to tourists."

The construction of an icon is an action proposed at 2.1.1 in this plan.

The following are some of the other actions recommended to attract coach tour business into the Park specifically and the town in general.

Proposed actions:

2.4.1 Provide promotion/information packages to coach companies including commentary notes for tour drivers/guides.

Rationale/Background:

Although major attractions on the itinerary are pre-arranged, coach drivers have some discretion in being flexible or negotiating with passengers where they will make a rest stop or short visit.

¹⁴ See Appendix 4 for interview notes.

In the short term, exploit the opportunities to influence driver discretion by making it easy or attractive for them to stop. Action: Supply coach drivers with a booklet or a couple of pages of brief speaking notes to provide content for their commentary and attract their interest. Make it easy for drivers to tell the 'stories' (as entertaining as possible) of your town/attraction.

Background notes should include:

- background to the town (population, industries;
- features and attractions they will see along the road;
- a bit of 'story' or 'spiel' about features they will pass;
- introduction to what they will see at the Park;
- again an easy spiel to relate what features can be expected in the Park according to what type of group might be traveling – wildflowers, timber history, machinery, local legends etc.
- indication of time frame it will take to see various aspects of the Park, suggested 'packages' for interest groups.

Level of industry support:

Recommended by coach tour company owner. See NT3 Appendix 4 - Interview with Coach Company

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Coach tours provide a volume of visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. Increased volume of visitors will contribute significantly to income stream from entry fees.

Resources required:

Staff time to produce driver commentaries and promotional materials, establish a contacts database and disseminate information. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

Not required.

Timeframe:

Short term

Priority:

Very high.

2.4.2 Invest in improving and promoting the wildflower gardens.

Rationale/Background:

In the absence of an icon, *the single feature most likely to attract coach tours to the park is the availability of wildflowers in bloom.* (Refer to Appendix 4, NT4.)

The peak season for coach tours is July to November when visitor numbers are bolstered by International and interstate tourists specifically seeking to experience Western Australia's wildflower season. During this season coaches can often be seen parked by the side of the road attempting to provide their passengers with the chance to get up close and photograph flowers which locals very much take for granted.

The best wildflowers are often illusive and scattered over a wide geographical area making them difficult to access in the short time frames available in one or two day coach tours. Obviously being able to offer the viewing of a whole range of the region's native flora within a short time frame is a very attractive proposition to a coach tour operator. When this intensive wildflower experience is combined with access to toilets, food, drink and the other features available in the Park, many drivers will consider this an ideal 'rest stop' regardless of their advertised itinerary.

Through this means an opportunity is presented to capture a portion of the coach tour market *in the short term* and establish the Park as a familiar attraction for coach drivers and tourists reporting back to travel agents.

Historically the wildflower gardens in the Park have been developed and maintained by volunteers loosely described as Friends of the Park. Over the past three decades a huge amount of labour and

care has gone into planting and tending trees, shrubs and wildflowers to increase the selection of plants available for viewing in the Park.

In recent years this responsibility has, in reality, fallen upon two people, Ray Cranfield and Doreen Owens. Due to limited funding availability, Ray and Doreen have economised by cultivating plants from seed that they have then raised in a nursery until plants reach seedling size and can be transplanted in the Park.



Two-year old mass wildflower plantings starting to fill out near the top pond.

Although some gardens are thriving and showing resplendent colour (see above), unfortunately many of the smaller seedlings have failed to survive due to poor soil quality in some areas, lack of summer watering and insufficient care and attention due to the limited volunteer custodianship of the gardens.

As a result, the garden featuring species indigenous to the Manjimup area in particular is looking extremely sparse in some areas. The recent installation of attractive plant ID markers into this garden has only served to highlight the fact that the garden itself is looking rather bare. (See below.)



Obviously-bare sections of the Local Wildflowers feature garden near the Timber Museum after recent installation of identification markers.

If we wish to capture a portion of the coach tour market, what is required is an investment of funds and energy to enable:

- purchase of more mature plants to increase the density of flower 'show';
- upgrading of soil quality in areas of new plantings or, at minimum, provide suitable mulching;
- additional plant ID markers; and,
- assistance with watering and weeding to increase survival rates during summer.

In the medium term, gardens at the front of the Round Building should also be replanted with native flora that is low in height (to maximise light into the building) but high in showy colour.

Once entry fees are introduced, the direct returns on this investment would average \$150 per coach with many indirect returns possible as well. An investment of \$1500 in the short term would be returned with the first ten coaches visiting once entry fees are established.

Level of industry support:

High. (Refer to Appendix 4, NT4 & NT 10.)

Level of community support:

Lack of resources to service wildflower gardens raised as an issue in Key Stakeholder Forum and consistently discussed in the meetings of the Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee meetings.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Page 12 of the final report [Sept 2004 plan] recommends that a commissioned study be undertaken for the natural bushland. The earlier draft [Feb 2004] recommended on page 26, Zone 6 – "The garden around the timber museum should be extended and upgraded to link with the gardens leading through to the waterways area. Use the bushland areas and waterways to interpret the natural flora and fauna."

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Coach tours provide a volume of visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes, Objective 3. Increased volume of visitors will contribute significantly to income stream from entry fees.

Resources required:

Human: A gardener needs to be employed to manage all of the Park's gardens, including the wildflower gardens which require additional care in summertime during their establishment period. The high levels of volunteer support previously relied upon for maintaining gardens cannot be relied upon indefinitely. The gardener needs to be able to operate a mulcher and have access to suitable vehicle to remove rubbish or this service to be outsourced.

Assistance may be required from volunteer labour teams from time to time.

Volunteers available to provide expertise but not ongoing labour.

Materials:

Irrigation (trickle tube and fittings on timers) initial set up then occasional maintenance.

Plants, seeds and fertiliser (initial mass planting then replacement levels).

Costs:

Mulcher operator (Costs to be explored.)

Irrigation fittings - \$100

Plants - \$2000 (initially for 2 years) \$400/year replacement plants (should be reduced over time),

Fertiliser - \$100.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Immediate short term.

Priority:

Very high.

2.4.3 Re-explore options for providing sewerage-dumping facilities for coaches.

Rationale/Background:

In 1999, an approach was made to the Shire to consider providing sewerage-dumping facilities that would provide an incentive to encourage coach companies to stop off in Manjimup. (Refer to Appendix 4, NT 9.)

The rationale for the Shire to provide this service is that it would be a mutually beneficial arrangement. Coach companies have limited opportunities to unload sewerage in country areas so may be forced to carry sewerage on board for long distances and faced with high charges to discharge waste in city disposal facilities.

On the other hand, coach drivers will generally set down their passengers for an hour while they go off to dispose of their waste. If passenger expenditure during this time is between \$20-\$50 per head¹⁵, this represents an injection of (on average) \$800-\$2000 per coach, providing passengers have access to outlets where they find items of interest on which to spend their money.

The Shire's initial research into installing sewerage-dumping facilities found it to be cost prohibitive due to Water Corporation compliance requirements and annual fees to discharge waste. The increased volume of coach traffic passing by Manjimup may justify reviewing the proposition, however, to see if new technologies can provide a cheaper solution to initial set-up costs.

Further exploration should be in the context of negotiating arrangements with coach companies to ensure any outlay on infrastructure is compensated by a commitment to directing passenger expenditure on a visit to the Park, meals, accommodation or general 'retail therapy' in the CBD.

Level of industry support:

Likely to be high, as sewerage disposal is a common issue.

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Coach tours provide a volume of visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes, Objective 3. Increased volume of visitors will contribute significantly to income stream from entry fees. Likely to generally benefit the town's economy, if not the Park.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Research possibilities in short term.

Priority:

Medium – High.

2.4.4 Professionally promote Park to travel agencies and tour booking companies.

Rationale/Background:

One of the reasons for targeting coach tours is that a large market can be accessed through professionally promoting to a small number of agencies. Travel agents generally put together the packages for overseas visitors with some negotiation of itinerary with coach companies. The agents are at the top of the decision-making chain and the key to securing a share of this market.

Even if local coach tour operators are sympathetic and wish to include the Park in itineraries, they will have difficulty influencing the packages if the agents are unfamiliar with the venue and attractions. It is, therefore, imperative that the Park is promoted directly to the agents.

The market is highly competitive; presentations and promotional materials must be of an extremely high professional standard.

There are a number of opportunities for tourist operators to make presentations to travel agents through trade shows, tourism symposiums held in Australian cities (3 days) and through industry joint marketing tours through Asia (7-14 days).

¹⁵ See Appendix 4 and introduction to this Strategy.

At the very minimum, a suitably skilled representative of the Timber & Heritage Park should make formal presentations to travel agents at any symposium held in Perth and the Asian marketing ventures should be considered in the longer term.

Level of industry support:

Recommended by coach tour operator. Success of this marketing approach seen in those venues currently listed in itineraries. (Refer to Appendix 4.)

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Plan did not propose marketing strategies.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Coach tours provide a volume of visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Yes, Objective 3. Increased volume of visitors will contribute significantly to income stream from entry fees.

Resources required:

Staff member skilled in market presentations. 1-4 weeks per annum.

Professional marketing materials for presentations. See Proposed Action 2.3.1.

Cost Estimates: Australian (3-day) symposiums - \$1800 plus accommodation & airfares. Asian tours (7-14 days) \$3,000 - \$4,000.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Medium and long term.

Priority:

High.

2.4.5 *Negotiate packages and deals with travel agents, coach companies and other compatible tourist operations.*

Rationale/Background:

In this highly competitive market it is necessary to offer incentives and deals that are attractive to travel agents and tour operators. By offering discounts, incentives and package deals, the Timber Park can improve its competitive advantage.

The attractions available in the Timber & Heritage Park and within the town of Manjimup do not warrant a primary billing on a tour itinerary. It would be well worthwhile exploring the possibilities of cooperative marketing with other providers such as catering and accommodation services, wine cellars and tourist attractions in towns both within the Shire and towards Margaret River.

In this way it may be possible to promote to travel agents a package that extends an existing one-day tour into a two-day with overnight stay in Manjimup or Pemberton, thus increasing the financial benefits to the local economy.

Level of industry support:

By negotiation.

Level of community support:

Not discussed in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan: No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Coach tours provide a volume of visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. Increased volume of visitors will contribute significantly to income stream from entry fees.

Resources required:

Staff with skills to identify opportunities and contacts for cooperative marketing. See Proposed Action 2.3.1.

Potential funding sources available: N/A

Timeframe: Medium and long term.

Priority: Medium.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.5 *Clearly identify a single entry point to park with an experience that makes a highly positive impact and sets the tone for the experience within.*

Proposed action:

2.5.1 *The Round Building should be the main focal point and entry to the Park – open daily all year.*

Rationale/Background:

Regardless of what other purposes the Round Building may simultaneously serve, there is very strong community support and also very sound commercial and interpretive reasons for using this building to provide a positive impact and focal point through which visitors enter the Park.

In a tourist venue upon entry to the Park visitors should receive:

- A friendly personal welcome.
- Information about the Park and region.
- Orientation to site.
- Indication of activities available and main features of the Park.

A single entry point provides:

- A collection point for entry fees
- A 'point of sale' for retail of Park interpretive materials and souvenirs
- A security monitoring point and controlled visitor flow.

The Current Multiple-Entry Situation:

There are currently three entry points to the Park, none of which are suitable as an entry statement if the Park is to become a viable tourist attraction.

- ***Through the Entry Gates – the current 'official' entry point.***

In 2001, considerable funds were expended on the creation of a substantial rammed earth and metal entry gate.

While the new entry gates have served to modernise and upgrade a previously unattractive fence, they do not provide any facility for personalised welcoming, orientation, collection of entry fees, provision of information or point of sale for retail items.



Extensive observation of visitors entering through these gates during the past year consistently revealed a visitor reaction of confusion, pausing to look around for an orientation point or for someone to provide directions, trying to decipher a faded map that offers little navigational information.

With a little luck, visitors wandering towards the Timber Museum may find an orientation map/brochure if sufficient copies have been printed.



The welcome sign provides minimal orientation and navigation information.

- **Through the Cafe**

A second entry point to the Park is through the Gallery Café. This route of entry is unsuitable as the formal entry point because, being a non-affiliated commercial enterprise, the current lease arrangement places the proprietors under no obligation to provide visitors with the friendly welcome, orientation, and positive promotion of main features in the Park that are critical to successful tourism.

While the current proprietor has been helpful in distributing map-brochures and Visitor Survey forms, the café is not the ideal place as a point for sale for the Park's interpretive, promotional and souvenir items as this may present a conflict with the type of items in the gallery retail area.

Entry to the Park is through the café building with an undefined exit onto a covered veranda and sandy escarpment that form part of the café lease. The lease was extended to incorporate a 25 square metre area beyond the veranda because the proprietor intended to make improvements to develop an *al fresco* eating area. Unfortunately improvements have not been undertaken, the native shrubbery is untended and the terrain has further deteriorated.

A visitor approaching the Park via this route, as in the case with the main gate entry, would receive no formal greeting, orientation and promotion of the Park's features.

Upon exiting the cafe into the Park itself, the visitor receives no directional guidance by way of signage and is inclined to walk directly ahead towards grassed areas through a rather scrappy patch of overgrown native shrubbery and down a pathway defined only by a water-eroded gully cut through sloping grey sand.



First impressions of the Park via the café entry point - sand, weeds and soil erosion.

- **Past the Public Toilets – the 'actual' main entry.**

The third, and now the most frequently used entry to the Park, is the most direct route visible from the main parking area. Due to the prominence of the Round Building, most visitors assume this building to be the logical entry point and gravitate to this parking area. Upon discovering that the Round Building is not the entry, after some confusion, most notice the open gateway to the west of the building and enter here.

Consequently, the most obvious direct route into the Park is down beside the public toilets where a narrow paved pathway traverses uncultivated bare sand with weeds and passes through a gate in an old cyclone wire fence. This entry brings the visitor to a lovely post-and-rail fence but there is, once again, no welcome or orientation signage and tall shrubbery obscures an open view into the Park.

The first impression the majority of visitors now receive of the Park could hardly be more unfavourable! As an urgent short-term remedy to this situation, this gate should be closed off at the first opportunity and signage provided to clearly indicate the preferred entry points.



The 'actual' main entry point - past the men's toilets, across sand and through a cyclone wire fence.

Fully utilising the natural advantages of the Round Building as the formal entry is pivotal if the Timber & Heritage Park is to have any chance of success as a tourist attraction. A number of possible complementary uses are discussed in the proposed action that follows.

Level of industry support:

High. Discussions with operators and government officers indicate high levels of support for a clearly delineated entry providing a welcome to the Park.

Level of community support:

Very high. In the final community planning forum where the future use of the Round Building as key discussion topic, there was very strong support (92 votes) for the building's primary purpose to be as the Main Entry to the Park.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes. Page 13 states:

"**The Entry Statement** – the point of entry to the facility is a key success factor. It should be obvious and recognisable as the entry/exit and control point. The circular Entry Building is considered most suitable. It should also control the adjacent service access, and all after hours access should similarly be controlled."

See also page 17, Zone 1 Recommendations and page 20.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Very high.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1 - provides a focal point for community involvement in the Park.

Objective 3 – will allow a collection point for entry fees and retail sales to generate income from Park visitors.

Resources required:

See various alternate uses below.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short term. As soon as urgent repairs to roof and floor are complete.

Priority:

High.

2.5.2 Utilise the Round Building for purposes compatible with its primary function as Entry Building for the Park.

Rationale/Background:

The proposed uses for the Round Building was a key discussion topic in the final community planning forum and has been debated within the community since the Visitor Centre vacated the premises in December 2004.

Uses proposed in the community planning forums included:

Venue for regular entertainment – music, arts council events.	27
Relocate café/restaurant into Round Building	26
Old photos exhibited in Round Building	21
Display old photographs and showcase local product	21
Use to showcase local produce/museum	7
Function Centre/Gallery	6
Relocate Timber Museum to Round Building	5
Encourage more groups to use Park & Round Building	4
Exhibition Centre – business, art.	4

The options most popular with the community may not be the most practical in meeting all three Objectives. For example, utilising the building solely as an entertainment and exhibition area for cultural events is not likely to bring a high financial return. Similarly, although an attractive venue for such purposes, relocating the café into this building would raise some major issues with regard to the current leasing arrangements (in place until 2009) as well as incurring substantial costs in having to construct and fit out a commercial kitchen (Estimated \$1500 per square metre.)

Fully leasing the building to a commercial entity was not well supported as an option by the community forums and would be likely to preclude retaining control of the entry function.

The recommendations for the future use of the Round Building in this plan aim to:

- combine various suggestions with high community support ;
- take into consideration practical, legal and financial issues;
- maintain a focus on the Park being able to operate as a commercial tourist operation; and.
- allow the facility to simultaneously serve community needs.

In all planning forums a number of general themes prevailed in terms of how the community would like to see the building used. From these discussions, we can conclude that the community would like the building to provide:

- Highly positive impact in delivering the entry function into the Park. (As discussed in 2.5.1)
- Exhibition and display areas.
- Space that can be utilised for community events, entertainment, public and civic functions.

With careful design and management, the 303 square metres floor space could be utilised to serve all three purposes above. By removing the current large brick and timber counter, visitor traffic flow could be directed to circle closer to the center of the building, while the round shape and timber pillars could

be used to advantage to create distinct sections around the perimeter of the building – like segments in a pie. Please see the drawing attached at Appendix 7 for a general concept plan of how the spaces might be utilised.

1. Main Entry Function

As mentioned in the previous proposed action, it is critical that part of the Round Building be used to provide the formal entry function for the Park. The use of space must enable 'meet and greet' function to welcome visitors, a controlled entry point for collecting entry fees and monitoring visitor flows, an orientation and information area and a retail area to sell Park related products.

The Visitor Centre was previously located in the Round Building and quite adequately provided the entry function for the Park. One of the main issues justifying the relocation of the Visitor Centre was the discomfort experienced by volunteer staff due to an inability to heat such a large open space.

It is, therefore, proposed that this particular issue be resolved by the construction of a small office cubicle just inside of the main entry door from Edwards Street. Ideally the office cubicle would:

- have a false ceiling to keep heat trapped below;
- be fully enclosed apart from a small counter area open to the doorway to enable fee collection and retail sales;
- be large enough to house one or two people who could be kept warm by a small heater, and;
- be constructed or clad in a material that blends aesthetically with the interior of the Round Building.

Shelving for a small retail area would need to be situated where it is visible to the person staffing the entry counter. (See Proposed action 3.3.4.)

The entry section should also include the Park's own displays providing orientation and information about the key features as well as an audiovisual area. A theatrette could be created by curtaining off one of the 'segments' of the building and fitting it out with video/DVD player, screen and a small bank of comfortable seats. It is preferable for curtains in the audiovisual section to be retractable to allow for opening up of space when the building is used for other functions.

2. Showcase – the best of who we are NOW!

Another recurrent theme during community planning forums was that the Park should provide visitors with a window into who we are as a community *now* as well as presenting our history. The region's current activities could be represented in the Round Building by utilising segmented exhibition areas to create:

- ***Commercial Exhibition Space***

Offer our current industries – Timber, Horticulture, Agriculture and Viticulture – the opportunity to showcase their 'state of the art' timber products, premium horticultural produce and award-winning vintages by erecting permanent displays in what will become one of the highest profile viewing areas in the district.

If this opportunity is presented professionally, commercial businesses and grower organizations will see the public relations and commercial promotion advantages to participating in these exhibitions and should be willing to pay a display fee to have their products promoted in the Showcase.

From the Shire's point of view, making a portion of the building available to house commercial displays provides the most cost-effective solution to space usage in the short term, as the majority of costs involved in creating professional displays will be borne by the businesses exhibiting in the building.

- ***Community displays/exhibitions***

Temporary and semi-permanent display areas could be made available for community usage and might include current information about land and forest management, Indigenous culture, school projects, art, photographic and craft exhibitions.

These community exhibition areas should be displayed on partitioning or panels that are designed to retract or fold back to the wall in order to make it possible to increase the open space for functions/events when required.

3. Function/Entertainment Centre

Since the Visitor Centre vacated the premises the Round Building has informally, and quite successfully, served as a venue for civic receptions, community and private social functions. The attractive ambience and unique design style make a tasteful statement about the district's timber heritage, which provides an excellent setting for civic and community functions.

There is a distinct lack of availability of a venue suitable for conducting wedding receptions in Manjimup and the Round Building has been successfully used for this purpose on a number of occasions in the last two years. The Park's attractive gardens and waterways already make it a popular location for wedding ceremonies and photographic sessions, so the availability of an indoor venue for receptions would enhance the desirability of the location and create a demand to hire the building. Hire fees would contribute to the income stream for the Park.

Even when used for larger social functions such as the cocktail reception for the Cherry Harmony Festival, only about a third of the building's floor area was utilised. With careful design of the layout it would, therefore, be possible to compatibly incorporate an area for holding functions along with exhibition areas and the building's primary role as main entry to the Park. Temporary partitioning of the function area would be needed, however, to ensure that visitor access to the Park is not limited while functions are being conducted.

The space could also be hired as a venue for community events and entertainment (such as music recitals) and temporary display areas could be booked for art or photographic exhibitions – thus serving a number of potential uses identified in community planning forums.

Although the existing kitchen facilities are unsuitable for a commercial café, they are almost adequate for the purposes of one-off events where external catering is provided. Improvements to enhance the venue's capacity as a function centre might include the addition of hot water to the sink, a gas stove, a larger fridge and the availability (for hire) of a *bain marie* for heating catered meals. Additional seating and tables could either be purchased for the building or the function holder could arrange private hire of furnishings through a commercial provider.

The building's heating and lighting issues will need to be addressed to meet the requirements of the various intended usages.

Longer Term.

These uses of the building have been recommended in the first instance because they provide the most immediate and affordable solution to having the building serve multiple suggested uses that have some commercial benefit while allowing the primary function as the Park's main entry. It is imperative to the implementation of this management and development plan that the building fulfils an entry and fee collection function at the earliest opportunity.

These recommended uses should be reviewed within three years to ascertain whether they continue to meet all the Objectives more successfully than other potential uses.

Due to the popularity of the suggestion that the café facility should be located in the Round Building, this option may need to be re-explored before the expiry of the current café lease arrangement in 2009. At that time it is anticipated that expressions of interest will be sought for the provision of hospitality services in the Park and this would be the ideal time to make any changes in location if this is still considered a viable option.

This option should only be implemented if it could be demonstrated that the costs involved in relocating the café will be adequately compensated with direct financial benefits to the Shire/Park. Once visitor flows have been increased through better management and promotion, it may be possible to attract a potential lessee who is prepared to invest (an estimated \$1500 sq metre) in undertaking the necessary kitchen upgrades in order to establish a business in what could become a premium location.

The expiration of the café lease also provides an opportunity to review the conditions of lease in any new agreement to ensure the food outlet is aligned with the themes and values promoted in the Park. A recommendation in both the community planning forums and the 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan is that the café menu should focus on presenting and favourably promoting locally produced foods.

Similarly a new lease agreement should ensure that employees of the café are required to undertake the same mandatory hospitality training as other Park personnel to maintain a high standard of public relations throughout the facility.

Extreme caution should be exercised before handing over the entry function of the Park to the café or any other agency or commercial enterprise and should only be contemplated under an extremely proscriptive lease agreement that clearly outlines the public relations standards to be maintained.

Should the café be relocated into the Round Building, the existing building housing the café might provide a good location to expand the commercial exhibition Showcase area, with some bays available to lease for retail sales.

Level of industry support:

There is no other central location where the region's industries can permanently display their premium products and promote their businesses to visitors and locals. If professionally presented, this opportunity is likely to be appealing to a number of companies and industry associations. The tourist industry would support a facility that showcases the best the region has to offer.

Level of community support:

These recommended uses aim to combine key elements of the suggestions for use identified in community planning forums. See Background/Rationale section.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes, using the Round Building to provide entry function and presenting an overview of the region's industries was *strongly* recommended in the 2004 Plan.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. The combined uses meet the needs of visitors in providing a welcome at entry, positive impact first impressions and an overview of the region's industries and community.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Community and regional businesses will have a greater involvement in the Park.

Objective 3. Income can be derived from charging fees for visitor entry, lease of exhibition space and hire of function venue.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

A partnership between Shire, government and commercial agencies utilising exhibition bays. Possibly AusIndustry Australian Tourism Development Grants and Regional Development Scheme.

Timeframe:

Short term and ongoing.

Priority:

High.

2.5.3 Construct a covered veranda between the Café and the Round Building.

Rationale/Background:

It is proposed that a covered veranda be constructed between the café and the Round Building to extend the alfresco eating area, integrate the two spaces and create a more meaningful, weatherproof connection between the areas. The covered walkway would also provide a conduit for ferrying food between café and Round building if the former provides catering to functions held in the latter.

It is envisaged that the extension would be open to the northern side facing into the Park and walled on the southern side with doorways allowing access to toilets from within the Park. (See Proposed Action 2.5.4.)

To allow improved viewing into the Park, taller vegetation beyond the post and rail fence should be removed and replanted with attractive native shrubs and groundcovers that will not exceed one metre in height. Clearly delineated, wheelchair-safe, paved pathways should be constructed leading from the café and Round Building down onto the grassed area.

The rear (southern) wall of the veranda would make an ideal location to display super-size black and white historic photographic panels. These photographs would create both an attractive backdrop to the seating and an opportunity for visitors to photograph themselves in front of some of the more

outstanding pictorial images we have available – for example, Alan Dineen and mates lying in the scarf of an unfelled karri with a 28-foot girth at Jardee. Local families could also be offered the opportunity to sponsor a photographic panel that depicts the story of their founding family members.

Extending the external seating area available to both the café and Round Building and landscaping the view into a delightful parkland vista to maximise Manjimup's only current northern-facing alfresco dining area would instantly create an outdoor entertainment area that rivals any in the district. It is proposed that additional seating be provided by Park management in the areas closest to the Round Building to enable members of the public to freely enjoy the space as well as café patrons. With the installation of clear plastic drop blinds (as used in many city venues) at the café end, the alfresco area could be utilised in almost all seasons.

Level of industry support:

Outdoor dining is a popular attraction for tourists and there is no other venue in Manjimup that provides protected alfresco dining.

Level of community support:

Display of historic photographs in the Round Building was strongly supported in community planning forums (21 votes). This proposal aims to meet this expectation by displaying historic photographs in the area adjacent to the Round Building.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Alfresco dining in such an attractive environment would be highly desirable to tourists. Improvements to the existing outdoor dining area, including garden landscaping, are urgently needed.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective1. Local families could become involved in sponsoring photographic boards and sharing more local history.

Resources required:

Human: Staff members to apply for funding, coordinate construction, collect historical photographs and stories, supervise design and production of panels, oversee landscaping.

Physical:

Construction costs of veranda extension.
Creation of photographic display panels.
Landscaping services and purchase of plants.

Potential funding sources available:

Regional Development Scheme funding program available through South West Development Commission (\$25,000 - \$40,000).

Sharing Australia's Stories. Funding (\$5,000 - \$50,000)

Lotterywest Heritage grants (\$15,000)

Timeframe:

Medium

Priority:

Medium.

2.5.4 Provide access to toilets from within the Park when multiple entries are closed.

Rationale/Background:

With the creation of a single entry point through the Round Building and the closure of the current entry gate beside the male public toilets, it will be necessary to provide access to toilets from within the Park.

The cheapest alternative for providing access to existing toilets would be to close access to the public toilets except via the Edward Street car park and to utilise the toilets inside the Round Building. This could be achieved by closing internal access doors (thus making more unbroken space available for commercial displays) and creating an opening to the outside to allow access to the toilets within the Round Building. For the minor inconvenience of Round Building users having to step outside to access toilets (undercover if Proposed Action 2.5.3 is carried out), this would enable park visitors to access to a normal and a disabled toilet for each gender.

There are also male and female toilets at the rear of the Timber Museum that would be more frequently used if signposting could be erected to indicate their whereabouts.

Should additional toilets be required, it is recommended that a disabled toilet for each gender be constructed at the northern end of the existing Edwards Street car park public toilets to maximise use of existing plumbing. When larger events are conducted in the Park, portaloos can be hired to accommodate increased demand.

Level of industry support:

Availability of public toilets is a prerequisite. Most coaches would use the public toilets on Edwards Street upon arrival and toilets inside the Park would be an added advantage.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Existing toilets accessible from the outside of the Park would be requirements but access to additional toilets within Park would be advantageous for the convenience of visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Local users – especially families with children - would benefit from accessibility of toilets within the Park.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Medium term. To coincide with closure of alternate entries and construction of covered veranda.

Priority:

Medium.



Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.6 *Develop a unique experience on the tourist map with a definite 'point of difference' from other tourist venues.*

Proposed actions:

2.6.1 *Reconstruct a Tobacco Shed to house the story of the district's unique horticulture history and reinforce the theme of this community's 'resilience' in adapting to change.*

Rationale/Background:

Monkey Mia has the dolphins, Hyden has Wave Rock, Albany has Whale World and Walpole has the Tree Top Walk. Each of these places has become established on the tourist map because they have an attraction that is *unique* to their location.

Manjimup has Timber industry history but then so do Pemberton, Dwellingup and the Greenbushes Discovery Centre will soon have a timber feature display too. The Park has some steam machinery, but the investment of capital and labour on machinery restoration at Dardanup Heritage Park and the Yarloop Workshops leaves it well out of the competition. Perhaps the Shire will eventually have a share in a Sky Jetty or Slide, but this icon will be located outside the town and travellers can just as readily pass right by as they do now en route to Walpole or Pemberton.

What we do have that is entirely *unique* to this district is its Tobacco industry history. Perhaps not unique in an International context, but certainly unique in this state and, therefore, a novelty in the intrastate tourist market.

Most people in WA would not know that tobacco was grown in our state and, for newcomers to the region, the eye-catching structure of a tobacco kiln instantly arouses curiosity. Locating the building in an area of the Park where it is visible from the main roads would be an additional drawcard. Few people are aware that the Pink Lady apple variety originates from here as well, so that is another story we need to tell.

Even though Horticulture and Agriculture have been integral aspects of this region's economic development, it is rather surprising that this aspect of the community's heritage is *not* already represented in the Park. We are at a stage where it is still possible to capture the human experiences and relics of the tobacco era, an opportunity that may not exist in another decade.

The history of these industries has been marked by waves of success and failure, impacted by both Nature and market demands. What emerged as a defining characteristic of this region's human heritage is a spirit of *resilience* – the ability to pick oneself up, dust oneself off and carry on after a fall.

Highlighting this region's historical capacity to overcome adversity and adapt to change is a message locals should be proud to share with visitors but also a timely reminder to the community today in the wake of economic losses incurred by the restructure of the Timber industry.

To reconstruct a tobacco kiln and fit it out with displays depicting the history of tobacco and other stories of life on the land would be a major undertaking, requiring high levels of community participation and substantial funding. There are, however, very valid reasons for facilitating the community engagement process that would be required to interpret this aspect of the community's heritage. (See Proposed Action 1.5.3) The initiative would also meet the criteria for a number of government funding sources, thus injecting external capital into the local economy.

When combined with the Park's existing features and the proposed new high visibility icon in the north-east corner, the Tobacco Kiln would add one more unique and interesting item to a suite of attractions and expand the Park's appeal to a broader visitor market.

Level of industry support:

Initial positive support indicated from local horticultural producers. Needs to be promoted further and support from industry built and coordinated into action. See Proposed Action 1.5.3.

Level of community support:

High. This concept received the second highest number of votes (63) in the combined totals of the first two community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes, refer to pages 14 and 27.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Adding tobacco history to the Park's existing attractions provides a 'point of difference' to other WA icons that can be used to advantage when marketing the Park within the highly competitive Tourism industry.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1 – builds the involvement and sense of ownership in the Park for a large portion of the community not currently represented.

Resources required:

Shire staff: To facilitate community planning and development process with related industries and community members; preparation of a series of funding submissions; coordination of project development; supervision of construction phase; and reporting and acquittal of external funding. (Estimated average 6 hours per week over a six-month period as a minimum.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Community: Significant levels of community involvement in planning, development, assistance with developing interpretation materials, location and identification of relics and artefacts that may be donated from within the community. See Proposed Action 1.5.3.

Materials: Range of modern, safe construction materials to simulate a reconstructed tobacco kiln.

Interpretation materials including displays, photographs as well as tools and machinery relics of the era.

Cost: To be explored, but estimate in the ballpark of \$100,000 - \$150,000 (including internal fit-out).

Potential funding sources available:

Interpretation of heritage:

Lotterywest Heritage grants (up to \$15,000 but require use of professional historian).

Materials and skilled labour:

WA government's Regional Development Scheme through South West Development Scheme (SWDC). (Grants of around \$40,000 pa acceptable for projects demonstrating contribution to economy or jobs).

Commonwealth government's Regional Partnerships Program through Area Consultative Committee (ACC).

Unskilled labour:

Ideal for a Green Corps project involving 10 young people in environmental and heritage projects for a six-month period. Project already flagged with State Manager.

Possibly also some level of community volunteers involved in construction phase.

Timeframe:

Short term: Begin community engagement process to develop concept and collect interpretive materials.

Medium. Construction phase - second major project after the iconic drawcard.

Priority:

High.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.7 Provide a higher level of interpretation experience utilising existing exhibits and resources.

Proposed actions:

2.7.1 Upgrade the WA Timber Museum to include a chronological history of forest management and reflect changes in forestry during the past 30 years.

Rationale/Background:

The WA Timber Museum was purpose-built in the 1970s to house Western Australia's timber industry history. Displays pertaining to the forest and silviculture have not been upgraded since the museum opened in 1977. During this period, areas of the displays – particularly photographs - have significantly deteriorated due to inappropriate lighting, continuous human handling and minor vandalism.

The content of display panels is now outdated and does not reflect modern forestry practices, particularly developments in the last 30 years such as plantation forestry. The museum also lacks a chronological history of the various eras of forest management – settlement to current day – which is the most obvious interpretive 'story' one would expect to find in our State's Timber Museum.

There is no external signage visible to passing traffic that identifies the building as the WA Timber Museum. At the entry to the museum, a memorial board commemorating those who lost their lives in forest industries has not been maintained and updated since 1995.

Public perception of the WA Timber Museum

Despite the deteriorated state of some of its displays, the Timber Park continues to draw positive comment as a tourist destination. For example, the web site for the Fairfax Walkabout Australian Travel Guide states:

Every visit to Manjimup should start at the Manjimup Timber Park. Located on the corner of Rose and Edwards Streets it is ***a truly outstanding museum-timber information complex with fascinating displays of local timbers***, a special Fire Lookout Tower (this is only 18 m above the ground), an historic village with a Blacksmith's shop, an old Police Station and lockup, a one teacher school and an early mill house and an exhibition of old steam engines. The extensive grounds are suitable for picnics and ***it would be easy for a person interested in the local area and the history of the Western Australian timber industry to spend a day in this excellent complex.*** It is open from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. daily.

The Visitor Survey¹⁶ conducted in the Park during the first five months of 2005 also contained much positive feedback, although some comments noted the deterioration of displays and poor lighting. Verbal comments to volunteers frequently suggest that it is a shame our WA Timber Museum is not as well maintained as it could be.

Upgrade Requirements.

The following components have been identified as necessary to revitalise the museum's vibrancy and currency:

- Upgrade existing display panels to reflect more recent developments in forestry.
- Expand the display area to include a chronological history of forest practices and management.
- Erect higher-level signage on the exterior of the building so that it is clearly identifiable from main street frontages as the "WA Timber Museum".
- Upgrade museum lighting to current technology that would reduce deterioration of displays and relics.

¹⁶ Visitor Survey Report is available as an Optional Attachment to this Plan.

- Update brass plaques on the Memorial Board to honour more recent loss of life in forest industries.

As the Shire has assumed responsibility for maintaining the museum for the past 28 years and will soon be expending funds on repairs to the roof and external structure, it is recommended that a tripartite funding partnership be sought with State Government and timber industry stakeholders to upgrade the contents of the museum as described previously.

Level of community support:

Medium. There were 10 votes supporting this suggestion at the final community planning forum.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

The deteriorated state of the museum will be generating adverse publicity among tourists. An upgrade will reverse this trend.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Developing the upgrade with partner agencies will broaden the sense of ownership for the facility. Involving the community in the launch of the upgrade will increase the sense of local pride in the museum and possibly attract more volunteer guides.

Objective 3. Improved facilities and word of mouth publicity will increase visitor numbers and justify charging entry fees.

Resources required:

Shire staff: To facilitate and negotiate planning and development process with stakeholder partner agencies; preparation of any funding submissions or proposals required; sourcing of interpretive data; coordination of project development; supervision of design and installation phase; and reporting and acquittal of external funding. (Estimated average 4 hours per week over a six-month period as a minimum and dependent upon whether Shire takes lead partner agency role.)

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

Recommended seek funding partnership with Forest Productions Commission, Timber Communities Australia, and possibly timber companies. Some financial assistance towards interpretation materials may also be possible through Lotterywest.

Timeframe:

Medium. It is recommended that the upgrade be completed in readiness for a 30th birthday celebration in 2007.

Priority:

High.



After 30 years, information in the forest display is outdated and the faded photographs, missing items and damaged text all give an impression of neglect.

2.7.2 Convert the Machinery Shed into a meaningful exhibition area.

Background/Rationale:

On the western side of the Park there is an open-sided Machinery Shed where a large number of assorted relics have been deposited and are at least somewhat protected from the elements. The collection has the appearance of having been 'dumped' in this location and there is no interpretation whatsoever to explain the origins or purpose of the pieces.

Due to safety concerns (particularly with the loose gravel ground surfaces) the Machinery Shed was fenced off in late 2004. This area is, therefore, no longer accessible to the public and presents a negative appearance of a neglected junk yard.

Although it has been agreed that other locations (such as Dardanup Heritage Park and the Yarloop Steam Workshops) are far better equipped to feature machinery as their main attraction, a small collection of well restored and maintained machinery provides an added enhancement to the interpretation of the Park's other features.

It has been suggested through numerous sources on many occasions that the visitor experience of the Park would be greatly improved if some of the static exhibits could be made to 'come alive' by having some machinery fully or partially operational or at least introducing simulated activity with audio-visual effects. Although it is beyond the Shire's financial means to restore larger pieces (such as steam engines) to operational status, it may be possible to cleverly introduce some movement and to fully restore some smaller engines to provide the elements of noise and action.

Within the community we have a wealth of machinery expertise and engineering ingenuity that could supply the knowledge required to effect these restorations. By facilitating the development of a machinery interest groups and enlisting their support, it would be possible to convert the Machinery Shed from a junk heap into a vibrant and interesting exhibition area. (See Proposed Action 1.5.2.)

A project of this nature would be ideally suited for a Green Corps project and the concept has already been flagged with the State Manager. Green Corps projects involve the subsidised employment of a team of ten young people to work on heritage and environmental projects within the community.

The following developmental process is recommended for the Machinery Shed restoration project:

- Facilitate meetings of the machinery interest group.
- Utilise community expertise to appraise and interpret machinery items.
- Identify those pieces most worthy of restoration and those that might be scrapped.
- Record anecdotal stories about machinery pieces for future interpretation.
- Prepare a restoration plan with priority list of items to be restored and what resources are required to do so.
- Apply for funding and/or seek corporate sponsorship for materials involved in restoration.
- Source volunteers (Greencorps, schools, Manjimup VRC) to assist with labour on restoration.
- Source funding to assist with the development of interpretive materials.

Once these stages have been successfully completed, the project itself would involve:

- Removal of all items from the shed to address the primary safety concern - namely the loose gravel floor surface and gradients on the perimeter.
- Add finer grade gravel and compact surface.
- Clearly identify safe access pathways.
- In returning items to the shed, sort relics into categories – possibly forestry, farming and transportation.
- Restore existing machinery collection with the guidance of the machinery restoration advisory group and according to the agreed restoration plan.
- Develop interpretive materials and signage.



Interpretation in the Machinery Shed should be designed to appeal to a broader audience than simply machinery buffs. For example, people who would be disinterested in a detailed description of a 949XJ turbo diesel generator might have their curiosity totally engaged by a story about the 'wiggly nail machine' involved in fruit case construction.

In the long term and if funds allow, it would be worth considering introducing some life-size plaster figures into these exhibits to show how people operated or interacted with the machinery.

This image from the Kauri Museum in New Zealand demonstrates how the inclusion of human figures and a little amber lighting brings this steam boiler into a semblance of 'aliveness'. (Life-like plaster models cost \$NZ3000 each.)

See more examples of this great museum at www.kauri-museum.com

Level of industry support:

Likely to be high as demonstrated by the number of retired employees who have indicated a willingness to be involved.

Level of community support:

High. A combined total of 38 votes in the first two community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

In general terms machinery restoration was recommended.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium – high. The addition of another related exhibition area will be an attraction. More importantly, the current neglected state of the Machinery Shed contributes a negative impression to visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Linked to Proposed Action 1.5.2.

Resources required:

Human:

Shire staff member to facilitate machinery interest group, write funding proposals and coordinate project development. (Estimate minimum average 2-6 hours per week over 6-9 months, particularly when numerous funding submissions are involved.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Machinery interest group to serve as advisory body. See Proposed Action 1.5.2.

Hands-on volunteers to undertake restorations. (Green Corps, schools, Manjimup Volunteer Resource Centre, Work for the Dole program)

Materials:

Gravel and compacting equipment

Retaining walls and designated pathway building materials.

Tools, paint, machinery fittings etc for actual restoration.

Display panels and interpretive materials.

Cost:

Unknown until scope of project and extent of restoration is identified.

Potential funding sources available:

Some potential sources may be: Regional Development Scheme (SWDC), Regional Partnerships (ACC), Lotterywest Heritage Grants, Green Corps Program, Work for the Dole program.

Timeframe:

Short – medium. Begin machinery appraisal and start seeking funds in 2006.

Priority:

Medium-High.

2.7.3 Use new technology to develop a 'whole park' audio interpretation.

Rationale/Background:

It is recognised that audio interpretation adds another whole dimension to helping visitors gain a sense of fully experiencing the features of the Park. In 2002, quotes were obtained to install two-minute audio grabs that would be activated when people enter the hamlet buildings. Although it is highly desirable to add 'realism' to the displays, at a price of over \$30,000 to install a short sound byte in the five hamlet locations, the means of delivering an audio interpretation may need serious reconsideration.

With new technologies being introduced, it would be wiser to explore options for providing an audio interpretation for the *whole* park that is carried with the visitor rather than incurring the exorbitant costs of installing power, player and speakers into the multiple locations that would benefit from the addition of sound.

For some years now, tourist facilities in Europe and the US have been utilising portable CD "Discmans" to deliver their sound. New technologies using an audio 'wand' or MP3 players provide even more options for this mode of delivery and allow a large amount of information to be included in the audio interpretation. The Desert Park in Alice Springs supplies this type of audio interpretation to visitors inclusive in their entry fee. (Please see Appendix 6 for further information.)

The ideal would be for the visitor to hire a pack containing a portable player with over the shoulder strap with a disc inserted containing the full audio interpretation of the Park. As part of the audio pack there would be a booklet that numbers and provides a very brief description of each of the attractions identified with a matching numbered plaque.

By pressing the corresponding track number on the player, the visitor would be provided with a full audio description of the feature that might also include appropriate background noises e.g. forest sounds or steam loco, children playing or reciting multiplication tables.

This mode of delivery would allow for the inclusion of some oral histories and storytelling and it would be at the visitor's discretion and their level of interest in a particular subject matter as to how much of the recording they chose to hear on each track.

The advantage of this means of introducing audio is that there is opportunity for some financial return on the investment of providing audio - firstly in the hiring of the player and then with the option to purchase the CD or MP3 disc as a take-home souvenir. Funds raised in this manner could contribute to the overall financial viability of the Park and allow for the updating of audio content or equipment as required.

Level of industry support:

Real life personal guides are the first preference of the Tourist industry. However, when these are unavailable, recorded audio guides are the next best thing.

Level of community support:

There is an expectation that audio interpretation will be provided in modernising the Park. There is little general appreciation of the costs involved in providing this facility in such a wide-spread venue.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes. Installation of audio in hamlets strongly recommended at pages 25 and 27. Prohibitive cost of provision not a factor for consideration in this consultant's brief.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 3. Hire fees and sale of discs will generate income. (See Proposed Action 3.2.3.)

Resources required:

Human:

Shire staff: To source interpretation data and people's stories; write funding submissions; coordinate design and production of audio interpretation; and prepare acquittal reports for funding bodies. (Estimate 30-60 hours.) See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Professional expertise: Contract services of designer and sound engineer to record content.

Cost: To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored. Possibly Lotterywest Heritage Grants.

Timeframe:

Medium. Best if undertaken when location of displays areas is stabilised.

Priority: Medium.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.8 Provide a higher level of visitor comfort.

2.8.1 Improve disabled access – pedestrian networks

Rationale/Background:

The extension of the pedestrian networks utilising surfaces suitable for wheelchair access has been a priority for the Timber & Heritage Park Advisory Committee (T&HPAC) for many years. The quality and extent of paved pathways has been improved significantly in recent years. Further extensions are planned in the next year utilising the Grants for Forest Communities funding. These works will extend disabled access from the Age of Steam Museum to the Woodturners' Shed and from the Timber Museum to the Hamlet.

Although it would be desirable to extend disabled access throughout the whole Park, installing appropriate surfaces is very expensive. Various alternate surfaces have been explored and, regardless of materials used, the cost of covering such vast areas remains prohibitive.

With these limitations in mind, extensions to pedestrian networks should continue as funds become available, keeping to the current policy of meeting the demands of the highest areas of visitor traffic. See also Proposed Action 2.8.3.

Level of industry support:

Medium.

Level of community support:

Medium. The issue was raised in the Key Stakeholder forum and has been a constant agenda item with T&HPAC.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Disabled access and clearly delineated safe pathways are an important aspect to cover, particularly with an aging visitor market.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Safe pedestrian networks providing disabled access benefit the local community as well as tourist visitors.

Resources required:

To be explored with each extension project.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored with each extension project.

Timeframe: Short term and ongoing.

Priority: Medium.

2.8.2 Identify innovative solutions to visitor comfort issues.

Rationale/Background:

Frequently inclement weather and the distances to be traversed in exploring all of the Park's attractions present some issues for visitor comfort, particularly during the winter months or for elderly visitors.

The 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan recommended that covered walkways be constructed to link the buildings. While this is a worthwhile goal and an ideal solution to providing weather protection, it is also well beyond the Shire's financial means to implement and any available funds can be better spent elsewhere.

As an affordable alternative in the short term, the entry area should make available umbrellas and disposable plastic ponchos. These could either be provided as a free service or hired to generate some cost recovery and replacement.

To provide a service to allow elderly or disabled people to more readily access more distant areas of the Park (particularly if the Dick Sprogue monument is constructed in the NE corner) some kind of vehicular transport service should be established. This might be a project to which the Machinery Group could contribute some practical solutions along the lines of rigging up a motorised vehicle to look like an old-fashioned buggy or replica 'steam' vehicle. The vehicles could be simple enough to allow self-drive hire like golf buggy style vehicles or electric wheelchairs for singles.

The Desert Park in Alice Springs has solved their mobility problems for elderly people traversing the large expanses in their park by purchasing six shopping buggies (similar to those used by residents at Moonya Lodge). Further information is available in Appendix 6.

These are just a few examples of where innovative thinking may solve otherwise expensive problems.

The idea of having a mini steam trail running on a track linking the Park's attractions has been mentioned on many occasions and this would be a great addition if a private commercial operator expressed an interest in setting up such a service.

Level of industry support:

Provision of transport within the Park would be supported by tourist industry.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

The use of "a small scale transport vehicle with carriages" is mentioned on page 28.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Provides greater accessibility for elderly and disabled visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1 – local visitors would also benefit.

Objective 3 – levying a small fee for hire of weather protection or in-park transport would help to cover costs.

Resources required:

Weather protection – minimal expenditure to maximise visitor comfort.

Transport within Park – innovative machinery minds to create a serviceable vehicle.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Medium.

Priority:

Medium.

Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.9 *Increase the human element and provide a friendly welcome, quality information and high level of service.*

2.9.1 *Introduce mandatory "Aussie Host" or similar in-house short course training to all personnel having interaction with the public in the Park.*

Rationale/Background:

To enjoy a reputation as a worthy tourist destination it is imperative that all visitor encounters in the Park occur with friendly, welcoming people who provide quality information and a high standard of service.

Overseas and interstate visitors frequently comment that the quality of service in Western Australia leaves a lot to be desired. Although most visitors will tolerate a little of the laid back Aussie style, this cultural tolerance will not extend to rudeness or inattentive service. When Australians go on holidays we are 'treating ourselves' and we, too, like to be treated well by people who provide services to visitors.

Some form of hospitality training is an essential requirement for all personnel providing the public face of the Park. Although difficult to impose for short-term casual staff, it should be mandatory for anyone who is working in the Park for more than three days a week beyond a three-month period. This should include volunteers and paid employees of the Park and any tenants of the Park who have regular public contact. If commercial training is too expensive, then a similar in-house training program should be devised and provided as part of induction.

Level of industry support:

Very high.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community forums but a "friendly welcoming attitude" would be the general expectation of how this community wishes to portray itself to visitors.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Training not specifically mentioned.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. The absence of this factor will seriously detract from the venue's suitability as a tourist destination.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Local people like to receive friendly and professional service too.

Objective 3. Deriving a good reputation for friendly welcoming service will contribute to income flow.

Resources required:

Funds to have staff attend commercial training or a staff member able to develop and deliver a similar training module. Aussie Host - \$140 per person.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Short term and ongoing.

Priority:

High.

2.9.2 Provide guided tours.

Rationale/Background:

The inclusion of personal interaction as a key factor in enhancing the visitor experience cannot be underestimated. Tourist industry feedback and our own Visitor Survey confirm this fact. Overseas visitors particularly appreciate the interactive elements of guided tours where they have the opportunity to ask questions and to clarify any confusion arising from their reduced English language skills.

At the present time there is only one volunteer guide working in the Park and attempts to increase the volunteer workforce have been hampered by a number of factors. For additional information regarding the development of a volunteer program, please see Objective 1.5.1.

Given the difficulties in finding people who have both the knowledge and a willingness to *volunteer* their time to this role, it may be worth considering employing guides on a small honorarium or encouraging a private operator to provide this service as a commercial venture.

Whether volunteers or paid, guides will require training to learn both the informational content of their tours, hospitality industry training and possibly some intercultural training if dealing with high numbers of overseas visitors.

Level of industry support:

High. The availability of tour guides would increase the Park's marketability to the coach tour market.

Level of community support:

High in principle, but low in practice.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes, see page 27.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. The provision of guided tours, even if only available during peak periods or by prior arrangement, would greatly enhance the visitor experience available in the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1: Local people would benefit both from serving as guides and in attending guided tours to learn about their own heritage.

Objective 3: Fees could be charged for providing guided tours and thus contribute to the financial viability of the Park.

Resources required:

Staff member to coordinate guides and arrange tours. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Volunteers or sufficient visitor flows to justify paid guides.

Training for guides as described above which may incur a fee.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored if required.

Timeframe:

Medium term.

Priority:

Medium-High.

2.9.3 Explore the possibility of obtaining more timber cottages to house more human activities.

Rationale/Background:

Although not a substitute for engaging hosts and guides to provide orientation and information, increasing the number of visible human figures would go a long way to dispelling the empty and abandoned perception that some visitors experience in the Park.

This could be achieved by relocating more timber cottages and using them to house groups or individuals who would provide more constant human activity in the Park.

Possible compatible tenants might include:

- aligned community-based groups (such as Landcare);

- local craftspeople and artisans who might like to establish a workshop or studio; or
- an on-site caretaker and family who could establish old style veggie gardens, chook pen and prop washing line.

There are still some timber cottages throughout the district that may be available by donation or small fee. This option should be explored if potential tenants indicate an interest in locating themselves in the Park.

Level of community support:

The concept of having more artisans and craftspeople resident in the Park was raised.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

The concept of having artisans and more people working in the Park was supported.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. There is a serious need to 'people' the Park to allay the perception of emptiness.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Would bring more local people into the Park.

Objective 3. Rentals would contribute to income flow.

Resources required:

Timber cottages available for relocation.

Costs involved in relocating cottages, connecting services and setting them up for occupation.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Medium – long.

Priority:

Medium.



Objective 2.

Increase external (tourist) visitor rates to encourage a greater contribution to the district's economy.

Strategy:

2.10 Tap into niche and eco tourism tourist markets.

2.10.1 Promote the Indigenous Heritage Trail when completed.

Rationale/Background:

Australian Tourism Commission research¹⁷ indicates that up to 80% of Western European (particularly German and British) tourists would be interested in having an experience of Indigenous culture when they visit Australia.

The Walgenup Aboriginal Group has agreed to develop an Indigenous Heritage Trail in the northwestern area of the Park. This will include bush tucker and medicinal plants, a traditional bark hut (*Mia Mia*), camping ground and interpretation boards displayed under the shingled rotunda.

The inclusion of Indigenous heritage in the Park will be recognition of the original human habitation of this area and provide another aspect that can be promoted to tourist visitors. If, in the future, the Aboriginal community were able to provide trained people who can guide visitors along the trail and present their cultural heritage, this would greatly enhance the value of the current project.

Level of community support:

Received 12 votes in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes. The inclusions of Indigenous heritage was recommended on pages 14, 24 and 26.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1 - The Indigenous Heritage Trail will raise cultural awareness in the local community as well.

Resources required:

Include in generic promotion for the Park.

Potential funding sources available:

Not required.

Timeframe:

Medium.

Priority:

Medium.

2.10.2 Increase the Park's capacity to serve as an interpretive centre for the region's forests and natural attractions.

Rationale/Background:

Due to its existence within the largest town in the Shire of Manjimup, an area presented in tourist promotions as the "Southern Forests" region, the Timber and Heritage Park is an ideal location for a central facility that could provide visitors to the area with information that will enable them to interpret their broader experiences of the region's natural attractions.

¹⁷ Australian Tourism Commission, Segment Insights Pack – Market Research Intelligence on Aboriginal Tourism, March 2004

The natural environment, Tree Top Walk, Gloucester Tree and forests were identified to be the most important reasons attracting visitors to the region in research undertaken by the Centre for Sustainable Tourism CRC in 2004.¹⁸

Table 10: Most important reason for visiting the Southern Forest Region (n=416)

Purpose for visit	% of respondents (No. 1 reason)
The natural environment	26.7%
Tree Top Walk/Gloucester Tree	23.3%
Forests	21.4%
Other	15.4%
Coast	7.0%
Wineries	5.3%
National Parks	1.4%

The same survey indicated that visitors considered forests to be an important factor in attracting them to the region.

Table 13: Importance of forests in attracting tourists to the Southern Forest Region (n= 441)

Importance	% of respondents
Extremely important	58.5%
Very important	36.3%
Moderately important	4.1%
Somewhat important	1.1%

It is clear from this research that the majority of tourist visitors to the region are attracted to the natural environment, the icons (where natural attractions have been enhanced by man-made structures) and the southern forests themselves.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) performs an admirable role in identifying nature trails and providing interpretation materials *in situ* but there is no central location within the region where a visitor can receive an interpretive overview of the forests' features.

The Northern Territory government developed the Desert Park in Alice Springs as an initiative aimed at increasing tourist visitation to Central Australia. This park has been successful in increasing tourist visitations and provides visitors with a centrally located source of interpretive experiences and information that educates both self-drive and coach visitors to what they are likely to encounter in the broader region of Central Australia.

The Desert Park's website is well worth visiting to gain an insight into how the Timber and Heritage Park might be further developed with more of a focus on the region's natural attractions and serve a similar high profile role in the Southern Forests region's tourism development strategies. <http://www.alicespringsdesertpark.com.au/> (Please see Appendix 6 for an interview with the Desert Park manager.)

Although such development is beyond the scale of the Shire's financial resources and scientific expertise, stronger stakeholder alliances with Tourism WA and CALM could be formed to facilitate a higher level of input from the state government in developing the Park's function as a tourist attraction and forest interpretive centre.

Adopting the community-based management model recommended earlier in this plan and ensuring that these agencies have a greater role as stakeholders in the future planning and development of the Park would enhance the strengthening of alliances with state government.

¹⁸ Case Study on Southern Forest Region 2004 produced by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) based at University of Canberra.

In the short- medium term, opportunities to work more cooperatively with CALM and increase the presentation of forest interpretation displays should be explored for incorporation into development of the Round Building.

Level of industry support:

See Tourism research data above and in Optional Attachments Index.

Level of community support:

Not specifically raised by community.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

See recommendations for Zone 6 that includes and Eco Education centre.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1 – Would provide local community with a better understanding of their own region's environs.

Objective 3 – If strategically developed, this action is likely to result in higher levels of visitation and income flow.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Ongoing

Priority:

High.

2.10.3 Reintroduce some native fauna into the Park for Ecotourism.

Rationale/Background:

Prior to it being donated to the Shire for community use, the Timber & Heritage Park was run as a Wildlife Park. Although it would require repairs and reinforcement to the perimeter fence, once entry is reduced to a single point through the Round Building, it would be advantageous to reintroduce some smaller species of native fauna into the Park.

Although most overseas visitors usually get an experience of Australian animals at one of the larger wildlife parks in Perth, the appearance of a few tame wallabies grazing on the lawns in the Park's publicity materials would be just one more added attraction. If possible, other less well-known species such as bandicoots, phascogales and some reptiles could also be introduced. Once the perimeter fences provide a safe haven from predatory domestic animals, it is likely that the numbers of existing species in the Park (such as Bobtails) would increase and become more evident.

Aviaries containing live birds have proven to be a big attraction at the Desert Park in Alice Springs. In the first instance, bird aviaries might be the least expensive option for presenting some of the region's native fauna. We tend to underestimate the beauty of many of our local birds. Some common local birds that we may consider as nuisances - such as our Twenty-eight parrots - are particularly fascinating to overseas tourists.

A range of native birds naturally visits the Park, including a group of Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos. However there is very little interpretive material in the Park to assist visitors in identifying the local species. The Karri Ecosystem display in the Timber Museum contains some preserved examples of birds indigenous to the region. More information could be provided on local birds in strategic locations around the Park.

There may be opportunities for collaboration with CALM for the Park to be incorporated into ecotourism educational tours and activities conducted by that agency. As many local species are nocturnal, a program of night spotting or 'tracks and scats' recognition sessions or may be negotiated with wildlife officers.

Level of industry support:

Tourist industry statistics indicate that wildlife experiences are high on the attractions overseas visitors are seeking when visiting Australia and ecotourism is an expanding niche market in both domestic and overseas tourism markets.

In a survey of 3 million nature-based tourists, 64% listed visiting National parks/state parks as the most popular activity, while 59% listed visiting botanical or other public gardens and 59% listed visiting wildlife parks/zoos/aquariums as their preferred activity.¹⁹

As Manjimup is surrounded by State Forest and National Parks and, it is likely that many tourist visiting the area would already be seeking the ecotourism experience. The Timber & Heritage Park contains exotic and native flora gardens and the addition of native fauna would be just one more incentive to draw tourists to the Park from the surrounding areas.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community forums although the suggestion that wildlife be introduced to the Park has been raised in private consultations with community members on a number of occasions.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium – high. Could provide an additional drawcard for overseas visitors.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1- local people would benefit from any ecotourism educational programs conducted in the Park.

Resources required:

Cost of repairing fences, building enclosures and ensuring requirements for compliance with Wildlife Park Licence.

Native fauna.

Wildlife expertise.

Potential funding sources available:

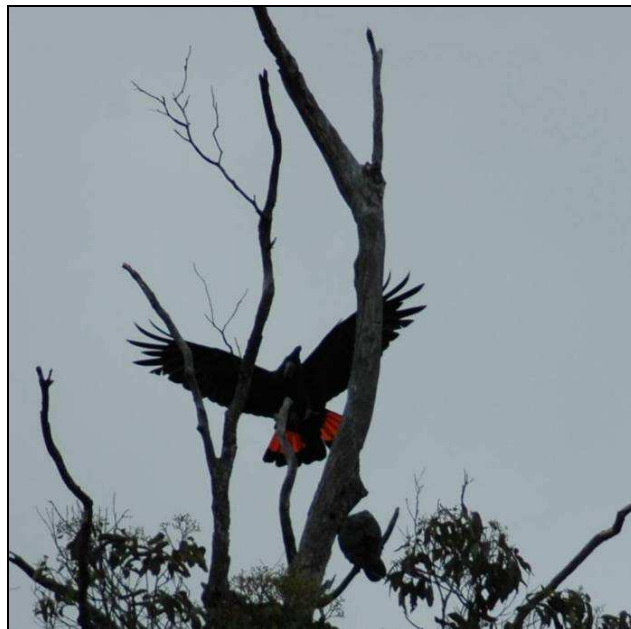
To be explored.

Timeframe:

Medium.

Priority:

Medium.



Red-tail Black-Cockatoos photographed in the Park January 2006.
(Photo - Yvonne Jennings)

¹⁹ Nature-based Tourism Snapshot – June 2005 from Tourism Research Australia
http://www.tourism.australia.com/content/Niche/niche_snapshot_ecotourism.pdf

Objective 3.

Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Strategy:

3.1 Reintroduce entry fees collected through a single entry point.

Proposed Actions:

3.1.1 Establish the Round Building as the sole entry point.

Rationale/Background:

The use of the Round building as an entry point is integral to providing an effective visitor entry function and also pivotal in any attempt to generate income from the Park.

The obvious logic of using the Round Building as the entry and focal point from a visitor perspective is explained earlier in this plan under Proposed Action 2.5.1.

From a commercial perspective, a single entry point provides:

- A collection point for entry fees
- A 'point of sale' for retail of Park interpretive materials and souvenirs
- A security monitoring point and controlled visitor flow.

The Round Building is also the most logical location for these commercial functions to occur. The alternative would be for entry to be through the Café and for the proprietors to collect payments for visitor entry and sales of retail items. This option is problematic from the perspective of being unable to control the quality of entry functions (as described in 2.5.1) and may be seen as an imposition or a conflict of commercial interests by the café proprietors.

Income generation from the Park is not possible unless there is a single entry point over which the Shire has control. With the modifications proposed in 2.5.1, this entry function can again occur through the Round Building.

Level of industry support:

Due to its high visibility, the Round Building is seen as the point to which most visitors gravitate for entry.

Level of community support:

High.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Provides a suitable venue logical entry and the delivery of a professional entry function to visitors.

Resources required:

Cost of constructing and fitting out office cubicle.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Short – medium. Should be considered a priority as soon as roof and floor repairs are completed to enable fee collection to begin at the earliest opportunity.

Priority:

High.

3.1.2 Collect entry fees from adult tourist visitors only.

Rationale/Background:

With no fees being charged for use of the Park the facility continues to be seen primarily as a drain on Council funds instead of, at least in part, paying its own way.

The charging of entry fees was suspended the late 1990s with the rationale being that fees would again be charged when the Park had been upgraded to a level where it warranted an entry fee. For a period of time, mandatory entry fees were replaced with a voluntary donation system. This was found to be an ineffective means of income generation and few people made contributions to the donation boxes that were placed prominently near entries.²⁰

There has been considerable financial outlay in creating an entry statement for the Park that has made the charging of an entry fee even more difficult because there is no means of collecting a fee.

For the first five months of 2005 a Visitor Survey was conducted in the Park. The following is an extract from the Visitor Survey Report²¹ relating to visitor responses to being charged an entry fee.

Q. 10 If you were asked to pay a fee to visit the Park, would you be prepared to pay?

YES	NO
89	15

The data indicates that the majority of visitors would be prepared (and many indicated they would *expect*) to pay a fee to visit the Park. Please see Comments section.

Q. 11 Based on your experience with other tourist attractions, how much would you expect to pay?

\$2	\$3	\$5	\$7	\$10
25	19	39	2	3

A number of people commented that they thought a \$20 family fee would be appropriate.

Based on the above data, it appears that there would be little resistance to visitors being asked to pay a \$5 per person fee for entry to the Park.

Resistance to imposing entry fees is far more likely to be heard from locals who use the Park as a public recreation space. This dilemma could be easily resolved by providing free entry to local people who can show their driver's licence or some other piece of ID proving they are local residents.

With a low number of children represented in the survey results, it would not significantly reduce the funds gathered if children were provided free entry. This would act as an incentive for holidaying families if only adults were required to pay for entry.

Entry fees for comparison:

- Whale World - \$18 adults, \$9 children, \$14 students and concession card holders, \$45 for a family comprising two adults and two children. (Includes guided tour.)
- Dardanup Heritage Park - \$10 adults, \$5 children.
- Desert Park, Alice Springs - \$18. (Includes audio interpretation. NT government facility.)

Failing to charge an entry fee to visitors who fully expect to pay for their experience represents a considerable loss of potential revenue.

²⁰ Consultation with Peg Johnstone, former volunteer.

²¹ Copies of the Timber & Heritage Park Visitor Survey Report 2005 are available as an Optional Attachment to this Plan.

It is therefore recommended that a \$5 entry fee be charged to adult visitors who are not resident within the Shire of Manjimup. This fee appears to be appropriate for the Park in its *current* condition but should be reviewed when any significant improvements are made.

Local visitors would be required to show a driver's licence or some form of proof of a Manjimup Shire address. All children under 18 would be eligible for free entry.

Level of industry support:

The Visitor Survey clearly indicates that tourists *expect* to be asked to pay a fee for what they experience in the Park in its current condition. Coach tour operators would probably require some discount on fees when bringing a large volume of visitors.

Level of community support:

High.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

See page 12. Commercial viability.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Entry fees are the most logical way for the Shire to provide a reasonable financial return to recoup some of the costs involved in maintaining the Park.

Based a \$5 entry fee, the following returns are possible:

25 individual visitors x 360 days = \$45,000

30 individual visitors x 360 days = \$54,000

35 individual visitors x 360 days = \$63,000

One coach per day - Discount rate of \$3.50 X 40 passengers X 360 days = \$50,400

Target of one coach and 25 individuals per day average = \$95,400 pa.

9000 individuals and 14,400 coach visitors per annum = Total Visitor Target 23,4000.

Whale World receives 70,000 visitors per annum.²²

Tree Top Walk, also within the Shire of Manjimup, receives (approx) 200,000 visitors per annum.

203,500 domestic and 23,300 international visitors (total 226,800) stayed overnight in the Shire of Manjimup during 2004.²³

If the promotional strategies recommended in this plan are implemented effectively, the Total Visitor Target (less than 10% of the region's 2004 overnight visitor numbers) required to cover the costs of employing staff to manage the Park appears achievable.

As facilities improve within the Park, higher visitation numbers can be anticipated and fees can be increased to reflect the quality of the visitor experience. Hence, increasingly higher levels of financial self-sustainability can be expected.

Meets other Objectives:

Both locals and tourist visitors are likely to place a higher value on an experience for which a fee is being charged.

Resources required:

Staffing of entry point. See Proposed Action 3.2.1.

Potential funding sources available:

N/A

Timeframe:

Short term. As soon as Round Building is functional as entry point.

Priority:

Very High.

²² See Appendix 4 – Background on Whaleworld.

²³ Shire of Manjimup Tourism Fact Sheet 2004 published by WA Tourism, May 2005. Available as Optional Attachment to this Plan upon request.

3.1.3 Negotiate a resolution of entry issues with Café to ensure single entry point through the Round Building.

Rationale/Background:

Limiting the current access through the Gallery Café will have implications for the way the café conducts their business and negotiations will be needed to reach a mutually satisfactory solution.

Some possible options that might be considered include:

- The Café might open a kiosk window and extend the roof to provide some covered outdoor seating on the Edwards Street side to serve Westrail and other fast food customers while retaining a more 'up-market' style café inside, accessible only through the Park's main entry.
- The Café might retain its Edwards Street entrance and exercise its option to create an extended alfresco area on the northern side that would now need to be fully enclosed with a balustrade to prevent access into the Park.
- The Café might retain its Edwards Street entry, rescind its option to lease the external areas on the northern side and close the doors that provide access to the Park.
- The Café might create a door onto the external veranda at the eastern end and extend its counter area to enable closer monitoring of access and fee collection on behalf of the Park. (Difficult to administer with proposed 'visitors pay, locals free' policy and simultaneously trying to run a busy café.)
- The Café might absorb the entry fee for its patrons entering the Park and pay the Shire a negotiated monthly figure.

The above are only suggestions as to how the issues might be solved and discussions with the lessee may unearth even more satisfactory solutions. The fact that free access has previously been granted through the Café should not preclude the Shire from now limiting access to enable their own income generation activities.

Level of industry support:

The change in policy is unlikely to be well received initially by Café proprietors and regular patrons but the single formal entry point would be supported by tourist industry generally.

Level of community support:

Not specifically raised in community planning forums however there was overwhelming support for the Round Building to serve as the entry to the Park.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Single entry point supported in 2004 Plan.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. Income generation via entry fees would be substantially reduced if visitors can obtain free entry via the café entry.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Well-defined and efficiently functioning formal entry point will improve tourist visitor experience.

Resources required:

Varies dependent upon which option is chosen to resolve change in entry policy.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Short-medium term. As soon as Round Building is functioning as entry.

Priority:

High.

Objective 3.

Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Strategy:

3.2 Run the Park professionally as a business.

Proposed actions:

3.2.1 Employ a manager.

Rationale/Background:

If the Park is to be run on a more commercial basis, it will be necessary to employ a person with the skills to manage the facility. It should also be quite evident that very few of the recommended strategies in this plan can be implemented without appointing a suitably qualified person to carry out the necessary tasks.

Although employing a manager will initially create a deficit, without the investment in personnel to implement this plan, none of the other income generating activity is possible. As with many new businesses, it should be anticipated that the Park as a commercial venture would run at a loss for the first 12-18 months.

Meeting the target mentioned under Proposed Action 3.1.2 would eventually generate income for the manager's salary. That is, one coach and 25 individuals per day average = \$95,400 pa. If the majority of the key elements in the management and development plan are implemented, it is not unrealistic to expect that this target would be met within two years.

It would be necessary for the appointee to be a multi skilled professional, as the manager's role would involve:

- extensive promotion and marketing;
- developing and managing projects within the Park;
- applying for government funding and sourcing corporate sponsorship;
- developing high levels of community engagement;
- managing and training staff and volunteers; and,
- day to day management of the Park.

In the early stages, as the sole employee, the manager's role would also include staffing the Round Building main entry until such time as he/she can arrange replacement by recruiting and training volunteers to staff the entry or generating sufficient income to employ additional paid staff.

Level of industry support:

The employment of a person with the specific role of managing the Park's affairs has been supported in consultations with tourist industry advisers.

Level of community support:

Raised in community planning forums in the context of the necessity to engage a person to coordinate volunteers and activities within the Park.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Page 12. "A full time manager will be required to drive the development of the park."

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Essential. Without the personnel to implement the strategies, very few aspects of this plan can be delivered.

Meets other Objectives:

Essential to other objectives also.

Resources required:

Manager's salary and office costs. (It would be necessary to offer sufficient remuneration to attract a manager with a wide range of professional skills and experience as required for this position.)

Potential funding sources available:

It is likely that Council would need to cover the cost of salary for 18-24 months when the position would be self funding.

Timeframe:

Short term. Commence 2006-2007 Financial year.

Priority:

Very high.

3.2.2 Employ staff and/or train and engage volunteers.

Rationale/Background:

At the earliest opportunity the manager should train a team of volunteers to assist with staffing the entry and providing tour services. This will ensure continuity in providing a warm, well-informed welcome to visitors, extend the range of services available (guides) and free the manager's time to focus on developmental and project coordination roles. For further recommendations regarding the role of volunteers in the Park refer to Strategy 5.1 and Proposed Actions 1.5.1 & 2.9.2.

When the income flow from entry fees and retail sales improves, additional paid staff may be employed to take on some of the manager and volunteer's roles.

Level of industry support:

High. Professional service delivery is critical to success.

Level of community support:

Medium. See 1.5.1.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Implied.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Important to free up manager's time for more highly skilled tasks.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Volunteer staff will increase community participation.

Objective 3. Well trained staff and professional service essential to attract return visitors.

Resources required:

Manager to train and coordinate volunteers.

Income flow to provide additional paid employees.

Potential funding sources available:

N/A

Timeframe:

Medium.

Priority:

Medium.

3.2.3 Charge a fee for services.

Rationale/Background:

There are a number of services mentioned in other strategies for which a fee could be charged if the Park is run on commercial lines.

The following services could be provided with an estimated fee of:

- tour guides (\$5-\$10 pp or \$40 per coach);
- audio interpretation CD or MP3 player hire (\$5 – \$10 per hire);
- transport within park (\$5-\$10 if includes driver/guide); and,
- umbrellas and wet weather gear (\$1 per use).

It may also be possible, in time, to extend the services provided through the Park to include booking of external tours or some other compatible form of business.

Level of industry support:

Provision of additional services would be supported by tourist industry as it enhances visitor experience.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community planning forums.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. The accumulation of fees for services will contribute to the financial inputs to maintain the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. Provides additional services to tourists who expect to pay for services provided.

Resources required:

Implementation of other aspects of this plan to ensure services available.

Potential funding sources available: N/A

Timeframe: Medium. As soon as services are available.

Priority: High.

3.2.4 Establish a small retail outlet and produce items for sale.

Rationale/Background:

A small retail area should be established to enable sales of the Park's own information brochures, mementos and souvenirs. There are a number of publications/brochures that could be produced and sold through this outlet that would add a deeper level of interpretation to the visitor experience as well as generating sufficient income to at least keep brochures in print, if not make a profit.

The following brochures should be produced and sold for at least a gold coin fee:

- Timber & Heritage Park A3 *Map/Brochure* (updated and in colour).
- *The Karri Ecosystem* A3 DL fold colour brochure – additional in depth information about the karri forest and its ecosystem. (Currently being produced to support museum display upgrade.)
- *Significant Trees in the Park* A3 DL fold colour brochure – trees currently being mapped by Green Corps team and brochure will be produced by January 2006.
- *Age of Steam brochure* – should include all the in depth information lost from original display when upgrade was done (Jenny Mills' original text still available courtesy of Mrs Owens).
- *Wildflowers of the Southern Forests* – relatively easy to produce as photographs already being used in ID markers and simply requires some additional descriptions and layout.

It has been suggested that copies of the recently updated Karri Ecosystem display (in the Timber Museum) would make an excellent poster for sale as an educational tool, particularly for visiting school groups. These could be relatively easily produced in small numbers by running them off on a colour print plotter and having them laminated. They would easily retail at \$20 each.

Souvenirs should also eventually be produced that reflect the experiences in the Park - for example, wildflower cards, statuettes of the Dancing on Karris icon, steam engine replicas and wood samples.

A classy glossy booklet such as that published by the New Zealand Kauri (timber) Museum²⁴ could also be produced for the Timber & Heritage Park. (Retail at \$NZ20 and sells well.)

The entry-building outlet should also retail locally produced crafts and produce – particularly those created within the Park by wood turners and blacksmith. It would also be appropriate to make this an outlet where a range of publications on the district's heritage can be purchased.

It should be noted that a number of other tourist facilities (for example, Whale World and Pemberton Fine Woodcraft Gallery) lease out catering services but retain the retail sales area. This provides a level of control to ensure that the retail items reflect the quality and theme of the visitor experience desired by management, as well as retaining the profitability offered by the sale of these items.

Level of industry support:

Coach tour operators advise that visitors love to have mementos and take home reading to remind them of the places they have visited in their travels.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community forums.

²⁴ A copy of the Kauri Museum glossy booklet has been purchased by the Shire and should be referenced as an example of best practice. The museum's website provides many inspiring examples for presentation as well. <http://www.kauri-museum.com/>

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

The sale of retail items and souvenirs is mentioned in the previous plan.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High, will contribute to the income generation.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Local craftspeople and producers will have the opportunity to market their products.

Objective 2. Tourists will contribute more cash into the local economy if they are provided with easy opportunities to spend.

Resources required:

Shelving installed in an area visible to entry counter.

Reprinting of existing brochures, design and production of new brochures.

Design and production of souvenir items at a later stage.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Medium.

Priority:

High.

3.2.5 Administer a mail order catalogue of locally produced items.

Rationale/Background:

One form of income generation that might complement corporate display spaces in the Round Building is to develop and administer a mail order catalogue of local products. This idea was floated earlier when the call centres were first promoted in the district but not further developed. The concept was to produce a catalogue of locally produced items (such as wines, pickles, jams, honey, cheeses, chocolates, crafts, books, timber products, nick knacks or whatever products people might create) that could be ordered by phone or Internet and mailed to purchasers.

If the Timber Park officer was to administer the catalogue, taking personal, phone and online orders, a commission could be levied on sale of any items featured in the catalogue, thus generating additional income for the Park. The Round Building offers a centrally located display area where items in the catalogue could be exhibited (and possibly sampled) by visitors.

Level of industry support:

Local producers would need to be consulted to ascertain their interest in marketing their products via this means. It is anticipated that there would be some considerable support for the concept so long as it didn't detract from other retail outlets such as cellar door sales.

Level of community support:

Not raised in community forums but received some interest when the idea was first raised some years ago.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

No.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium, will contribute to the income generation.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Local craftspeople and producers will have the opportunity to market their products.

Objective 2. Tourists will contribute more cash into the local economy if they are provided with easy opportunities to spend.

Resources required:

Shelving installed in an area visible to entry counter.

Development of catalogue.

Promotion of catalogue as a group marketing exercise for regional producers.

Potential funding sources available:

Unknown.

Timeframe:

Medium.

Priority: Medium.

Objective 3.

Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Strategy:

3.3 Generate income from leases and hire fees.

3.3.1 Lease buildings.

Rationale/Background:

Apart from the café, most tenanted buildings in the Park are currently leased to community associations or artisans for non-commercial rental rates and this policy is supported to ensure the Park is populated by those conducting activities of interest to visitors.

Further leasing of buildings is proposed in the event that, in the longer term, additional timber buildings can be relocated into the Park (see Proposed Action 2.9.3) or the café relocates into the Round Building creating the opportunity for this space to become available for commercial lease to compatible businesses.

Lease fees from the café should be attributed to the Park budget and be seen as compensating outgoings on maintenance and upkeep of the Park as a whole.

Level of community support:

The community planning forums indicated support for compatible private enterprises to be located in the Park if they contribute to the overall themes promoted there.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

General support for location of compatible private enterprise to be conducted in the Park.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Medium. Lease fees may only cover part of the costs involved in creating the building spaces to be leased.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 2. More tourist visitors will be attracted if there can be an extension of the range of interesting activities carried on in the Park and the economy will benefit from providing opportunities for tourists to spend their money locally.

Resources required:

Unknown.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

Timeframe:

Long Term.

Priority:

Medium – low.

3.3.2 Lease/hire venue and display areas.

Rationale/Background:

Several of the proposed actions already mentioned in this plan would result in income generation from hire/lease of spaces. These include:

- Lease of display spaces within the Round Building. (See Proposed Action 2.5.2.)
- Hire of the Round Building for private functions. (See Proposed Action 2.5.2.)
- Hire of The Round Building and/or gardens and lawn area as a venue for entertainment and events such as concerts or festivals. (See Proposed Action 1.4.2.)

For other headings, see the Proposed Actions (bracketed above) in which these ideas are first mentioned.

Objective 3.

Increase financial inputs to recoup outlays on maintenance with the long-term aim of attaining financial sustainability.

Strategy:

3.4 Stage fund-raising events in the park

Proposed actions:

3.4.1 Organise concerts, movies and outdoor entertainments.

Rationale/Background:

Another possible source of income for the Park could be derived through the staging of events or other fund-raising activities. Based on the interest indicated in community planning forums, there appears to be strong community support that would result in high levels of attendance at any events staged in the Park. Possible events include outdoor concerts and movies conducted during the summer months when the weather is more reliable.

The success of major-artist entertainment events such as the Leeuwin Concerts has established this event as a 'must-see' on the WA social calendar. If professionally organised and with high levels of volunteer support, it is possible that a similar event could be staged in the Park and become a major money-spinner to raise funds for the Park's upkeep and attract visitors to the town. Obviously the lack of a proper outdoor performance stage would detract from the appeal to attract top of the range artists in the short term.

Outdoor movies have been run at the Pemberton Camp School with mixed success due to the costs involved in hiring equipment²⁵ balanced against ticket sales. While beneficial as a purely social function, these events would not be an effective fund-raiser unless participation of over 100 paying customers could be guaranteed although profits can also be derived from catering for meals and drinks.

The ideal time to conduct this event would be in early February when weather is more reliable and families have returned from summer vacation. In order to ensure optimal attendances, cooperative liaison with the Pemberton Telecentre will ensure no clash of dates and possibly shared marketing of the program.

A series of smaller recitals and performances might be staged over a longer time period with the added advantage of being able to be relocated into the Round Building if the weather is unsuitable for staging outdoors.

Level of community support:

Medium.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

The Park's role as a venue for community events is recognised but no specific mention is made of the commercial opportunities this offers.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

Secondary to other strategies. Profitability of proposed events to be explored before staging as fund-raiser.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. Would result in increased opportunity for local people to experience the Park.

Objective 2. Larger events likely to attract external visitors.

Resources required:

To be explored.

Potential funding sources available:

To be explored.

²⁵ Equipment hire currently available through Rural Cinemas in Capel at around \$700 per session. The Pemberton Telecentre is investigating purchasing its own equipment to continue staging these events.

Timeframe:

Short term and ongoing. Possible tester of movies as fund-raiser in February 2006.

Priority:

Medium.

3.4.2 Conduct a Heritage/Vintage Day event as a fund-raiser.

Rationale/Background:

With high levels of volunteer support to help organise, a festival type event such as "A Step Back in Time" may prove to be a profitable fund-raiser. (See Proposed Action 1.4.1) This event should not be attempted, however, unless a large team of volunteers is available to help support its implementation.

Level of community support:

High. This suggestion raised a combined total of 42 votes in Community Forums 1 &2 being the fourth highest in popularity.

Recommended in 2004 Interpretive Concept Plan:

Yes.

Degree to which action contributes to the Objective:

High. This type of event is likely to attract a high number of external visitors and entry fees could contribute to financial inputs for maintaining the Park.

Meets other Objectives:

Objective 1. An event of this magnitude would require a high level of community involvement, volunteers and sponsorship. It would also serve to educate the local community about their heritage.

Objective 2. Depending on the breadth of promotion, the events is likely to attract out of town visitors.

Resources required:

Volunteer event coordinator

Team of devoted volunteers to help stage the event.

Cost: To be explored. Feasibility of this event as a fund-raiser should be carefully evaluated before proceeding.

Potential funding sources available:

Lotterywest will often support events of this nature but it should be noted that only a 'donation' can be requested for entry to events supported from this source.

Timeframe: Medium term.

Priority: **Medium.**



The area between the Age of Steam Museum and Woodturners' Shed has been earmarked as a high priority for an extension of pedestrian-safe paved pathways.

Appendix 1 – Outcomes Community Planning Forums

Key Ideas & Suggestions Forums 1 &2

The following tables lists the ideas and issues raised at the first two forums in order of preferential voting value priority.

(Voting was done via coloured stickers with Red = 4 votes, Yellow = 3 votes, Green = 3 votes, Blue = 1 vote.)

Ideas & Suggestions	Votes
Improve promotion & advertising. Signage – highway, town entry, in town, promote events. Entry statement/ 'drawcard' visible from Graphite Road and Highway	156
Tobacco shed reconstruction to tell story of horticulture	63
Markets in Park (both markets combine, stall holders pay small fee.)	52
Vintage Days – exhibitions Outdoor historical re-creation events – pioneer mockups, ghost walks. Federation Days – "Our Rich Cultural Heritage".	42
Archival storage area needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, fireproof and damp • Database accessible to public. (Where? Library?) 	42
Report on all machinery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacture • Use in the industry • Best purpose - Operational display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Static exhibits - Outdoor display 	41
Register of machinery expertise, working group to guide and volunteers for restoration	35
BBQs	35
Valuable machinery needs restoration - Snorting Lizzie, Machinery Shed, some steam machinery running.	38
Extend playground and provide more shade & seating	29
Issue: Not enough locals "know" our history	26
Volunteers – 'people in the park' – storytellers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need paid coordinator – Register of volunteers • Uniform • Training • Community Involvement 	22
Explore the role of education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate into school curriculum • Incorporate into school events • Regional school sporting events in Park • Develop education resources – designed to be child and teacher friendly (Idea: energy trail) 	21
Relationships need to be built to share information between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to reveal history. Tell story of what they each learned from interaction, e.g. Access routes, fire / burning	21
Use new technology for full park audio interpretation.	21
Adopt an area to maintain & upkeep – schools, service clubs. – provide them with list of priority tasks for upkeep	19
More walks and activities – well promoted.	14
Concerts in the Park (more & ongoing) – stage or amphitheatre for performance	12
Simulated steam whistle to mark shifts (Park open and closed times)	12
Indigenous Walk Trail – Indigenous bush food, medicine and plants, camping ground and signage.	12
Miniature railway – call for expressions of interest private operators.	10
Charge an entry fee - one entry point plus pass for locals	10
Improve disabled access – pedestrian networks	9
Café to serve local produce	8
Indigenous history in Park has educational value for non-indigenous, cultural reconnection	8

and value to young Aboriginal people	
Promote Park on Open Garden scheme	7
Cherry Festival in Park	7
Safe visitor access to historic machinery	7
Indigenous 'knowledge of country' expertise workshop	6
Information may come into park?	
Horticulture Today – audio visual of current industry	6
Indigenous history - Many unanswered questions / missing information	5
Corporate sponsorship from Timber Industry	4
Displays tidy and upgrade – Hamlet and Museum changed	4
Educational value for non-indigenous, cultural reconnection and value to young Aboriginal people	4
Interpretive panels for Indigenous Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In garden traditional • Representation in round building "showcase" if eventuates • Traditional stories needs to be told • Researched (effort) Who? – MAC and Shire 	4
Tell story of Indigenous local heroes, footballers etc.	3
Dairy Industry Display	2
Horticulture Today - Links to on farm tours	2

Suggested Uses for the Round Building	
Venue for regular entertainment – music, arts council events.	27
Function Centre/Gallery	6
Use to showcase local produce/museum	7
Old photos exhibited in Round Building	21
Encourage more groups to use Park & Round Building	4
Exhibition Centre – business, art.	4

Forum 3 – “Big Picture” issues.

This table is a summary of ideas raised in the Final Forum listed by priority ranking after calculating the value of stickers and combining any ideas duplicated in small group discussions.

Ideas and Suggestions	TOTAL
Round Building – Main focal point and entry to park – open daily all year. (44 + 34 + 9 + 5 =)	92
Need for icon/drawcard to attract people to park. Visual sculpture on north east corner (Dick Sprogue dancing concept) (39 + 3 + 11 =)	53
Round building - relocate café/restaurant into there.	26
Working groups formed in Forum 2 work with Shire on a comprehensive planning process down to proscriptive stages and then apply for funding.	24
Round building – to display old photographs and showcase local product.	21
Request Shire to subsidise the Round Building and provide incentives to businesses if they provide the ‘entry’ function.	19
Signage to clearly delineate Entry to park.	17
Round Building – contents should be ‘interpretation’ of Manjimup Shire.	14
Vintage cars may be available for display	12
Function of Round Building – upon entry visitors should receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information • Orientation to site • Indication of activities available and main features of the park. 	11
Upgrade museum displays	10
Round building – heating issue needs addressing.	8
Encourage coach lines to visit – provide guides.	6
Displays of notable people	6
Relocate Timber Museum to Round building. Tell story of the last 30 years including ‘Green’ history.	5
Shire signage policy restricts colours and number of letters.	5
Keep communication lines open – Shire & Community	5
Management - working parties for projects – some autonomy.	4
Round building – more light	4
Round building – should be multifunctional	3
Entry fee – collected by private enterprise (tokens). Locals free.	3
Timber companies to showcase and display product	2
Log signs near park need replacement.	2
Café to remain separate (short – medium term)	1
Call for expressions of interest to commercial operators to use building if their business is compatible and they can provide the above entry function.	1
Café to collect fees and take a small percentage. In their commercial best interests to perform this function if all entry through café.	1
Hang signs below log archway at entry to town.	1
Round building - multifunctional with displays representing all industries	1
General suggestions that did not receive a ‘vote’.	
Need an Entry Statement not just signposting. Confusion over entry.	
Paul Bunyan icon statues in Michigan – need something similar	
Close off central street crossing railway (Ralston) to direct all northern traffic past park.	
Sense of ‘arrival’ needed	
Relocate Timber Museum into Round Building	
What’s to be seen in the Park?	
Move café to Round Building – change lease	
Private enterprise attracts people to park (café)	
Relocate Tone River log ‘Monster’ to the park.	
The Shire owns a collection of paintings that are not being displayed.	
Visitor survey indicates \$5 entry for tourists would be accepted. Target: \$5 X 25 people per day X 356 days = \$46,000	
Provide gold coin donation boxes	
Previous visitor experience – people ‘expected’ to be charged an entry fee but donation boxes had not yielded significant fees.	

Appendix 2 – Contributors to the consultation process.

Burt	Angus	
Neil	Auguston	WA Tourism
Les	Bail	Whale World
Joy	Bardoe	Museums Australia
Jacki	Baxter	CALM
Peter	Beatty	Forest Products Commission
Pam	Bodsworth	
Jane	Brunali	
Daria	Burnett	
Tom	Busher	SWDC
Greg	Butcher	
Tish	Campbell	Timber Communities Australia
Maureen	Ciccone	
Nick	Ciccone	
Jay	Cook	Dep't Indigenous Affairs
Debbie	Coverley	
Doug	Craigie	
Ray	Cranfield	
Ron	Cresey	
Colin	Crombie	
Ray	Curo	Shire Councillor
Richard	Doust	Rotary
Tim	Foley	CALM
Mary	Fox	
Gary	Fry	Desert Park, NT
Karen	Garrat	
David	Giblett	Historical Society
Nancy	Giblett	Historical Society
Vic	Grozotis	Apple & Pear Board
Peter	Gunson	Gunns
Susan	Hills	Malaysian Tourist operator
Sarah	Hockridge	Manjimup Primary
Graeme	Hodgson	ACC
Mary	Holford	
J	Holford	
Frances	Hull	Historical Society
Kevin	Humphries	
Robyn	Inkpen	WA Tourism
Gail	Ipsen Cutts	
Mike	Jackson	
Margaret	Jacobs	Historical Society
Yvonne	Jennings	Swan Hill Rural City Council
Peg	Johnstone	
Vivienne	Karahoutis	
Amanda	Keough	Pemberton Telecentre
Kesi	Kesaven	Horticulture Research Ins
Louise	Kingston	Business Assistance Centre
M	Lambert	
Joan	Lefroy	CWA

Keith	Liddelow	
Bill	Mabey	NSW Tourism
Geoff	Mabey	Lions
Michael	Marsh	
Jim	McGlenn	Lions
Garry	McGrath	Kearnan College
Rose	Moyle	Cherry Festival
Anna	Mueller	
Jim	Muir	Lions Club
Jim	Muir	
Paul	Nolan	Pemberton Visitor Centre
Nick	Oaks	Shire of Bridgetown
Doreen	Owens	
Bevan	Pape	
Yvonne	Pegrum	Manjimup Woodturners Group
Neil	Pemberton-Owens	
Roy	Piggot	Manjimup Visitor Centre
Jacki	Plummer	
Dennis	Pratt	
Jonathon	Rose	
Andy	Russell	Ribbons of Blue
Jan	Ryan	
Kris	Scroop	Historical Society
Beth	Shorthouse	Farmers Market
Jessie	Skoss	
Rosemary	Skoss	
Steve	Smith	Wood Turners
Patricia	Stein	
Robert	Taylor	Shire Councillor
Kath	Taylor	
Neville	Thomson	Thomson's Tours
Alan	Tutthill	
Trevor	Waugh	Warren Forest Services
Robin	Wodsworth	
Harold	Worth	Wood Turners
Irene	Worth	Wood Turners

Appendix 3 – Summary of Grant Funds for Park 2000 - 2005

Date of Grant	Grant Body	Purpose	Amount (ex GST)
23-May-00	Office of Citizenship and Multicultural Interests	Federation Island	20,980.00
24-Jan-01	Commerce and Trade	Painting of Timber Museum	7,100.00
28-Mar-02	WA Tourism Commission	Signage	4,000.00
Nov-02	DOTARS Regional Solutions	Power Supply & Lighting Upgrade, Show Room Paving, Upgrade Woodturners Shed, Entrance Stratement, Interp Signs	101,363.00
30-Jan-03	South West Development Commission	Entrance	8,000.00
Apr-03	Lotteries WA	Extension of Forestry Shed, Screens for Hamlet, Museum Exhibit, Consultant	\$38,341.00
25-Jul-03	South West Development Commission	Interpretive Plan	8,000.00
Dec-04	Dept Of Fisheries and Forestry - GFC Grant Federal	Upgrade Round Building, Paving, Lighting, BBQ, security	100,000.00
Sep-05	Green Corps		
		<u>TOTAL VALUE</u>	<u>287,784.00</u>

Appendix 4 - Coach Tour Company Interview

Summary of Notes of Interview

– Neville Thomson, Thomson's Tours.

(Former local timber mill owner and now owner of one of the largest coach tour companies in Perth - very familiar with both local area and coach tour industry.)

Q.1 What do we have to do to get coach tours to include the Timber & Heritage Park in their itineraries?

NT 1.

Really need an 'icon' that is really big or highly visible!

Icon needs to be something that is accompanied by a good 'story' that is easy for the coach driver/guide to start telling the tourists on the approach to town. Yes, Dick Sprogue dancing on Karris concept would work in that way. Otherwise a giant cauliflower or apple or something big and iconic that symbolises the region.

Action: Build an icon in the Park.

NT2

Most effective marketing is with travel agents.

Travel agents generally put together the packages for O/S visitors with some negotiation of itinerary with coach companies. The tour will be marketed with set attractions such as Whale World, Wave Rock, Pinnacles etc.

Coach companies have little opportunity to suggest a venue be included as a feature of the itinerary if the travel agents are not familiar with that site. Therefore, marketing must target travel agents at the top of the decision-making chain.

There is an annual marketing trip to Asia where group of 15 or so local operators will do marketing presentations to travel agents.

Some of the businesses that participate in this marketing exercise represent 'rather average' attractions and yet the success of the exercise is demonstrated in the fact that their sites are featured in many Asia-booked tours.

Action: If you are serious about getting coach tours to visit Timber Park, this Asian marketing tour is a must!! Marketing to Perth-based travel agents also important (Four major agents should be targeted at least.)

NT3.

Make it really easy for the coach drivers/tour guides to entertain their passengers.

Although major attractions on the itinerary are set, coach drivers have some discretion in being flexible or negotiating with passengers where they will make a rest stop or short visit.

In the short term, exploit the opportunities to influence this driver discretion by making it easy or attractive for them to stop.

Action: Supply coach drivers with a booklet or a couple of pages of brief speaking notes to provide content for their commentary and attract their interest. Make it easy for drivers to tell the 'stories' (as entertaining as possible) of your town/attraction.

Background notes should include:

- background to the town (population, industries);
- features and attractions they will see along the road;
- a bit of 'story' or 'spiel' about features they will pass;
- introduction to what they will see at the Park;
- again an easy spiel to relate what features can be expected in the Park according to what type of group might be traveling – wildflowers, timber history, machinery, local legends etc.
- indication of time frame it will take to see various aspects of the Park, suggested 'packages' for interest groups.

**Q2. What features of the Park would most interest your passengers?
(Rank importance value 1-5 highest.)**

NT4.

Drawcard/Icon	5. Essential to have this.
Local History	1. General history 3. Interesting stories about people, legends much better
Aussie animals	4. Kangaroos or wallabies (Don't go for the big wildlife park because that's done in Perth but a few small roos or other recognisable fauna grazing on the lawns etc is big with Asian market.)
Wildflowers	5. Big attraction. Although a specific market bound by season (July-November) if you provide local wildflowers in a natural setting that makes it easy for drivers to unload passengers, experience and photograph wildflowers and be back on bus in 30 minutes, this is a very attractive proposition for tour operators. Plantings should be natural but with enough mass to provide good colour. ID markers are good idea. Best if there is a feature plant eg boronia. Better if it is something rare or is hard to find in the bush.
Indigenous culture	1. Not high interest and would have to be done with guide provided because drivers do not know the heritage and culture.
Fast food	3. A lot of meals eaten on coach. If driver can pick up 60 rounds of sandwiches and drinks to take way and consume on coach, more time could be spent in the Park. Higher interest if food is locally produced and again if there is some 'story' can be told about it. (eg local cauliflowers, marron, avocados, fruit, nuts.)
Machinery	2. Not big interest with O/S market. More so with retiree tours.
Souvenirs	4. But only if related to icon and/or features in the Park.

Q3. What about guides or story-tellers?

NT5

Yes, this is an attraction if it allows the driver to have a rest. Guides need to be able to respond to questions and clarify language confusion if it arises with non-English speaking tourists.

Q4. Ideal time frame for visits.

NT6

See it all in 30-minute package is ideal. Tours are loaded with many features to see in one day. For example, Wave Rock, Albany, Tree Top Walk back through SW is one-day tour. (Go past Manjimup at about 6 pm)

If longer than 30 minutes, need to really have something worthwhile seeing and needs to be fully marketed to Travel Agents.

Q5. What sort of financial inputs do coaches provide to a town?

NT7

Aim is to capture an overnight stay.

Accommodation average	\$2000
Restaurant meal	\$250 – 300 smaller coach \$600 – 800 regular coach

\$1500- 1700 58-seater

NT8

Short stay

Shopping	average spending per hour	\$50 per person
		\$2000 per coach

Average 10 coaches per day passing Manjimup on the SW highway. Wildflower season is the peak. Most would just drive past without stopping because there's nothing to draw them off the highway.

Q6 Apart from those suggestions already mentioned, is there anything else we can do to attract coaches to stop here?

NT9

Yes, provide a facility where coaches can empty their toilets. That would be a major incentive. All that is required is a sewage input with a large hose we can connect to our coaches to unload. Installation cost probably around \$200. Plus Council to absorb Water Corp. costs for sewerage.

Coach drivers will generally drop passengers off for an hour while they empty toilets. So if passengers were dropped in the main street or at the Park, this represents a good boost to the town's economy if there's likely to be \$2000 spent every time a coach empties their sewerage here.

In about 1999, an approach was made to Manjimup Shire to provide a facility of this type but at the time they weren't interested. Tourism was then seen as a threat or competition to the timber industry, but maybe now the town is able to see that tourism can be *part* of the solution to recovering the economy.

Q7 Any more tips?

NT10

Initially look for ways you can get the Park included in existing itineraries as a quick stop-off (for wildflowers for example). Communicate with coach companies and let them know what you have to offer.

Next, build your icon and then market professionally to travel agents to be included as official attraction on itineraries.

Appendix 5 – Background on Whaleworld Management Structure.

WHALE WORLD

Company Background

During 1975, the concept of a separate body capable of undertaking projects considered too large for individual Jaycee Chapters or involving joint efforts of members from more than one Chapter evolved.

A proposal was developed by Fremantle Jaycees member Peter Snow and Western Australian Jaycees State President Ron Raynor for an incorporated not-for-profit association associated with, but independent of, the national, state and local Jaycees organisations.

Solicitors Jackson McDonald formulated a suitable constitution and assisted in negotiations with the Australian Taxation Office resulting in the Foundation being granted exemption from Income tax and allowing deductibility for donations to its benevolent fund.

And so The Jaycees Community Foundation Inc. was formed as a not-for-profit association incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act of Western Australia. A logo incorporating the Jaycees shield but acknowledging the state origin was designed by Geoff Warner, a member of Curtin Jaycees.

Whale World is owned and operated by The Jaycees Community Foundation Inc, a not for profit organisation.

The Jaycees Community Foundation Inc T/A Whale World commenced operation on this site in 1980. Prior to this the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company operated a commercial whaling operation on the site from 1952 until its closure in November 1978.

Whale World celebrates 25 years of operation on Boxing Day 2005.

Whale World has evolved over the past 25 years into a major tourist icon of international significance. The visitation numbers have remained fairly static over the past 5 years indicating a need for a bold approach to maintain the viability of such a valuable heritage site. The Whale World site was vested a WA Heritage Place of significance in 1998. Over the past 9 years Whale World has been successful in attracting substantial State and Commonwealth Government funding for capital works. This has resulted in at least one new major attraction or exhibit being opened each year to attract repeat business from the local community and surrounding hinterland.

The Jaycees Community Foundation Inc. Mission Statement

"To preserve and interpret Australia's last whaling station as an historic and cultural asset for the education and enjoyment of this and future generations."

Whale World's Collection Policy Mission Statement.

"The Whale World Museum, Frenchman Bay, Albany, seeks to collect, preserve, research and document, interpret and display in a sympathetic environment, items of historical significance to the history of the whaling industry in Australia and it's Territories."

Board of directors

- Peter Snow Executive Chairman JCF

Peter had been the Chairman in a voluntary capacity until he was made Executive Chairman JCF twenty months ago and moved to Albany. His role is to source funding for the development of the proposed Bio Diversity Park project at Whale World. Peter comes from a venture capital background. He has been involved with the Foundation for twenty nine and a half years. He also has a marketing and accountancy background.

- Neville Clare Deputy Chairman (Special projects)

Neville has recently retired from his business Link Interiors.

- Geoff Hampton Director (ILF)
Geoff is a partner in McKenna Hampton, insurance brokers.
- Bob Kelly Treasurer
Bob has retired from a senior position in banking.
- John Breeden Secretary
John is currently employed by the Fisheries Department.
- Mette Neilsen Director (JCI Resource)
Mette is past National President of the Junior Chamber Organization. She is a practicing Corrosion Engineer.
- Ron Raynor Director (Whale World committee)
Ron is retired from 40 years with Australia Post and currently breeds alpacas.
- Bill Ross Director (Community)
Bill has retired from a senior position in the Insurance Industry.
- Natalie Barton Director
Natalie is a solicitor and is currently employed by (JC Activities)
- Garry Leighton Minute Secretary
Garry is a past Chairman of the Foundation and has been involved since 1976. He currently operates his own architectural business.

Meeting quarterly now after many years on a monthly basis.
Now a select committee meet monthly to attend to the WW business and other JCF business.

Further Background information

70,000 visitors a year.

Fees

Entry prices current until July 1 06.

Adults	18.00
Students 13 to 18	14.00
Children 6 to 12	9.00
Children 5 and under	FREE
Concessions	14.00
Family pass 2 Adults 2 Children under 12	45.00

Recognized cards.

- Pension Card
- Seniors card
- Backpacker & YHA cards.

Group concessions by pre-arranged booking.

Hours of operation are 9 am to 5 pm, 7 days a week, closed on Christmas day.
Professional guided tours on the hour from 10 am to 4 pm.

Comment from Les Bail, General Manager:

I, as General Manager, run the show and the buck stops with me in all matters.

Fees cover our day to day running but we seek government funds for capital works.

We have 4 volunteers on site working on the ship 7 days a week 10 to 4 pm, paid an expense account of \$30 per shift.

Your mob really needed to visit to see what can be achieved.

We are heritage listed and we won a heritage award and a Museums Australia award this year. That was very gratifying because they were not for tourism.

Appendix 6 - Desert Park, Alice Springs, NT.

Notes from interview with manager, Gary Fry.

Management structure: Tourist operation of Northern Territory Government.

The Desert Park was a government initiative aimed at addressing a drop in tourist numbers in Alice Springs.

Visitor numbers: 93,000 p.a.

Entry fee: \$18 per adult. Includes guides, presentations (8 per day) and whole-park audio interpretation.

Exit survey feedback surveys indicate main features visitors appreciate are:

- Nature theatre (live presentation involving wedge tail eagles, kites and other birds)
- Nocturnal house (which is very well presented compared to other nocturnal exhibitions elsewhere)
- Indigenous interpretation and stories
- Walk-thru aviaries (x 2 walk-thru, 9 walk-by less successful)
- Provision of transport (12 electric shopriders)
- Audio guides
- Presentations (8 per day)
- Film (20 mins runs x 5 per day.)

Whole-Park Audio Interpretation

- Technology is via individual MP3 players
- Produced and owned by Narrowcasters in Sydney.
- Desert Park leases the audio presentation paying according to visitor entry stats.
- Current language versions include English, German and Japanese. Soon to add French.
- 31 audio points described in presentation and identified throughout the park and in printed audio guide.
- Feedback to audio overwhelmingly positive.
- Lost 1 player out of 200,000-plus users.
- Although free, a survey indicated visitors would be prepared to pay \$2-4 for hire of audio.

In-Park Transport

- Walk track throughout the Park is 1.8 kms
- Park purchased 12 'shopriders' – electronic wheelchairs (like those used by Moonya patients to travel around town) – at cost of approx \$3000 each.
- Hire fee of \$5 is greatly appreciated; many say they would have been happy to pay up to \$20.
- Provision of this service features prominently in positive feedback about the Park.

Marketing

- Included in NT whole state promotion "Share our stories" theme.
- Main visitor origins are from NSW, SA, Vic.
- Marketing manager, Olivia Chandler.
- Website <http://www.alicespringsdesertpark.com.au/>
- Trade shows and domestic shows
- Brochures
- Target Internationals – big buyers.
- Target coach companies and tailor presentations to suit schedules where possible.
- "Passport" of discounts as cross-promotional tool with other tourist operations.

Contact:

gary.fry@nt.gov.au

08 8951 8788