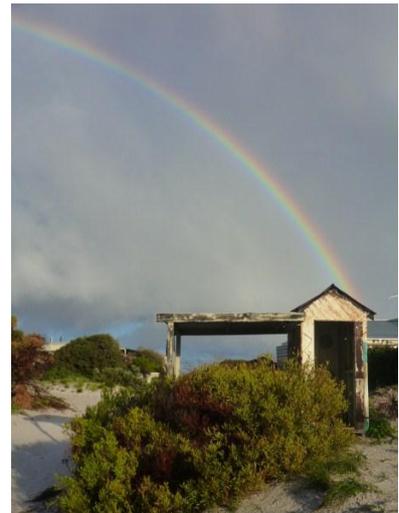


Godden Mackay Logan

Heritage Consultants



Wedge and Grey Shack Settlements

Cultural Heritage Assessment

Report prepared in collaboration with Context Pty Ltd
for National Trust of Australia (WA)

April 2012

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd

ABN 60 001 179 362

Sydney

78 George Street Redfern

NSW Australia 2016

T +61 2 9319 4811

Canberra

2A Mugga Way Red Hill

PO Box 3171 Manuka

ACT 2603

T +61 2 6273 7540

www.gml.com.au

Report Register

The following report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled Wedge and Grey Shack Settlements—Cultural Heritage Assessment, undertaken by Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd in accordance with its quality management system. Godden Mackay Logan operates under a quality management system which has been certified as complying with the Australian/New Zealand Standard for quality management systems AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/Description	Issue Date
11-0005	1	Draft report	January 2012
11-0005	2	Final report	April 2012

Copyright and Moral Rights

Historical sources and reference material used in the preparation of this report are acknowledged and referenced at the end of each section and/or in figure captions. Reasonable effort has been made to identify, contact, acknowledge and obtain permission to use material from the relevant copyright owners.

In accordance with the contract terms for this project GML:

- vests copyright in all material produced by GML (but excluding pre-existing material and material in which copyright is held by a third party) in the client for this project (and the client's successors in title);
- retains the right to use all the material produced by GML for this project for GML's ongoing business and for professional presentations, academic papers or publications; and
- waives the Moral Rights <of both GML and the project team members> in this work, in accordance with the (Commonwealth) *Copyright (Moral Rights) Amendment Act 2000*.

Contents	Page
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Site Identification.....	1
1.2.1 <i>Wedge</i>	1
1.2.2 <i>Grey</i>	1
1.2.3 <i>Access</i>	2
1.2.4 <i>Heritage Listings</i>	2
1.3 Site Ownership and Management.....	2
1.4 Project Method & Results.....	3
1.4.1 <i>Documentary Research</i>	3
1.4.2 <i>Community-Based Research</i>	3
1.4.3 <i>Physical Research</i>	3
1.4.4 <i>Limitations</i>	4
1.4.5 <i>Terminology</i>	4
1.5 Authorship and Acknowledgements.....	5
1.6 Endnotes.....	12
2.0 Shacks in Context	13
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 Shacks as a Vernacular Building Type.....	13
2.2.1 <i>The Characteristics of Shacks, Huts and Cabins</i>	13
2.2.2 <i>The Design and Materials of Shacks</i>	14
2.2.3 <i>The Psychological Dimension of Shacks</i>	14
2.3 Shacks in an Australian Context.....	14
2.3.1 <i>The Place of Gunyahs, Huts and Shacks in Australian History</i>	14
2.3.2 <i>The Creation of Recreation</i>	15
2.3.3 <i>The Place of Shacks in Australian Culture</i>	16
2.4 Endnotes.....	19
3.0 Historical Overview	21
3.1 Introduction.....	21
3.2 Western Australian Historical Context.....	21
3.3 Shack Settlements in Western Australia.....	23
3.3.1 <i>Historic Process of Shack Settlement Establishment</i>	23
3.3.2 <i>Historic Locations of Shack Settlements</i>	25
3.3.3 <i>The WA Squatter Policy</i>	25
3.3.4 <i>Historic Pathways to Removal or Retention</i>	26
3.4 Shacks on the Central Coast Region.....	26
3.5 Local Historical Context: Dandaragan Shire.....	28
3.5.1 <i>Introduction</i>	28
3.5.2 <i>Differing Human Responses to the Landscape</i>	29
3.6 Historical Overview of Wedge.....	35
3.6.1 <i>Phases of Historical Development</i>	35
3.7 Historical Overview of Grey.....	40
3.7.1 <i>Phases of Historical Development</i>	40

3.8 Conclusions	45
3.9 Endnotes.....	46
4.0 Shack Communities, Culture and Traditions	49
4.1 Introduction.....	49
4.2 Approach	49
4.3 The Wedge and Grey Communities Today	50
4.3.1 Grey	50
4.3.2 Wedge.....	52
4.4 Culture and Traditions	53
4.4.1 Life in a Shack Settlement.....	53
4.4.2 The Shack Experience	60
4.4.3 Continuity & Traditions.....	61
4.4.4 Spaces.....	62
4.5 Feelings of Attachment.....	62
4.5.1 Escape.....	63
4.5.2 Nature	64
4.5.3 Home & Belonging.....	65
4.5.4 Identity.....	66
4.5.5 Shack Culture & Traditions.....	69
4.5.6 People: Family & Community.....	70
4.6 Conclusion.....	72
4.7 Endnotes.....	77
5.0 Physical Analysis of the Shack Settlements	81
5.1 Introduction	81
5.2 The Settlement Landscape of Wedge.....	81
5.2.1 The Evolving Landscape of Wedge.....	81
5.2.2 Current Wedge Settlement Landscape	83
5.3 The Settlement Landscape of Grey.....	88
5.3.1 The Evolving Landscape of Grey.....	88
5.3.2 Current Landscape of Grey.....	89
5.4 Shack Design and Construction—Wedge and Grey.....	94
5.4.1 Shack Construction Surveys.....	94
5.4.2 Factors Affecting a Design Ethos.....	95
5.4.3 Phases of Use and Construction	97
5.4.4 Form and Functional Components	99
5.4.5 Defining Boundaries / Spatial Arrangement / Landscape	99
5.4.6 Structure and Cladding Materials.....	100
5.4.7 Interiors	101
5.4.8 Services and Technologies	102
5.4.9 Recycling, Innovation and Personalisation	102
5.5 Case Studies	110
Shack W287, 'Cream', Wedge	110
Shack G123, Grey.....	111
Shack W301, Chick Inn, Wedge	112
Shack W139, Gower's, Wedge	113
Shack W069, Wedge	114

5.6 Conclusions.....	115
5.7 Endnotes	116
6.0 Comparative Analysis	117
6.1 Shacks in Other Australian States and New Zealand.....	117
6.1.1 <i>New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory</i>	117
6.1.2 <i>Victoria</i>	118
6.1.3 <i>Queensland & Northern Territory</i>	119
6.1.4 <i>South Australia</i>	119
6.1.5 <i>Tasmania</i>	119
6.1.6 <i>New Zealand</i>	120
6.2 Other Shack Settlements Remaining in Western Australia.....	120
6.2.1 <i>Overview</i>	120
6.2.2 <i>Shacks in the Great Southern and South West Regions of WA</i>	121
6.3 Australian & Western Australian Historic Themes	124
6.3.1 <i>Australian Themes</i>	124
6.3.2 <i>Western Australian Themes</i>	126
6.4 Conclusions.....	127
6.5 Endnotes	129
7.0 Cultural Heritage Assessment	131
7.1 Introduction.....	131
7.2 Discussion of Cultural Significance	132
7.3 Western Australian Heritage Assessment Framework.....	133
7.3.1 <i>Legislative Framework</i>	133
7.4 Heritage Listings and Similar Assessments	134
7.4.1 <i>Heritage Listings</i>	134
7.4.2 <i>Assessment of Similar Places</i>	135
7.5 Application of Western Australian Assessment Criteria.....	135
7.5.1 <i>Aesthetic Value</i>	135
7.5.2 <i>Historic Value</i>	139
7.5.3 <i>Scientific Value</i>	142
7.5.4 <i>Social Value</i>	144
7.5.5 <i>Rarity</i>	149
7.5.6 <i>Representative</i>	151
7.5.7 <i>Condition, Integrity and Authenticity</i>	153
7.6 Summary Statement of Cultural Significance.....	154
7.7 Attributes of Cultural Significance.....	156
7.8 Endnotes	159
8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations	161
8.1 Conclusions.....	161
8.2 Recommendations.....	162
8.3 Endnotes	164
9.0 References/Bibliography	165
9.1 Books.....	165
9.2 Published Articles	165

9.3 Newspaper Articles	165
9.4 Heritage Assessments, Listings and Reports	166
9.5 Unpublished Articles	167
9.6 Submissions	167
9.7 Personal and Family Histories and Recollections	167
9.8 Interviews.....	168
9.9 Web Resources	168
10.0 Appendices.....	169
Appendix A	
<i>National Trust of Australia (WA) Classified Listings/Heritage Assessments for the Wedge and Grey Shack Settlements</i>	
Appendix B	
<i>Social Values Assessment: Questionnaire Survey Summary Analysis</i>	
Appendix C	
<i>Social Values Assessment: Focus Groups and Interviews</i>	
Appendix D	
<i>Shack Location Plans</i>	
Appendix E	
<i>Australian and Western Australian Historic Themes</i>	

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd (GML) was engaged by the National Trust of Australia (WA) to prepare a cultural heritage assessment of the shack settlements at Wedge and Grey, north of Perth, Western Australia. The assessment was undertaken as a collaboration between GML and Context Pty Ltd, Melbourne.

The project was coordinated by the National Trust of Australia (WA) and was undertaken with assistance from the Wedge Island Progress Association (WIPA) and the Grey Conservation and Community Association (GCCA). Both community groups also contributed financially to the project.

The scope and focus of this project was to assess whether the two shack settlements together satisfied criteria under the Heritage of Western Australia Act, 1990, to warrant listing on the WA State Register of Heritage Places. This project is not intended to provide conservation policy for the management of the shacks.

1.2 Site Identification

1.2.1 Wedge

The shack settlement of Wedge is located on the Indian Ocean coast 150km north of Perth within unvested and unclassified Reserve 43283 (213ha). This reserve is surrounded by Wanagarran Nature Reserve (Figures 1.1 to 1.3). There are approximately 320 shacks at Wedge that were constructed from the late 1950s to the early 1990s, initially by fishermen and pastoralists, and later mostly by residents of Perth and other places for weekend/holiday use. The Wedge settlement is also known as 'Wedge Island' because the small Wedge Island is located approximately 300m off shore and is occasionally joined by a sand spit to the mainland.

As shown on Figure 1.3, both Wedge and Wedge Island are triangular or wedge-shaped areas of land. The landform of Wedge is a series of sand dunes vegetated with low heath that bound this triangular area; one at the south running east-west, one running north-south behind the beach, and one forming the third side of the triangle. The shacks are generally located in vegetated swales behind the dunes. An interdunal swamp in the centre of the settlement and a series of vehicle tracks are the other main site features. To the north of the settlement is a large dune system that forms a strong and enclosing landscape feature (see Figures 1.4 and 1.5).

1.2.2 Grey

The shack settlement of Grey is located a further 20km north of Wedge within unvested and unclassified Reserve 43284 (193ha) (Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.6). This Reserve is surrounded by Nambung National Park. The landform is defined by two limestone headlands and two large dunes inland from the headlands. The approximately 120 shacks at Grey have a similar construction and use history to Wedge and are found in two main areas. A long line of shacks is located on the dune directly behind the beach at the north end of the settlement.

Other groups are located around a bay to the south, sheltered by the southern limestone headland, and also in clusters inland from this bay around the dune system that creates pockets of strongly undulating topography (see Figures 1.7 to 1.9).

1.2.3 Access

Access to Wedge was, until recently, via Lancelin and then via the beach and rough tracks north. Access to Grey was, until recently, via the Brand Highway and south from Cervantes along a rough track. However, in early 2011 the bitumen-paved Indian Ocean Road was completed to Jurien Bay and this now allows access to the Wedge settlement via a 4.5km bituminised spur road and to Grey via a shorter c300m road (see Figure 1.1).

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 describe in more detail the landscape character of Wedge and Grey and provide further analysis of the physical evolution of these two settlements.

1.2.4 Heritage Listings

Wedge and Grey are not listed in the Shire of Dandaragan's Local Government Inventory of heritage places and are not included on the WA State Register of Heritage Places.

Wedge and Grey are both included in the National Trust of Australia (WA) Register (see Appendix A).

1.3 Site Ownership and Management

Wedge and Grey are the two largest shack settlements remaining in WA and total approximately 450 of the 1280 shacks remaining in WA (in 2011).¹

In 1989 the WA Government introduced the Illegal Occupation of Coastal Crown Land (Squatters) policy (Squatter Policy) to stop the construction of new shacks and shack settlements in WA, and to move towards the removal of existing shacks and shack settlements.² Some 678 shacks were removed from 1989 in the Central Coast area north of Wedge and Grey.³

The reserves on which Wedge and Grey are located are managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). These reserves were created at the time of, and in association with, the Squatter policy. Since the announcement of the shack policy, the Government has agreed to a series of leases and lease extensions to the shack owners who own, or claim ownership of, the fabric of the shacks.

In 2000 DEC (then the Department of Conservation and Land Management [CALM]) prepared a Masterplan for Wedge and Grey identifying that the shacks would be removed, the land rehabilitated and the area used to provide nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities for day visitors and short stay holidaymakers. To date, this Masterplan has not been implemented.

In 2010 the WA Legislative Council (the Upper House) held an Inquiry into shack sites in WA (WA Shack Inquiry) and released its report in April 2011. This report concluded that:

while the Committee understood the heritage arguments presented, including the views of the National Trust, it had formed the view that heritage considerations do not outweigh equity considerations.

The WA Shack Inquiry recommended that the relevant minister and managing authority instruct leaseholders and shack owners to remove the shacks at Wedge and Grey.⁴ The WA Government is currently considering this report and as part of this process, in August 2011, it announced an extension of shack leases for a further 12 months.

There are two shack community associations that represent shack owners at Wedge and Grey: the Wedge Island Progress Association (WIPA) has operated since 1968, and the Grey Conservation and Community Association since 1969.

1.4 Project Method & Results

This report is structured in accordance with Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999 (Burra Charter) heritage assessment principles with sections that provide for an analysis of documentary and physical evidence relating to the shacks, as well as comparative evidence of similar places in WA and elsewhere. The assessment of significance is consistent with Burra Charter methodology and uses the relevant Western Australian heritage assessment criteria.

1.4.1 Documentary Research

While there has been no comprehensive history prepared on either settlement, there are a number of family accounts, and tertiary student research and academic papers, written on the settlements. The documentary analysis includes this material as well as testimony gathered during the site work from group and individual interviews. The documentary analysis has included:

- a review of previous reports and assessments of the shack settlements;
- analysis of aerial photography from approximately every decade from the 1950s;
- an interview with representatives of DEC who manage the land;
- an interview with staff of the WA Heritage Council and review of reports held in the WA heritage council library on similar shack places; and
- interviews with academics who have written about the shacks.

To assist comparative assessment the project included a web-based survey of heritage professionals in Australia to ascertain knowledge of other shack groups in Australia.

1.4.2 Community-Based Research

Social significance involves understanding the values of the place from the perspective of those with experience of the place. The methods used can be described as community-based research and included a questionnaire survey, small group discussions and interviews, and documentary research. The concept of social significance and the research methods used are described in detail in Section 4.0.

1.4.3 Physical Research

Other physical research included:

- data forms were distributed to shack owners to gather data on dates of construction, materials of construction and alterations. Of these, 125 forms were returned;
- photos were taken of the majority of shacks in Grey and a number in Wedge, with additional photography provided by community representatives;
- an external site inspection was made to the majority of shacks in Wedge and Grey; and
- plan drawings were made of a number of shacks in both settlements.

1.4.4 Limitations

The site investigations and associated meetings in Perth were structured over a full week in August 2011 with 2 days in each shack settlement.

Inventories have not been completed for each shack. However, a large number of shacks were visited and photographed and a number were drawn in plan (see Section 5.5), so both the typical and unusual features of the shacks could be analysed at the level required for this assessment.

This project did not include site investigation or consultation regarding Aboriginal heritage values. However, interviews were undertaken with Aboriginal shack owners at Wedge.

1.4.5 Terminology

The Burra Charter includes the following definitions used in this report:

1.1 *Place* means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views.

1.2 *Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

1.12 *Setting* means the area around a *place*, which may include the visual catchment.

1.15 *Associations* mean the special connections that exist between people and a *place*. Associations are part of the tangible heritage.

1.16 *Meanings* denote what a *place* signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses. Meanings are also part of intangible cultural heritage, as cultural expressions all have meanings.

Intangible cultural heritage: The term intangible cultural heritage responds to a focus on physical or tangible heritage as expressed in concepts such as 'place'. A formal definition of intangible heritage is provided in the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage:

Intangible Cultural Heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

Intangible cultural heritage refers to aspects of heritage that are embodied in traditions, knowledge, cultural and social practices, language, and performance, etc, rather than in the physical fabric of places and objects. The intangible and the tangible are like the warp and weft of our cultural cloth, neither existing alone.

Intangible cultural heritage is in many ways very tangible, but it is usually not expressed or embodied in the fabric of a place—rather it is found within the culture and cultural expressions of those associated with the place.

In relation to this project, aspects of intangible cultural heritage could include:

- language—terms, names, expressions, and ways of speaking;

- social practices, rituals and festive events;
- traditions: ways of doing and making things, craftsmanship; and
- performance.

For some places the most important aspects of intangible heritage are knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe—often these are spiritual practices. It seems unlikely that any such examples will occur in the current project.

These values are embodied in aspects or features of the physical place, as well as in intangible aspects such as meanings, associations, traditions, and cultural expressions, etc.

Tangible cultural heritage: the concept of tangible heritage emerged in response to the identification of intangible heritage, noted above. Prior to this, mostly what was commonly understood as heritage (buildings, sites, movable objects, monuments, landscapes, books, art, and artefacts) is what is now included in the concept of tangible heritage.

Shack: The Macquarie dictionary defines a shack as a rough cabin; shanty. The WA Upper House Inquiry defined shack to include the concept that it is an illegal squatter construction. This report does not agree with that definition and a shack for this report does not equate to its tenure or otherwise, but rather its design construction and use characteristics consistent with the Macquarie definition. See Section 2.1 for a discussion on shacks and huts in Australia generally.

Wedge Island/Wedge: some refer to the settlement use the term Wedge Island while others use Wedge to differentiate it from Wedge Island itself. This report uses Wedge but acknowledges the use of Wedge Island to also describe the settlement.

Grey/Green Islet: the original name for this settlement was Green Islet or Green Island after the small island located in the reef just offshore, but is now known as Grey, after explorer Lt George Grey, later Governor of South Australian and New Zealand.

1.5 Authorship and Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Geoff Ashley, Senior Associate, of GML, in collaboration with Chris Johnston, Director, of Context Pty Ltd. Geoff Ashley was primarily responsible for the historical overviews and the physical analysis of the shacks and Chris Johnston for the community surveys and assessments. Flavia Scardamaglia, Research Assistant, of GML, and Jessie Briggs, Context, assisted with the report.

The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance of Karl Haynes and the staff of the National Trust of Australia (WA).

In addition to all the members of both settlements who participated in the surveys and meetings, the authors would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance with hosting meetings and logistical support during the site work for the project:

Wedge: Murray & Olga Knowles; Robin Adair; Anne McGuinness; Steve Dawe; Gary Cream and Wayne Otway; Peter Manchetti; Peter Muir; Bluey and Tanya Timewell; Bill Laundon; Ross Robinson.

Grey: The Loomes family, Rob Teune; Kim Miller & Penny Johnson; Peter Sheppard; Fred and Margaret Sharp, Des Folley, Denise and Ed Peverley.



Figure 1.1 The location of the Wedge and Grey shack settlements within WA. Shown in black is the recently constructed Indian Ocean Drive—formerly access to Wedge was via a track north from Lancelin and to Grey a track south from Cervantes.

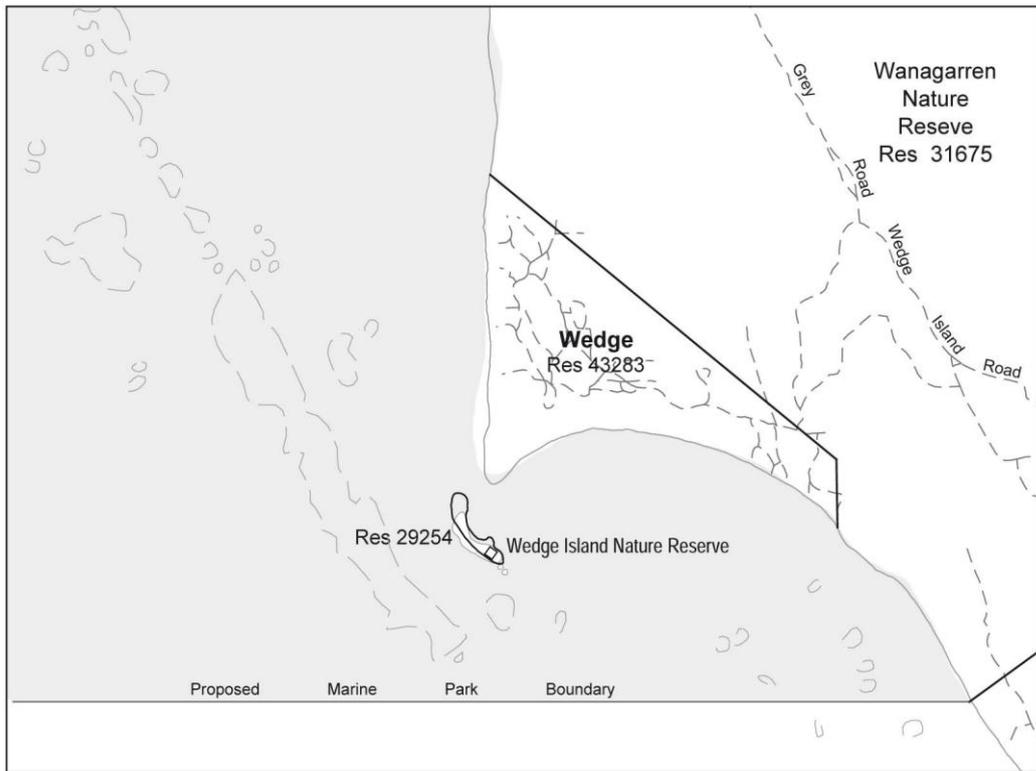
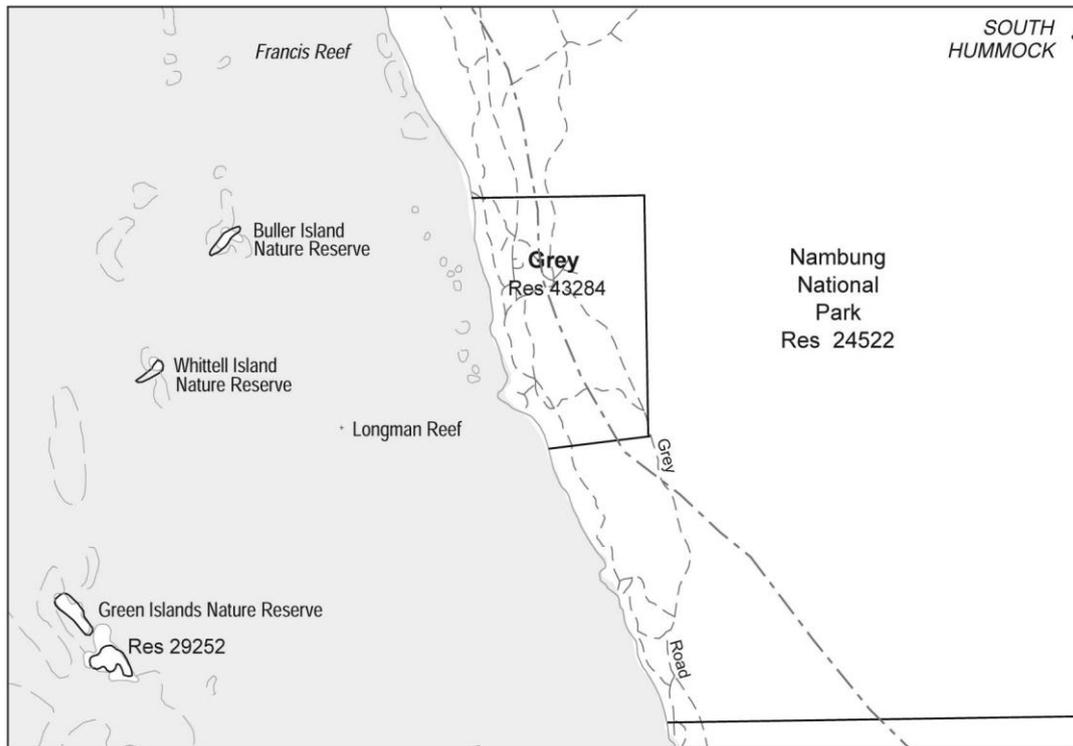


Figure 1.2 Land reservation status for both Wedge and Grey. (Source: Wedge and Grey Masterplan, 2000, WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)).

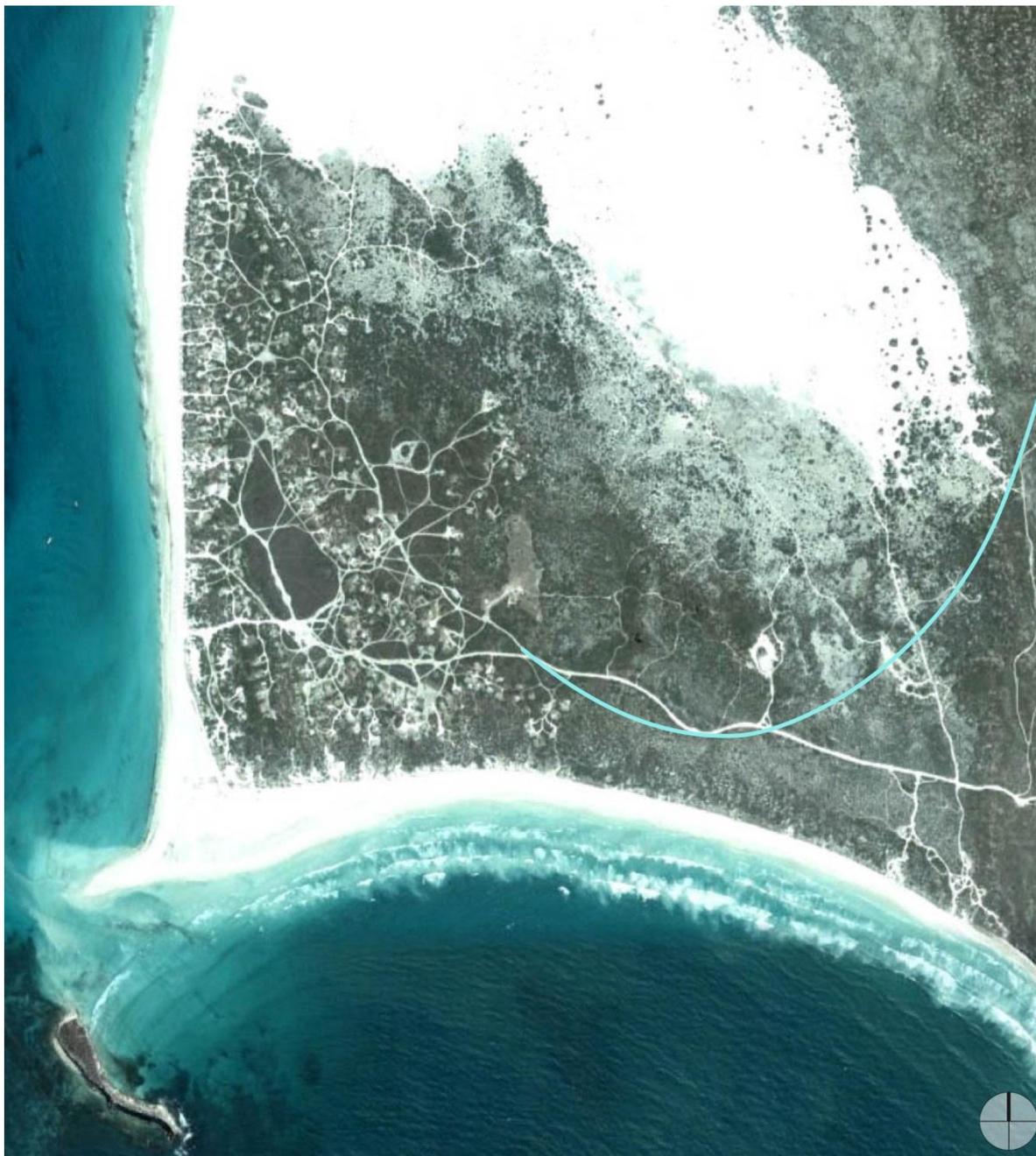


Figure 1.3 Wedge Island and the Wedge shack settlement in an aerial photo from 2003. A 4.5km spur road from the 2011 Indian Ocean Drive is shown in light blue approaching from the east, with the Indian Ocean Drive itself to the north east of this image. A large dune (white area) sits north of the settlement. (Source Google Maps)



Figure 1.4 Oblique aerial view of the Wedge shack settlement from the southeast, showing the interdunal swamp in the centre of the settlement and the first areas settled at the bottom of the image, including the straight 'street' of shacks behind a dune. (Source WIPA)



Figure 1.5 View southwest across Wedge from the large dune north of the settlement.



Figure 1.6 Grey shack settlement in an aerial photo from 2003 showing the two limestone headlands around which the settlement developed. The alignment of the 2011 Indian Ocean Drive and the short spur road into Grey is shown in light blue. (Source Google Maps)



Figure 1.7 The sheltered bay around which Grey was initially established.



Figure 1.8 The undulating landscape of Grey between inland sand dunes.



Figure 1.9 The northern beach of Grey.

1.6 Endnotes

- 1 The estimated total of 1280 shacks in WA is comprised of the 1060 shacks included in the report of the WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs on Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p15, and the 220 shacks at Windy Harbour noted in various submissions to that inquiry.
- 2 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p12
- 3 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p17
- 4 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p120

2.0 Shacks in Context

2.1 Introduction

This section provides a context for the analysis of documentary and physical evidence that follows in Sections 3.0, 4.0 and 5.0, and for the comparative assessments made in Section 6.0.

A discussion is provided on how shacks are part of a vernacular building type that includes huts and cabins. The physical attributes of these structures is described, along with their uses and their intangible psychological dimensions, to highlight how they are quite different building types to normal places of human habitation.

The place of shacks in Australian history and culture is discussed; in particular the mid-twentieth-century historical processes that saw a rapid growth in the notion of recreation, which in turn led to an explosion of coastal holiday accommodation, including shacks.

2.2 Shacks as a Vernacular Building Type

2.2.1 The Characteristics of Shacks, Huts and Cabins

Shacks, huts and cabins are a human habitation building type that is quite different in its use and design to other forms of habitation. They are not just small houses, but reflect in their use, location and construction materials, specific associations with the land on which they stand and its history. This aspect is particularly evident in a vast country like Australia, where the remotely located resources, and the huts associated with these resources, have become important parts of our history and cultural identity.

The Macquarie dictionary defines a *shack* as a rough cabin; shanty. This reflects ideas of urgency and/or temporary use, where the architectural resolution of the building itself is not of critical importance. There are similar notions in the definitions of *hut* as coming from the old German *hutte* that is probably akin to a 'hide', as in a place to conceal oneself.

The use of the term hut in Australia is usually associated with rural work-related uses, while shack is associated with coastal holiday recreation use. In terms of typology, the shack as a physical structure, like the definition above, is less conventional/traditional in its form or use of materials than a hut and is more organic in its evolution. Cabins are often designed groups in camping grounds. The terms shacks, huts and cabins are not fixed and are interchangeable. These three types of structures have shared aspects: they are small, they are used as human dwellings and their use is often seasonal or temporary in nature.

There are also three primary and often inter-connected reasons why people build these structures: for temporary accommodation for work or recreation, as a low cost affordable dwelling that is anticipated to be no more permanent than necessary, and perhaps as the first phase of what was hoped to be more substantial permanent dwelling.

The construction of shacks and huts for work or recreation is associated with a resource at a particular location. In the case of beach shack settlements it is the beach and/or its fishing resource. In the case of other locations the resource is grass pastures, mineral ores or forests, transport infrastructure or places of scientific research (eg Mawson's Huts in Antarctica). Sometimes the resource is of a seasonal nature such as alpine summer grazing huts and crayfishing shacks, and sometimes, such as outstation pastoral or prospector huts, the resource reflects a remoteness from

the centre of the economic production unit. (The recreation aspect of shacks in Australia is discussed further in Section 2.3.2, below.)

The second reason for shack construction is as temporary low cost accommodation. An example is the Depression era shacks built by Chinese market gardeners in Happy Valley at La Perouse, Sydney.

The third reason noted above is one of historical processes, particularly in rural areas where a shack marked the first stage of what later became a homestead—often this first structure became a kitchen for the expanded house (see Figures 2.4-2.6). In some of these situations, land laws required some form of structure to be constructed to confirm capital investment; in other cases, the shack or hut was a squatter's way of establishing a claim.

2.2.2 The Design and Materials of Shacks

The design and materials of shack construction reflects various factors: the seasonal or temporary nature of use, remoteness and presence of available materials, difficulties of transport and lack of tenure. For example, the coastal shacks now in Royal National Park south of Sydney could only be accessed on foot and the construction materials reflect this in the small size of roof and wall cladding sheets. At Wedge and Grey the sheet size was not as much of an issue as the need for robust materials able to withstand a rough vehicle track journey. Some huts reflect the availability of local materials; one example being the water worn river stones used in fishing huts on the Geehi River in Kosciuszko National Park, another example being a machine packing case that was reused as a penguin observatory on Macquarie Island, south of Tasmania.

The simple inexpensive form and materials of construction also relate to issues of tenure—there are distinct disincentives to over capitalise on a shack with no long-term tenure.

2.2.3 The Psychological Dimension of Shacks

The experience of habitation in shacks has intangible dimensions that are associated with being in the landscape and sharing space with others. There are also other more psychological aspects associated the German definition, noted above, of hut as hide. In *Hut in the Wild* Dianne Johnson covers the various ideas of the hut as: inscape, as metaphor, as escape, as tent, as keep, and as caravan:

I suspect that the hut is an archetype and as such speaks to many of us symbolically, in the language of poetry, in metaphor, contradictions and paradox. Simplicity, separateness and ephemerality are its essence.¹

In *A Hut of One's Own: Life Outside the Circle of Architecture*, Ann Cline refers to scholars throughout the ages who have identified the hut archetype as a foundation stone of architecture. Ancient writers would retreat to huts in the mountains to, ironically, contemplate the human condition.²

2.3 Shacks in an Australian Context

2.3.1 The Place of Gunyahs, Huts and Shacks in Australian History

The Aboriginal gunyah, typically a bark shelter made of boughs and bark, features strongly in Indigenous Australian cultural history. The pattern of use of the gunyah is associated with shifting resource exploitation and this is a feature that is also shared by shacks and huts.

The gunyah was one the first things described by Cook when he arrived in Botany Bay:

*Saw as we came on both points of the bay several of the natives and a few huts...*³

Tents, shelters and then huts were the first structures made by European people who often copied the construction of gunyahs.

The nineteenth-century history of Australia is full of references to the hut as the outrider of land claiming, sometimes constructed as a requirement to prove the claim and sometimes as squatting. In many cases, as noted above, the hut was the first stage in what later became a pastoral homestead. In all cases the hut was in some ways associated with resource exploitation.

From the late nineteenth century, the concept of travelling to the bush to enjoy nature resulted in the establishment of national parks such as Royal National Park, south of Sydney, where the advent of steam train travel aided the beginning of the notion of recreation time and 'getting away'. Public rail transport that had first opened up these natural places to tourism was joined with gusto in the early twentieth century by the motor vehicle that allowed access to otherwise out of the way places, and so in the interwar period camping places and shacks started to appear at the beach up and down the coast, such as at Stanwell Park, south of Sydney.

2.3.2 The Creation of Recreation

The 'why' of shacks is a lot to do with changes in Australian society that began early in the twentieth century, with recognition of the value of workers conditions, to both employees and employers, regarding weekends and paid leave time. This process literally picked up speed with access to motor cars after WWII. The time to recreate and the ability to leave the city in search of recreation are likely to be big factors as to why shack settlements developed so quickly in the postwar period.

In *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia* Richard White describes the underlying factors to why the period 1945 to 1975 was the heyday of the holiday; a period in which the holiday entered a new national mythology about 'the Australian Way of Life'.⁴ The factors noted by White include the progressive changes to provide annual leave in Federal awards: one week in 1941, 2 weeks in 1945, 3 weeks in 1963 and finally 4 weeks in 1974. The creation of a full weekend off and public holidays also contributed.

The second big factor was the huge postwar increase in car ownership—from one car for every 14 persons in 1946 to one car for every 3.5 in 1960; ie one per family. The advent of the motor car allowed individual choice of where to go:

*Individual car ownership meant that rather than finding accommodation in guest houses clustered around railway stations and jetties, the hordes of holiday makers could spread up and down the coast from the capital cities.*⁵

Nevertheless, a large percentage of people still had a holiday with family and friends—also a pattern at Wedge and Grey.

Another observation connects the stable postwar labour market and the availability of cars:

Job security and a car made a holiday possible. Unemployment rates were at an historical low during the 1950s. Workers could feel comfortable in spending money on caravans and canvas annexes, a small holiday shack or a few weeks away in self-catering holidays...

The caravan is, of course, a sort of portable shack that travels with the car and caravanning was an accommodation form that allowed flexibility in destination, but also often resulted in a pattern of later return and shack construction.

The form of accommodation resulting from the creation of recreation time and access varied, but in many cases follows a progressive pattern of tent camping and/or caravanning, as well as shack construction, before more formal control and creation of holiday settlements:

After war-time building restrictions were lifted many holiday makers began work on their own beach shack or 'weekenders', a word which was first used in Australia.⁶

Australians generally eschewed formalised holiday camps of cabins that were popular in the UK and Europe:

Simple holiday shacks, sometimes built by the holiday owners before stricter regulations were enforced in the 1970s and 1980s, sprang up at popular spots all around Australia. The Great Lakes Area of southern Tasmania has hundreds of fishing shacks; the Mornington Peninsular, Bellarine Peninsular and the Great Ocean Road areas of Victoria were havens for second home owners and campers alike.⁷

But later:

As local councils began to assert their authority over the coastline they (shacks) became more permanent, as scrounged cladding and corrugated iron gave way to basic timber and fibro.⁸

Professors Roy Jones and John Selwood have noted that the recent contemporary coastward move is affecting more of Australia's coast than the primary cities and smaller ports did in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries:

This modern 'Seachange' (Burnley and Murphy 2004) movement, fuelled by an increasingly affluent, mobile, ageing and numerous population is generating strong development pressures for second home, retirement home and tourism-related growth in many scenic coastal localities around the country.⁹

Jones uses the term 'recreational pioneers' to describe these people, who include the shack dwellers.¹⁰

2.3.3 The Place of Shacks in Australian Culture

With the accessibility of the beach holiday, the shack has created a place for itself in Australian culture.

The holiday home is still an Australian icon. The 'shack up the coast' or a house on the bay has played its role in Australian patterns of life in all levels of society.

The beach holiday was a symbol of an egalitarian Australia; holidays did not cost much. The general use of the terms 'shack' or 'weekender' whether or not the structure is really a shack or architect designed second home attests to its democratic and deliberately understated meaning.¹¹

Shacks and huts have a particular place in Australian culture, not only associated with its history, but with the sense of place and nature of living here. DH Lawrence in *Kangaroo* picked up this sense of place:

The roofs of scattered shanties will remind me of Australia. They seem to me beautiful, though it's a fact they have nothing to do with beauty.¹²

The tin shacks were almost a relief. They did not call for geraniums and lobelias, as did the pretty Hampstead Garden suburb cottages.¹³

How I liked the rain on the tin roofs of the huts at the war. It reminded me of Australia.

In *Coast Dwellers: a Radical Reappraisal of Australian Identity* Philip Drew stated that 'the beach is the twentieth-century's rejoinder to the bush, a wet tradition of sun, surf and sand, a tradition based on freedom and pleasure.'¹⁴

Jones refers to Shields' *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity*¹⁵ who states that places like the shack settlements are 'marginal places' in place and time that:

Have been left behind in the modern race for progress (and) evoke both nostalgia and fascination. Their marginal status may come from out-of-the-way geographical locations, being the site of illicit or disdained social activities or being the Other pole to the great geographical centre.

Jones finishes that it is a truism that the old times will gradually go:

*[yet] it is hoped the memories, and thereby the heritages, of several generations of West Australians of a very special type of coastal holiday experience can be preserved, not only in their minds but, at least in some modified form, on the ground.'*¹⁶



Fig 2.1



Fig 2.2



Fig 2.3

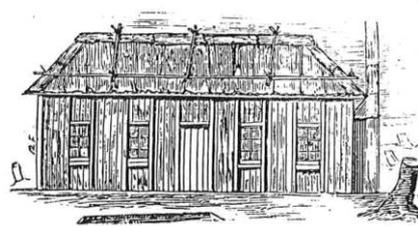


Fig 2.4

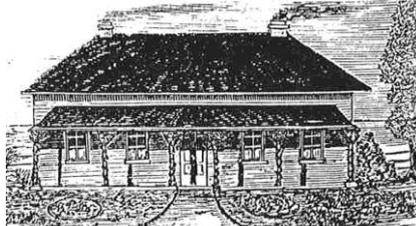


Fig 2.5



Fig 2.6



Fig 2.7



Fig 2.8



Fig 2.9



Fig 2.10



Fig 2.11



Fig 2.12

Figures (left to right) 2.1 Hainsworth Hut, Kosciuszko National Park—a typical gable roof hut; **2.2** South Era Shacks, Royal National Park; **2.3** Currawong cabins Pittwater; **2.4-2.6** How to progress from shack to homestead illustrated in the *Town and Country Journal* 1871; **2.7** Mawson's Hut; **2.8** Eucalyptus Town, La Perouse, Sydney; **2.9** Materials from the site—Bark Hut, Oxley Wild Rivers National Park; **2.10** reuse of materials—penguin science observatory Macquarie Island, Tasmania; **2.11** Aboriginal Gunyah – 'Native Huts of NSW' engraving from sketch by Governor King 179?; **2.12** Car based camping at Garie Beach south of Sydney, 1930s (Sources for images are Geoff Ashley except 2.1 Kosciuszko Huts Association and 2.4-2.6, 2.8, 2.11 and 2.12 State Library NSW)

2.4 Endnotes

- ¹ Johnson, Dianne, *Hut in the Wild*, 2011 p11.
- ² Cline, Anne, 1997, *A Hut of One's Own; Life Outside the Circle of Architecture*, MIT Press, p3.
- ³ National Library of Australia, Captain James Cook's journal entry for 29 April 1770.
- ⁴ White, Richard, 2005, *On Holidays: A history of getting away in Australia*, Pluto Press 2005, p119.
- ⁵ White, Richard, 2005, *On Holidays: A history of getting away in Australia*, Pluto Press 2005, p134.
- ⁶ White, Richard, 2005, *On Holidays: A history of getting away in Australia*, Pluto Press 2005, p136.
- ⁷ Monash University Website
- ⁸ White, Richard, 2005, *On Holidays: A history of getting away in Australia*, Pluto Press 2005, p136.
- ⁹ Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia unpublished paper p1
- ¹⁰ Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia unpublished paper, p1
- ¹¹ White, Richard, 2005, *On Holidays: A history of getting away in Australia*, Pluto Press 2005, p136.
- ¹² Lawrence DH, *Kangaroo Penguin* first published 1923, p376.
- ¹³ Lawrence DH, *Kangaroo Penguin* first published 1923, p31.
- ¹⁴ Drew, Philip, *Coast Dwellers: a radical reappraisal of Australian Identity* p114
- ¹⁵ Shields R *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity* 1991 in Jones Roy, 2011
- ¹⁶ Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia unpublished paper p11.

3.0 Historical Overview

3.1 Introduction

In addition to providing a thematically based historical overview of the shack settlements of Wedge and Grey, this section includes a discussion of the geographic, historical and cultural processes relevant to the history of shack development in Western Australia, the Central Coast region and the local Dandaragan Shire area within which Wedge and Grey are located.

While there were underlying historic processes of postwar change that are similar to those in eastern states, it is argued here that there are also broader cultural factors in the making of shack settlements in Western Australia that are different. There are also particular geographic and historical factors that have influenced the creation of these two settlements.

Included in this section is a discussion of recent changes and the current situation with regard to shack settlements in WA that leads to the comparative assessment in Section 6.0.

This section finishes with an identification of relevant Australian and Western Australian historic themes and makes some conclusions relevant to the assessment of cultural heritage significance that will follow in Section 7.0.

3.2 Western Australian Historical Context

Four aspects of Western Australian history are discussed below that are considered to be particularly relevant to the creation of the shack settlements:

- unique factors in the historical development of Western Australia and how these have impacted its development and culture;
- geographical and geological aspects, including the vast size of the state, a huge length of often unproductive coastal lands, as well as more particular geographical/geological aspects in the area local to Wedge and Grey;
- the slow development of local government and the implementation of planning controls and land management, as a result of vast areas, low populations and economic base, but also the broader cultural reasons noted above in rural areas, including a mistrust of government control; and
- the rapid postwar influx of migrants arriving in WA and the boom in available leisure time are similar to the changes experienced in the eastern states.

Different History—Differences in Culture

From the establishment of the Swan River Settlement in 1829 things have been a bit different in Western Australia. Captain James Stirling, who established the settlement at the Swan River as the first free colony in Australia, had the idea that:

The settlers would have to ship themselves and their labourers at their own cost and they would be granted land in return for the amount of capital and labour they brought.¹

The Swan River settlement initially failed but Wakefield (who followed) used this failing to argue that in new colonies land should be sold not given away and the proceeds used to pay passages of

labourers and their families. Convicts were not used initially but were transported to the colony from 1850 to 1868 to assist development:

As in the rest of Australia most of the land occupied by Europeans was devoted to pastoralism – to sheep on the rivers in the north west and later cattle in the Kimberleys.²

This early history has meant that success on the land was something that created the power elites in Western Australia who were not otherwise associated with traditional families and influence. As noted by heritage planner Don Newman, 'If you succeeded you became aristocracy'.³ In the opinion Newman this Western Australian history of self-reliance and disdain for government control comes from this settler history rather than from a convict colony and its pervasive level of government administration. This may be connected to a broader sense of individual freedom of action that is not sanctioned by the state; a factor probably at work in relation to shack settlements.

According to Professor Roy Jones, this historical pattern has produced two strongly different viewpoints on shacks:

For many Western Australians their right to camp, to fish and even build shacks is seen as a reasonable freedom in a frontier state and an essential component of their heritage. The alternate, official view is that this is a transgressive behaviour.⁴

The gold rush of the later 1800s created State wealth, but the digging was done by miners from the east who were also unionists:

The colony had found its prosperity but at the cost of being overwhelmed by outsiders, the t'othersiders as they were known.⁵

This had a political dimension with divisions between the conservative pastoralists in power and the new residents who were unionised. This was reflected at the time of Federation when a decision to unite was not at all a 'done deal' in the west. The sense of difference has continued; in the 1960s with the huge iron ore finds and in the more recent mining booms. The great prosperity Western Australia has enjoyed since the 1960s 'has encouraged the thought in some that it would be better off on its own'.⁶

The underlying political differences between more conservative rural people and middle class urbanites may be a factor in the history of local government opposition to the shack settlements. Also the fact that these urbanites were not contributing to the local revenue base to maintain community services and infrastructure through rates or leases may have galled those paying rates.

A Vast Place and Huge Coastline

The vast area of the State, its huge coastline and the generally poor quality of the coastal lands (that are different to the generally well watered and arable coastal margins in the east), has influenced the history of land development and created the circumstances that supported shack settlements. In the Central Coast area with the better pastoral areas and arable agricultural lands in the interior, the town settlements and scattered road and rail transport networks were also located inland, further delaying coastal development.

The Slow Implementation of Planning

While Western Australia was an 'early adopter' of modern land tenure and ownership systems, it lagged behind in the area of land management. This lag may in part be connected to the aspects noted above: the size of the state and the issue of individual freedoms and rights. While Western

Australia adopted the Torrens title system very early after the 1829 colony was established, it was not until a century later that the 1928 Town Planning and Development Act provided for local plans. Even then it was not until the 1970s that local plans started to appear. Don Newman summarised this situation in relation to planning: 'It was the Wild West until after WWII'.⁷ This process may also be associated with the slow development of local representative democracy. For example, it was not until the 1890s that the first local representation was established Dandaragan as the Dandaraga Road Board, with a focus, naturally, on road creation and maintenance, and it was not until the 1960s that this Road Board became the Dandaragan Shire.

Postwar Migration, the Mining Boom and Recreation Growth

Unlike the points of difference noted above, it appears that the same processes applied, and at the same time, in Western Australia (as it did in the eastern states) with regard to working conditions and the availability of motor cars (see Section 2.3.2). A huge postwar migrant intake is another theme in Western Australia that reflects similar processes to other parts of Australia. In the case of recreation, Western Australia had similar patterns of recreation development impetus, while the slow rate of settlement and take up of planning controls along the coastline may have provided a more suitable environment for squatter shack establishments than in the eastern states.

In summary, a history of self-reliance and resistance to government control, the isolated and less economically productive coastal lands, and a slow development of land use planning and control, have all led to the circumstances where the rapid postwar growth the economy in WA when coupled with the boom in recreation time and access to motor vehicles, have created unique historic patterns and processes at work in the establishment of shack settlements in WA.

The historical and cultural aspects discussed above, together with the specific history of Wedge and Grey are cross referenced to identified Australian and Western Australian historic themes in Section 6.0.

3.3 Shack Settlements in Western Australia

3.3.1 Historic Process of Shack Settlement Establishment

Based on the known number of shacks on the Central Coast region in 1994, together with those still existing in Western Australia in 2010, this report estimates that in the region of 3000 shacks existed in the State up until the 1990s—which represents a greater number per capita than in the eastern states.⁸ Some of the thematic reasons for this are noted above. Following the introduction of the WA Squatter Policy and shack removals in the 1990s, the 2010 WA Legislative Council Shack Inquiry found that there were approximately 1060 remaining in about a dozen places, mostly in the State's south and Central Coast areas. There are also 220 shacks at Windy Harbour in the south west (see Section 6.6.2) and submissions to the Shack Inquiry suggested that these should be added to the total number, which brings it to 1280.

The historical development of shack settlements is most strongly associated with the process of rural pastoral use, mining and forestry, and associated rural town settlement, rather than the notion of urban escape, although this has been the most dominant recent 'driver'. The initial connection between the coast and pastoralism was work related:

In the early settlement phase of the South West and Great Southern regions (1827-1860) farmers often had to drive their cattle long distances to find sufficient feed. Because of poor coastal soils that resulted in cattle

*illness the coastal areas were fired regularly and the cattle moved there seasonally around Christmas resulting in hut construction.*⁹

This pattern also resulted in farmers in the wheat growing areas 'taking a break' at the coast 'for recreational reasons in the period between the harvest and the sowing of their winter wheat crops'.¹⁰

During these breaks the families would often stay for extended periods with the farmers travelling to and from the property. Families from the rural towns near this study area also took part in this process from the 1920s and 1930s:

*A number of families from Dandaragan and Moora were undertaking the arduous journey across the cleared but unformed road to camp at Sandy Cape for their holidays, Jack Roberts being the first to build a holiday shack. Such was its popularity that the Dandaragan Road Board declared the area a reserve, and began charging a fee of 5s per year to those who had constructed shacks.*¹¹

Similarly in the South West region some farmers who had freehold land allowed informal camping and caravan parks until years later when Shire Councils forced building and services upgrades. This pattern may have been a model for squatting generally.¹²

The process of establishing shack settlements was underpinned by the attraction of coastal fishing for both amateurs and professionals, especially by the postwar development of the professional fishing industry, in particular crayfishing on the Central Coast.

At Cape Naturaliste and Dunsborough on the southwest coast, professional fishers bought land from farmers and built shacks. At Dunsborough, Don Newman remembers tents of farmer families packing the beach over Christmas holidays. Sometimes the use by fishers and pastoralists conflicted as occurred at Sandy Cape, near Jurien Bay, in the 1950s:

*Around this later period crayfishermen also began to use it as a camping place in so doing found themselves in conflict with some of the [pastoralists].*¹³

While most shacks settlements have an association with pastoralism and fishing, a few may have mining associations as noted by historian Bruce Baskerville:

*The settlement at Cliff Head developed as a place from which gypsum mined at Palm Tree Well during the 1950s or earlier and was shipped out in lighters waiting off shore – men camped at Cliff Head and near the mine site.*¹⁴

Baskerville also suggested that beekeepers, after whom Beekeepers Reserve on the Central Coast is named, may also have constructed shacks.¹⁵

The association between shacks settlements and Perth families is generally from the postwar period, including Wedge and Grey and to a lesser extent other Central Coast settlements to the north. An exception is the Naval Base Caravan Park located in the City of Cockburn just to the south of Perth City. It was established as a recreational and camping reserve for urban workers who built shacks there in the 1930s before car travel allowed travel to locations further afield (see Section 6.0).

Because of the closer settlement patterns in the southwest of the State associated with agricultural lands, the pattern of shack development is slightly different to the Central Coast pastoral areas where the towns were further apart. In general, and probably because of the closer settlement pattern that on the Central Coast, the camp and shack sites in the south and southwest have been

absorbed into town development or in some cases were managed from an early date by the local town-based shire, such as the Peaceful Bay cottages managed by Denmark Shire.

3.3.2 Historic Locations of Shack Settlements

While shack settlements have been located from Esperance in the south of Western Australia through to Point Quobba (Blowholes), near Carnarvon, in the north, the majority of shacks were located at several locations in the south/southwest and on the Central Coast between Lancelin (110km north of Perth), and Dongara (south of Geraldton). There were also several fishing related groups of shacks on islands off the coast: crayfishers shacks on the Abrolhos Islands off Geraldton and fishing shacks on islands in the Dampier Archipelago near Karratha and Roebourne further to the north (see Figure 3.1 for the locations of some of these shack settlements).

In the Great Southern Region shack settlements were located along the coast in or near Esperance, Albany and near Denmark at Peaceful Bay. In the South West region huts and shacks were established in what later became D'Entrecasteaux National Park by pastoralists shepherding stock and also in groups at the mouth of the Donnelly River (accessible only by boat) with another large group at Windy Harbour. As noted above, shacks were also built at Cape Naturaliste and Dunsborough in this region.

On the Central Coast shacks were established by pastoralists from inland farming areas such as Moora and were located in many groups, reaching as far as Horrocks, 2 hours north of Geraldton in the Shire of Northampton. The group at Horrock is interesting as a tight village grouping of shacks that has resisted removal on the basis that Horrock (originally a convict) granted/provided some of his land 'for the enjoyment of the local community'. Farmers would bring their families at Christmas and then return to the farm.¹⁶

3.3.3 The WA Squatter Policy

While some more specific details of shack removals are provided in the sections below, it is useful at this point to outline the development of shack policy in Western Australia.

In 1968 the State Government set up a committee that eventually produced the Stokes report of 1970, recommending the removal of shacks.¹⁷

In 1980 an amendment to the Land Act 1933 was enacted to allow for shack removals on public lands and a Government Position Paper of 1983 titled Coastal Planning and Management in WA, contained broad policy on coastal management and confirmed this position on shacks.¹⁸

In 1987 after a series of reviews, agreement was reached between the State and local government authorities, and in 1988 it was resolved that a State-wide policy be developed. The process of removing shacks started between Perth and Dongara. This policy became known as the Squatter Policy and was confirmed by the State Labor Government in 1989.¹⁹ The stated objective of the Squatter Policy was: 'To control the establishment of any new unlawful dwellings (squatters shacks) on coastal Crown land and facilitate the removal of existing dwellings (shacks) over a six year period.'²⁰ The Squatter Policy does not apply to vested lands—that is land specifically vested in a local government authority—or DEC lands such as Donnelly River and Dampier Archipelago.

From 1989, 678 shacks were removed from the coast north of Perth in accordance with the Squatter Policy (see Section 3.4 for details).²¹ This number is in addition to the shack removals that started in the late 1960s on the Central Coast in Dandaragan Shire and in Gingin Shire in the 1980s.

In 2010 the WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs held an Inquiry on Shack Sites in WA and released its report in April 2011. The findings of this report is discussed further in relation to comparative assessments in Section 7.4.1. However, in summary, it recommended the removal of the shack settlements of Wedge and Grey.

In its submission to this Inquiry, the Heritage Council of WA stated that it recognised the 'unique cultural landscape of squatter shacks and their innovative use of recycled materials and unconventional methods.' However it continued that:

The 1989 [Squatter] policy has made it difficult to conserve examples of this distinctive aspect of Western Australia's history as registration would be contrary to a government policy in relation to illegal occupation of crown land. ²²

The Heritage Council goes on to state that after extensive negotiations three shacks were to be conserved by Dandaragan Shire at Sandy Cape but subsequent vandalism led to their removal.

3.3.4 Historic Pathways to Removal or Retention

The historic 'pathways' that shack settlements have followed in WA can be summarised in the following ways:

1. the shack settlements have 'morphed' into towns, such as Lancelin and Jurien, with the shacks mostly disappearing, being replaced with more standard dwelling types;
2. the shack settlements remaining as entities were those where leases were given fairly early on (for example Peaceful Bay (Denmark Shire) and Naval Base (City of Cockburn))—these shacks are generally becoming, to different degrees, upgraded as cottages and used as second or even first homes;²³
3. the shacks remain but with changed use, or potentially changed use, to provide for controlled tenure and use rights or shared public access and use, such as in National Parks (D'Entrecasteaux National Park) or for fishing clubs or for residents of the shire (Dampier Archipelago);²⁴
4. the shack settlements that were located near towns were removed as the town developed (eg Sandy Cape near Jurien, or the settlements were totally removed by local Shires as a result of the 1989 Squatter Policy (as in the case of the Irwin, Coorow and Carnamah Shires on the Central Coast); or
5. the shack settlements remain but are under threat of removal—there are only a few remaining in this category including Wedge and Grey and the smaller Blowholes/Quobba group, near Carnarvon.

Section 3.4 below provides more detail of the history of the shack settlements in the Central Coast region and the removal of most of these in the 1990s. Section 6.0 provides a comparative assessment of the shack settlements that remain in Western Australia (as well as elsewhere in Australia).

3.4 Shacks on the Central Coast Region

Sweeping bays, sandy beaches, imposing dunes and limestone cliffs and headlands form the coastline of this region of Western Australia (see Figure 3.1). From the south to the north, this

c170km long coast represents the Shires of Gingin (the towns of Seabird, Ledge Point and Lancelin), Dandaragan (the towns of Cervantes and Jurien), Coorow (the towns of Leeman and Greenhead), Carnamah and finally Irwin (the town of Dongara) and beyond that the City of Geraldton. As noted below, most of the shacks in this region have been removed, apart from those at Wedge and Grey, and those leased to professional fishers.

The history of this coast and the shack settlements that were dotted along it are fundamentally connected to the underlying geomorphology of sandy soils with low fertility that are not suited to intensive cropping and pastoralism. The Aboriginal understanding and seasonal use of this landscape was not well understood by the settlers (see further description in Section 3.5.2 below). While the inland areas of this region have been used more effectively for pastoralism, the coastal areas remained largely unused well into the twentieth century, with very low populations and very little in the way of road networks particularly in relation to access to the coast itself.

Pastoralists first moved stock to and from areas south to the area first known as Champion Bay (that later became Geraldton), using a stock route that passed through the coastal plain of the Dandaragan area and benefiting from various wells and soaks that were also an essential part of the Aboriginal landscape and supported their seasonal movement patterns. The later Midland Road connected the small pastoral inland towns, such as Moora and Three Springs, and avoided the coast. It was only in the postwar period with the development of the Brand Highway to service the North West shelf gas fields that a road came anywhere nearer the coast.²⁵

From the early twentieth century onwards, farming families from inland towns such as Three Springs, Perenjori and Carnamah travelled directly west to the coast to camp following the end of harvest during the summer school holidays. The trip to the coast was very demanding:

We drove out in a truck from the farm at Marchagee and camped at Three Springs (the springs not the town) for the first night, then went over the limestone the next day. We camped under the trees at Billy Goat Bay.²⁶

As this practice continued year after year people began to construct shacks to use as accommodation. The practice is known to have occurred at many points along the coast as far as Northampton, north of Geraldton.²⁷ The progression from camping to shack construction is described by a former shack owner:

My father and our family first went to Green Head in 1929, the year I was born. I have been on many camping trips since. We built out there in 1960 after some years in a caravan.²⁸

When this coast was occupied during the Second World War by defence coastwatchers, some tracks were established and existing tracks were augmented with gravel. Telephone lines were also constructed and in one case this led to postwar appropriation that links these history phases:

A telephone line was extended from the coastal lookouts across the lakes to the Headquarters in Three Springs. [After the war] I used my Land Rover to snap off some of the posts, then loaded them into my vehicle to use as corner posts on my shack. ²⁹

While fishing was a key recreation pursuit for pastoral families:

The development of the rock lobster industry in the 1940s resulted in a new form of shack dweller at settlements along the coast. Living close to the fishing grounds was important as it reduced transportation and other costs. Crayfishermen were responsible for the construction of many shacks in the Shires of Carnamah and Irwin, with the men based mainly in Geraldton and Dongara, but occasionally also Perth and Fremantle. ³⁰

The shack settlements on the Central Coast sometimes evolved into formal town sites. Like other coastal towns such as Lancelin, Ledge Point and Cervantes, Leeman and Greenhead emerged as squatter settlements and later became formalised towns.³¹

Many of the shacks constructed in the northern part of the Central Coast region were associated with families from local towns such as Moora and Dongara, with a smaller number from Perth. Around half of the shacks in the shires of Coorow, Carnamah and Irwin were owned and used by professional fishers.

In the first decades after the Second World War, shire councils on the Central Coast were not active in managing the shacks. Some farmers who were also councillors benefited from shack squatting by providing supplies and fuel, and loaning trucks and bulldozers, etc.³² However, by the 1960s the shires started to act on reports from building inspectors on health issues. The rapid growth in shack numbers was also associated with better roads and 4WD vehicles becoming more available. In 1965 there were 11 shacks in Carnamah Shire and by 1970 there were 30. In Coorow Shire there were 115 in 1970 (28 occupied by fishermen and 83 by holiday makers) and by 1973 there were 150.³³

The first shack removals were at Hangover Bay and Kangaroo Point in c1968 by Dandaragan Shire. In 1980 legislation was introduced to enable removal of squatters from public lands (see Section 3.3.3). Subsequently, the coast of the Shire of Gingin was cleared of shacks in the early 1980s.

In the mid-1990s shacks were removed from the shires of Coorow, Carnamah and Irwin. A comprehensive report on the shack settlements on the shacks in these shires was completed in 1995/96 that indicated there were a total of 514 shacks in the three shires. 193 shacks were located in Irwin Shire in five nodes (varying from 15-61) and 191 shacks in Carnamah Shire in 6 nodes (varying from 14-59). Some 130 shacks had been removed in Coorow Shire at two locations in 1994 (Billy Goat Bay and Lipfert Island/Little Anchorage). The shacks in Carnamah and Irwin shires were removed after this 1995/96 report.

Some 40 shacks have been retained at Cliff Head near Dongara in Irwin Shire for use by professional fishers. The removal of the shacks in these shires had a domino effect with a number of shack owners moving to Wedge and Grey. Further discussion of the more recent history of shack management including the Squatter Policy, is provided in Section 3.3.3.

3.5 Local Historical Context: Dandaragan Shire

3.5.1 Introduction

The shack settlements of Wedge and Grey are located in Dandaragan Shire, within the Central Coast region. The Shire's boundary extends for approximately 60km along the coast from just north of Lancelin to north of Jurien and a similar distance inland, with the town of Dandaragan located approximately 35km inland from the coast. The towns of Cervantes and Jurien Bay are located north of Grey (see Figure 3.1).

The characteristics of the Central Coast landscape are a key to appreciating Aboriginal people's lifestyle, and it also determined 'where and why' stock routes, pastoral properties and rural service towns were established. This landscape is also the fundamental reason for the historical isolation of this part of the coast, its very slow development, and a key factor in the establishment of shack settlements. The more productive raised plateau area and less productive coastal plain area resulted in the small towns being established inland, and meant that until recently the Shire

answered to the pastoralists and not to 'newcomers' such as the fishermen who established the small coastal towns after the war.

This landscape history is addressed here as three related phases: differing human responses to this landscape, the resultant pattern of occupation and settlement, and the recent use of the coast as a 'resource'.

3.5.2 Differing Human Responses to the Landscape

The title of the history of Dandaragan Shire, *Plateau, Plain and the Coast* aptly describes how the different landscapes in the Shire have strongly affected its history. These different landscapes have also had a direct bearing on the establishment of Wedge and Grey.

In geological terms the Shire is located within the large sedimentary Perth Basin. To the east of the Shire separated by the Darling Fault Line is the far older Yilgarn block area of granite and gneissic rocks. Once below sea level, this sedimentary basin was uplifted to create the plateau area and when the sea level receded it left a coastal plain that was subject to a process of laterisation, resulting in a sandy plain that varies from 40km wide in the south of the shire to 10km wide in the north. There is a strong difference in the soils and natural vegetation of the plateau and plain; the plateau is naturally infertile but can be treated with fertilisers whereas the coastal soils could not.

Aboriginal peoples from the Yued nation, part of the broader group of Noongar people, occupied the southern part of this area with people from the Amangu nation living further to the north.³⁴ The different landscapes in the area resulted in a resource-influenced seasonal movement of Aboriginal people from the plateau to the coast around spring, and from the coast to the plateau in autumn. Water holes and soaks were key parts of their landscape and connected by regularly used tracks.

The locality of Wedge Island is known as Wetj Boya to the Yued people. An action plan prepared for Wetj Boya in September 2007 describes the strong Yued associations with this locality with evidence including three registered sites, oral testimony and published historic records.³⁵ The Wetj Boya report describes the traditional use of flora and fauna in this landscape in the different seasons and the importance of water holes, springs and soaks such as the nearby Bullfrog Well. The later graziers relied on the Yued people for knowledge of water sources and areas to avoid because they contained poisonous plants, and a number of the Yued worked for these graziers minding stock and tracking dingoes.³⁶ Several of the shacks at Wedge are the permanent residence of Yued Native Title claimants.

Aboriginal associations in the immediate vicinity of Grey have apparently not been documented. However, the Department of Indigenous Affairs have 15 identified sites within the Nambung National Park boundary which include camp sites, artefact scatters and ceremonial sites. In the past Aboriginal groups frequently visited this area, especially in summer for its food resources and fresh water wells. Caves which are found in the nearby area and the limestone ridge have both cultural and spiritual significance.³⁷ One reference has been cited that claims 'there used to be middens on the point'.³⁸

The early settler response to this challenging landscape was, to initially at least, treat it as a transitional landscape through which to pass to reach better pasture to the north. Stock routes and wells were the first artefacts of this response followed by 'peacocking' land near the water sources to shut out the smaller players. The importance of the water to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in a landscape that is largely devoid of permanent water is underscored by the name of the

shire that is taken from Dandaraga Spring which means 'good kangaroo country' and was a key point on the first 1850s stock route through the area.

3.5.3 Patterns of Occupation and Settlement

The initial settler responses to this landscape were then reinforced in the settlement pattern established in the later nineteenth century and continued well into the twentieth century. The pastoral operations were marginal and the population of the rural towns small. Because of these factors transport infrastructure was minimal and where it existed was located inland near the rural settlements.

Dandaragan Shire was established as the Dandaraga Road Board in 1890 and the first roads were tracks that followed Aboriginal paths. By 1918 only 95 miles (150km) of roads had been made in the Shire. This road pattern has been a major limitation on settlement; the Midland Road via Moora was the only substantial road until the Brand Highway was constructed in the 1970s. When the Midland Railway was constructed in 1887 it also acted to draw development and infrastructure towards the inland and away from the coastal area. Jurien Bay had started as a port, but when the railway started inland:

removing the necessity to develop Jurien Bay, the railway effectively reinforced the isolation of the Coastal Plain. Poison plants, deficient soils, a shortage of water and a rugged coastline ensured that the area remained largely unoccupied.³⁹

The population of the Shire was also very small: in 1900 the population stood at 280 but fell during the Second World War to 166 in 1945 (although there were up to 20,000 troops in the area) and was only 314 in 1955. This theme of a small permanent population and large transient population is also reflected in the figures from 1970 that the permanent population was only 10% of the seasonal population that was increasingly located on the coast.⁴⁰

3.5.4 The Coast as an Escape and as a Resource

The third phase in Dandaragan Shire history saw a major shift in settlement patterns towards the coast; while of an exploratory nature in the interwar period and during the Second World War this pattern developed rapidly after the war with the establishment of the professional fishing industry along the coast and a large increase in recreational use.

Ironically, the isolation of the coast became a threat during the Second World War as Jurien Bay was seen as both remote and a good landing place that could be used by the Japanese. Defence infrastructure, such as tracks and wells, later encouraged more visitation to this coast.

In the immediate post-war period, people began to use the various tracks, which had been blazed during military activities, to discover secluded fishing and recreational 'spots', one of the most popular being the beach shack assembled by two farmers, Bob Michael of Piawanning, and Jim Milner of Yerecoin, at a place known as Hangover Bay. In the meantime, fishing boats, which had operated off the Dandaragan coastline since the early 1900s, began to appear in increasing numbers. By the early 1950s, in fact, fishing boats were using the Dandaragan coastline as an anchorage for crayfishing as that industry gradually moved north of Fremantle.⁴¹

As the western rock lobster industry grew rapidly, fishers' camps and shacks were established. This led to the gazettal of several town sites along the Central Coast during the late 1950s into the 1960s, some of which became townships, Jurien in 1956 and then Cervantes:

Cervantes was gradually opened up, a situation which was officially recognised by the Department of Lands and Surveys, when, in 1962, 505 hectares of Nambung Reserve was excised in order to establish a townsite to accommodate people engaging in the crayfishing industry.⁴²

Several were never properly established, such as Grey, and became popular squatter sites.

The coastal settlement pattern is very interesting, with the camp sites established by pastoralists becoming shack sites and with a later layer of professional fishing interests. In some cases such as Jurien Bay there was an evolution to a town settlement:

Jack Ward from Namban, had, like many others in the region, used Sandy Cape as a holiday base, until the increasing use of a small boat for fishing drew him to Jurien Bay, with its protected waters and surrounding reef. To begin with Ward and his family simply camped on the beach ... By 1951 the Wards had built a boatshed, behind which they gradually constructed a more permanent beach house on a site that was enhanced by the presence of an excellent water supply.⁴³

In the late 1950s the Road Board approved the reuse and conversion of trams into dwellings but this was later rescinded.

By contrast is the example of the Sandy Cape site which had been utilised since the 1920s by Dandaragan locals (see Figure 3.9) and which by the 1950s was characterised by shacks. Around this period, crayfishermen also began to use it as a camping place, and in so doing found themselves in conflict with local families resulting in local Councillors seeking legal advice to try and remove the fishermen. While it did not happen at that time, the shacks at Sandy Cape were later removed.⁴⁴

The historic tensions between the Dandaragan Shire and new coastal dwellers probably has a number of roots. The Dandaragan Road Board was among the lowest, if not the lowest, revenue generating road board in the state. At the same time, it was responsible for an area which, if not the largest in the state, was certainly larger than most road boards in south-western Australia; today Dandaragan Shire has approximately 30% of its area reserved for conservation purposes, or as unalienated Crown Land, which constitutes one of the largest proportions of public land of any shire in the state.⁴⁵ There was a belief on the part of the rural sectors of the Shire that they should not have to pay for the development of the coastal towns.⁴⁶ In addition, a large number of seasonal residents in the shire who were squatters did not pay rates.

Equally, as the coast settlements and towns developed there was a sense of inequity on the part of coast township residents as only a small number of councillor positions represented the coastal wards:

there was a strong feeling among those people who lived on the coast that, with only two of the nine positions, they were inadequately represented, given that the majority of the ratepayers in the Shire lived in either Jurien or Cervantes.

It was, in fact, symptomatic of what was happening elsewhere on the coast. On the one hand, fishermen and holiday makers who resided on the coast, generally for only part of the year, either as property owners or as squatters, had done so largely free of interference. On the other hand, the Road Board had, until the late 1950s, little need to supervise the coast or for that matter to enforce by-laws. The large scale developments that were about to begin, however, spelt the end to this status quo: the State through the agency of the Board was obliged to intervene and the fishermen as long term 'free agents' naturally resisted this intervention.

The Shire history notes with a sense of irony that the rural community whose forebears had been squatters were now acting to remove the new squatters on the coast. ⁴⁷

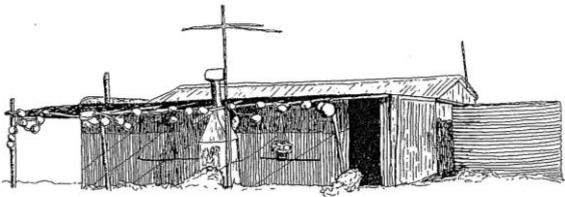
When in 1995 unvested reserves were created for the Wedge and Grey settlements which were placed under the management and control of CALM, Dandaragan Shire had removed other shacks along its coast. The Shire continues to oppose the shack settlements. While its Local Government Heritage Inventory has several sites associated the establishment of the crayfishing industry and the site of the former Sandy Cape settlement, no settlements or individual shacks are included.

In 2000, a Masterplan was prepared for Wedge and Grey by CALM with limited consultation with stakeholders. The Masterplan did not assess the heritage significance of the shack settlements or consider their retention.

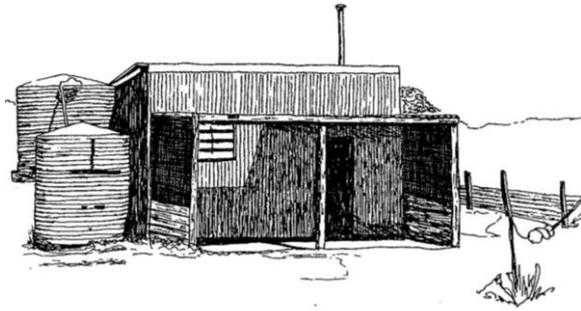
The last major reflection of the move to the coast has been the construction of the Indian Ocean Drive as an explicit recognition of the importance of recreation to the state economy including revenue from the 'grey nomads'. Completed in stages, the last section of the Indian Ocean Drive was completed in September 2010 and its long-term impact on the shack settlements and coastal environment generally is yet to be gauged.



Figure 3.1 The location of shack settlement sites in the central and southern regions of Western Australia, the local Shires within the Central Coast region where many shack settlements have been removed, and the routes of the Midlands Highway, the Brand Highway and the recent Indian Ocean Drive. (Source GML text over Geographica Atlas)



3.2 Shack in Shire of Irwin, now removed (Source: Survey of Squatters Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia)



3.3 Shacks in the Shire of Carnamah, now removed (Source: Survey of Squatters Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia)



3.4 Shacks in the Shire of Coorow now removed (Source: Survey of Squatters Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia)



3.5 Caravans, a popular form of accommodation on the Central Coast



3.6 Railway goods wagon converted to accommodation.



3.7



Figure 3.8 Truck Camping, 1940



Figure 3.9 Camping at Sandy Cape, late 1940s.⁴⁸

3.6 Historical Overview of Wedge

This historical overview is structured around the phases in the development of Wedge and also around some key themes reflected in its history. An analysis of the development of the physical form of the settlements and the design and changes to shacks over time is provided in Section 5.0.

3.6.1 Phases of Historical Development

Four phases can be discerned in the development of both Wedge and Grey. These phases have blurred boundaries, apart from the impact of the 1989 Squatter Policy and management of the unvested reserves after 1995 by CALM/DEC. These phases relate to:

- the postwar establishment of shacks, building on early use before or during the war, primarily by professional fishers (including postwar migrants) but also recreational fishers and families from Perth;
- the rapid growth of recreation use in the 1970s, with continuing professional fishing use;
- the decline of professional fishing use in the 1980s and increased recreation use; and
- the cessation of new shack construction and its aftermath following the Squatter Policy.

Establishment by Pastoralists and Fishers: Late 1950s and 1960s

Colin Wedge, a descendant of an original pastoral land owner JE Wedge, recalls that Wedge Island was visited by pastoralists who had leases in adjoining hinterland and had wells for watering stock: Bullfrog, Jack Stories, Reservoir and Rock Wells.⁴⁹ In 1933 JE Wedge's son Bob (WR) Wedge purchased Caro and developed a beef cattle business with his brother Fred (FA) Wedge. Located on the coastal plain, Caro included a swamp area that was important to Aboriginal people. It was during the 1930s that Bob Wedge established a shack at Wedge Island.⁵⁰

The first access by motor vehicle to Wedge was in 1937 from the Wedge property of Mimigarra located to the east.⁵¹ During the Second World War, the Army occupied a large section of this coastline. Coastwatchers located at Wedge constructed a phone line that connected Wedge, Green Islets (Grey) and Ledge Point to Mimigarra Homestead and Dandaragan in the interior.

By the mid-1950s, the Wedge family held one of only three pastoral properties on the coastal plain in the Dandaragan region. Ian Vaughan, who later built a shack, first went to Wedge in late 1950s as a stockman with a droving team that camped just south of the army area, planting Tuart trees (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) at this spot for shade.⁵² Although their original Wedge Island shack had been removed by the Army at the end of the war, the Wedge family re-established a shack at Wedge.⁵³

The postwar boom in the crayfishing industry is also associated with the Second World War, as apparently US servicemen in WA encouraged an interest in this crustacean. From 1946 crayfishing started at Wedge and this included postwar migrant fishers. In 1953 live crays were transported to Cervantes and surrounds by tracks via Mimigarra and the Phone Line track to Lancelin (established as the name implies during the war for the phone line used by coastwatchers).⁵⁴ Later re-occupation by the military of the training area south of Wedge also resulted in increased access and visitation.

With the establishment of a military training area to the south after the Second World War, a road was built from Mimigarra Road westward to Edwards Well just north of Lancelin; this was called

Sappers Road. The Wedge family saw an opportunity to connect it to their property Woolka and this road was then used by lots of people wishing to go to Wedge Island. It became known as Beacon Road.⁵⁵

Before the road was built to Lancelin, access to Wedge was from the town of Gin Gin and across the Moore River; Ross Robinson recalled that it usually took 2 hours, there being no private 4WD vehicles then. On a particularly rough section of the track it was common to see a snake and this spot gained the name 'Snake Gully'.⁵⁶ There is also a well along the track, claimed to have been a well associated with the Benedictines who had established at New Norcia.⁵⁷ Following the pastoralists and professional fishers, non-professional fishers started to visit Wedge. Alan Egan's association is typical of how the place evolved.

*In the mid-1950s he set out to find a good fishing spot. At that time, there was only one building at Wedge Island, and only one cray fisherman was operating from there. Soon after the initial visit, Alan Egan took along a few fishing mates. The fishing was so good at Wedge Island that they decided to build a shack, primarily to house the boat. It was a case of the boat or the people in the shack. It was very rudimentary with an earthen floor and candles for lighting. The shack necessarily developed over time.*⁵⁸

Government file records of 1962 state that there were three professional fishermen's shacks at Wedge but it is not clear if there were other shacks there at that time.⁵⁹

Ross Robinson from Perth has vivid recollections of his first visit to Wedge:

*The big sand hill, five tents and two shacks under construction. These dwellings were rudimentary and it was a couple of years before tents were replaced with shacks and corrugated iron roofs from which water was gathered and were made suitable for wives and partners of fishermen.*⁶⁰

Robinson said that when he first built at Wedge there were five professional fishers shacks located in Snake Gully and that he built further north to not disturb the sleep of these fishers who started early each morning; other beach fishers also built on the frontal dune north of the where the professional fishers had shacks.⁶¹

*It was heaven on earth as far as a spear fisher was concerned – I stayed with Al Bacon, a crayfisher, but later built my own shack in 1966 to leave the crayfishers alone.*⁶²

An aerial photograph from 1956 (see Section 5.1.1) shows tracks into and through Wedge but does not clearly show the number of shacks. However, the settlement was firmly established by the end of this period; a 1969 aerial photograph shows a number of shacks around the southern end of Wedge behind the south dune and at the southern end of the main beach dune.

In 1968, Alan Egan and another man Vic Davis built separate shacks on the beach front for their families. The Egan shack, which still exists was the northern most on the beach at that time and was constructed of tractor packing casing timbers with a corrugated iron roof, using driftwood for roof timbers (see Figures 3.12 and 3.13 of the first and second Egan shacks).⁶³

It was during this period that the Wedge Island community formed a Wedge Island Progress Association (WIPA); it was established in 1968 and incorporated in 1972.⁶⁴ This was a significant step in formalising their presence as a community, becoming more organised and tackling the fundamental needs of providing potable water and disposing of waste. For example, the community investigated sources of bore water on the shell flats east of the settlement to augment the water collected off roofs. The toilet systems were originally 'long drop' holes but after health scares and visits from the local health inspectors, septic toilet systems were constructed and the original

rubbish tip covered and a new tip started further to the east. The need for community action on toilet and waste disposal was one the key motivations for the establishment of WIPA.

Holiday Makers and Fishers: 1970s

During the 1970s Wedge was used as a base for professional crayfishers who built shacks (mainly in the southern area of Wedge) but was also increasingly visited by Perth families. What typically started as fishing trips by groups of men in the 1960s became increasingly family-oriented extended holidays.

In 1971 Government files (noted above) recorded 54 shacks at Wedge: 40 recreational shacks and 14 fishermen's shacks.⁶⁵

With the construction of a road to Lancelin, access to Wedge was then via a track that skirted the military training area entered several kilometres before Lancelin, making the trip a little easier (but by no means easy). This may have encouraged increased family visitation to Wedge.

While air photos from 1972 (see Section 5.2.1) show that there were more shacks present than in 1969, it was not until the end of the 1970s that the overall form of the Wedge shack settlement was defined.

Typically, the process of siting and building a shack was a process that started with camping or being invited to stay with a friend or family member in a shack. After time there would be a general invitation to construct a shack—often with the assistance of neighbours:

Being such a remote area you relied on everyone – the day I started my shack six people came and helped – you can't explain the camaraderie.⁶⁶

In this period Dandaragan Shire had started in 1968 to remove shacks at other places and some people moved to Wedge from these shack settlements. Greg Simpson's father and grandfather had shacks at Long Point, Whitfords and at Kangaroo Point before moving to Wedge as these other settlements were demolished.⁶⁷

Holiday Use Dominates: 1980s

Changes to the professional fishing system in the 1980s meant that less crayfishers were residing at Wedge. Fishers' shacks were quickly purchased by Perth families who were visiting in far greater numbers in this phase as a result of a desire to find economical holiday accommodation (at a time when holiday homes in the vicinity of Perth were sought after and comparatively expensive) and aided by the increased availability of 4WD vehicles at this time.

With the removal of shacks at Didie Bay and Narrow Neck in 1986 to make way for the Naval Bombardment impact range, a number of shacks were apparently relocated to Wedge, with one becoming the present Gun Club (a community building).⁶⁸

The 1980s saw an intensification of development, reinforcing the overall form of Wedge, with development spilling over into areas to the east of the central dune area. Despite this, the aerial photographs indicate that more of the settlement area is vegetated than in the 1950s and 60s.

Post 1989 Squatter Policy: 1990s to today

Following the adoption by the WA Government of the Squatter Policy in 1989 and the transfer of the management of Wedge and Grey to CALM in 1994/95, no new shack construction was permitted in

Wedge. However, with the increasing use of 4WD vehicles making access easier, the number of holiday visitors grew significantly—and by 1997 an estimated 6,000 holiday makers were using Wedge over the summer holidays.⁶⁹ Today, WIPA estimates that 10,000 people use the 350 shacks at Wedge annually, with up to 2,500 there at any one time over peak holiday periods such as Easter.

In 1995 when CALM took over, shack owners were initially given a 6-year lease; this has been extended on several occasions. Shack owners are required to maintain the shacks and the overall landscape. While shack transfer is not provided for under lease conditions, it is clear that sale or transfer of shacks still occurs.

While the nature of the community at Wedge has changed over time, the demographic range noted in previous sections remains. Professional fishers are still represented in the community, with the majority of shacks now being used by families from Perth. A recent change is that there are now few people, generally older, who live at Wedge on a semi-permanent basis. The Wedge community, through WIPA, has continued to actively fight to retain their lease holdings.

In 2001 the National Trust listed noted that there were five full season and one intermittent cray fishing boats operating from Wedge Island, with shacks providing accommodation for skippers and two crew for each boat. It is understood that in 2011 there were four cray fishing boats located at Wedge. In the longer term, the Western Australian Government has indicated that the professional fishers would be allowed to continue to operate, but that their on-shore accommodation would be relocated to an appropriate 'fishing development node'.⁷⁰

Since 2010 access has been vastly improved with the sealed Indian Ocean Drive to within 4.5km of Wedge, shortening the travel time from Perth to about 2 hours.



3.10 Wedge tents and shack probably viewed looking north from the south end, c1965. (Source Ross Robinson)



3.11 Wedge tents and shacks, c1965. (Source Ross Robinson)



Figure 3.12 Original Egan shack built in the 1950s in a family photo taken in 1964. The original section on the right also housed a fishing boat. Also in the photo is the family's first car a 1948 Standard Flying 8 that was converted for use as a beach buggy. (Source Terry Egan)

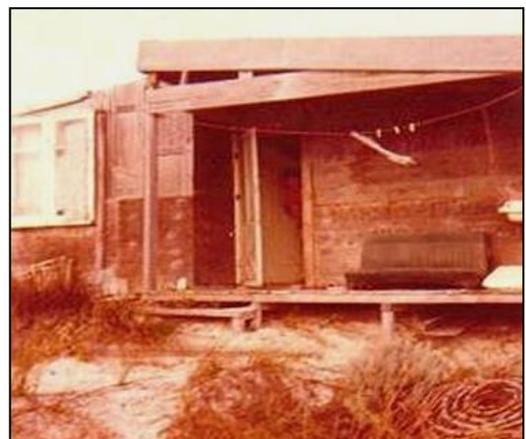


Figure 3.13 The second Egan shack constructed in 1968 from tractor packing casing timbers with a corrugated-iron roof, using driftwood for roof timbers. (Source Terry Egan)

3.7 Historical Overview of Grey

This historical overview is structured around an identification of the phases in the development of Grey and also around some key themes expressed in its history. An analysis of the development of the physical form of the settlements and the design and changes to shacks over time is provided in Section 5.0.

3.7.1 Phases of Historical Development

Establishment (Professional) Fishers Shacks: Late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s

As at Wedge, it is understood that local pastoralists camped at Green Islets (the earlier name for Grey), either while spelling cattle at the coast or having a holiday break. Similarly, during the Second World War coastwatchers were stationed nearby. Their camp was located in the valley behind the first sand dune and a telephone line connected them inland to *Caro* and to other coastal places such as Wedge, and to inland bases.⁷¹ Together these prewar and wartime activities created the tracks and use patterns for postwar settlement.

After the Second World War access to Grey was from the east via pastoral and coastwatcher tracks such as the track from *Caro* shown on a wartime topographic map.⁷²

In 1948/1949 a group of local farmers from Moora and the local butcher Andy Purser built a shack at Grey from packing crates with Masonite lining which carried farm implements as well as corrugated iron. However, this shack was destroyed in a storm in 1949. Andy Perser apparently built again in the 1950s and his brother Russell erected a Nissen Hut (a prefabricated wartime structure with a half round roof and wall combined). Storms also returned and in 1954 a big storm resulted in a few shacks 'going over the edge'—presumably this being at the edge of the bay where it is understood shacks were once located. One explanation is that dynamiting of the reef at Grey to improve boat access reduced the protection for the coast.⁷³

By the later 1950s it is understood that pastoral families from the region and at least one family from Perth were using Grey shacks for holiday recreation.⁷⁴ One of the first shacks constructed in the 1950s was a rendered brick shack built in 1953 by the Cavanagh family from Moora; a local bulldozing contractor created a track from 'Ernie's camp' 8km east of Grey. This brick shack is located close to the launching ramp and still houses many visitors to the area.

It was not long before the Dandaragan Road Board started to notice shacks developing at Grey. In February 1958 the Divisional Surveyor reported that several beach shacks existed on the coast, adjacent to Green Islets; something he believed should be prevented.⁷⁵ By November 1964, however, another officer had recommended that in view of the 'various squatter' improvements effected along the beach front, and because of enquiries for lots to be made available, that a townsite, to be titled Grey, be considered.⁷⁶ Grey was surveyed and gazetted as a town site in 1967/1968 (Figure 3.15); however, urban development at Cervantes meant that the 'formal' town of Grey did not develop. At least one shack was constructed in the 1970s in a location that was mindful of the lots on the gazetted town plan.⁷⁷

Most of the first shacks constructed at Grey were built by professional crayfishers. Many of the fishers who first visited Grey were postwar migrant fishers slept on their boats moored in the sheltered bay; however, a number of these fishermen started constructing shacks.⁷⁸ Kenny Walton was the first cray fisherman who built a shack at Grey around 1959.⁷⁹

In the late 1960s other holiday makers started to visit Grey often at the invitation of professional fishers. Fred Sharp's father came with a fisherman Frank O'Connor first in 1962 and built his own shack in 1966.

By the mid-1960s Grey had become a bustling settlement of around 50 shacks for fishermen, their families, and the deckhands required to run the cray boats, along with holiday makers from inland rural regions of Moora.⁸⁰

And for those working on the cray boats, they 'loved it when holiday makers came up' giving them a chance to socialise.⁸¹ With the shack removals at other places some shacks were relocated to Grey; for example, Shack 125 was moved in the 1960s from Flat Rock.⁸²

The Old Green Island Hotel that was originally built for crayfishers was later used as a place for meeting and drinking. During the 1960s and 1970s the people of Grey made their own fun, part of which was a 'mice and cockroach' racing track, which travelled far and wide, and after the races (sometimes during) it usually ended up in a 'blue' (fight). The local fisherman used to entertain themselves with 'card games' and some big money was won and lost. During this time the fishermen also built a 'club house' where the 'mice racing' could occur. A tennis court was also built and many a good get together was had at the 'club house' shack (now called 'Courtside') adjacent to the tennis court. Some of the fishermen joined to form a 'skeet shooting club'. Skeet shooting is normally done with clay targets and this was carried out on the flat in the bush south east of the now 'Pizza Hut', Shack 135.⁸³

An aerial photograph from 1954 (see Section 5.1.2) does not clearly show shacks although it does show access tracks. However by 1967 a large number of shacks were located around southern headland and beside the sheltered beach. A few shacks were starting to be constructed at the southern end of the northern beach that became known as 'Dalkeith'.⁸⁴

Holidays and Fishers: 1970s and 80s

Joy Davidson explains the very active fishing activities at Grey during the 1980s:

At this time (1970s) there were 13 cray boats working out of the bay with each skipper and deckies who all lived here at Green Islets. Two fuel tanks on the beach to refuel the boats. Four receiving depots for the cray catch and it was nothing unusual for the truck drivers to deliver cash to the skippers as part payment for the catch. On calm summer nights we'd be off to Kangaroo Point to put out the nets and catch mullet and herring and blue manna crabs and straight onto the BBQ for tea.⁸⁵

Fred Sharp has noted over 40 professional fishermen who have had shacks at Grey.⁸⁶

Evelyn Power explains the inter-connections between the professional fishers and the broader community:

My father went to Grey in the 1950s whilst working on the late Len McWhinnery's cray boat. (Our shack) G24 was originally where Len kept his craypots, where there was sufficient room for my parents to stay. When first visiting I can remember having to travel along a track from where the big water towers are in Cervantes. In later years having to travel past the Pinnacles then along a limestone track from Hangover Bay later on.⁸⁷

As she describes, access was possible from the north via Cervantes, and with the construction of the Brand Highway in the 1970s access to Cervantes would have improved. However, until the construction of the Indian Ocean Drive in recent years, access from Cervantes was via a long and difficult limestone track.

In 1975 and 1976, Dandaragan Shire made moves to evict owners of the Grey shacks and presumably the formation of the Grey Conservation and Community Association in 1976 was in response to this threat. Having taken this step towards organising the community, many Grey residents joined and helped on tip clean-ups, 'busy bee's' for beach cleaning, working on planting scrubs and plants on sand 'blow outs', and re-building and demolishing derelict shacks.⁸⁸

An aerial photograph from 1978 (see Section 5.1.2) shows that by the end of this period the overall current extent of Grey had been established.

Holidaymakers Dominate: 1980s

In the early 1980s the crayfishing industry became very capital intensive and there were reduced numbers of pot licences (in response to over-fishing) resulting in bigger boats; the result was that the last fishing family left Grey in 1982. However:

as the fishing families left, Perth families eagerly took up ownership of the buildings.⁸⁹

As shown on the aerial photograph of 1983 (Figure 5.15), most of the shacks currently in Grey had been constructed, except for one or two at the north end of the beach and inland in the southern area. This tallies with an unreferenced source that states that in 1984 there are 110 shacks at Grey.⁹⁰ In the aerial, infilling has occurred along the northern 'Dalkeith' beach in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as noted above:

There was a flurry of building along the northern bay referred to as Dalkeith, with another 50 or so shacks appearing...⁹¹

One of these shacks was G123 that was originally owned by Frank O'Connor (see above) who moved it to Grey from Garden Island near Perth in 1982 (when shacks were removed from there). It was purchased several owners later in 1987 by the Hill family who still own it—see a case study of their shack, G123, in Section 5.5. This pattern of owners (and in some cases the owners and their shacks) moving to Wedge and Grey following the removal of other shack settlements is a strong and recurring theme in this settlement history.

Another ongoing pattern is the intertwined relationship of associations between people associated with the fishing industry and other friendships over generations. The family of a shack owner in Gray were in the fishing industry and for some time stayed with a family at Grey. Following a return for social reasons in more recent years they purchased a shack for the enjoyment of their children and friends.⁹²

In January 1989, a fire started and burnt down three shacks and the community banded together to rebuild them.⁹³

In 1995 CALM became the manager of the unvested reserve of Grey.

Post 1989 Squatter Policy: 1990s to Today

While there has been a prohibition of shack construction with the Squatter Policy and the DEC management of Grey and Wedge, there still continues to be some transfer of shack ownership. Overall visitation has remained high with an estimated 5,000 holiday makers using Grey in 2010.⁹⁴ An article in the West Australian in 2009 suggested that up to 14,000 people use the shacks at Wedge and Grey annually.⁹⁵

In recent years there has been erosion and dune movement at the southern end of Grey that has consumed three shacks, leading to a concerted community effort that has now stabilised this dune. This work has included adding brush and/or seedlings to dunes and small primary dune blowouts and closing unwanted tracks by adding barricades (usually poles and branches). Scouting, school and university groups have continued to provide assistance in dune rehabilitation and restoration works and undertaken other research and studies in and around Grey.

There is a general Grey tidy-up to remove accumulated dropped cans and bottles and wind blown rubbish (plastic and paper) and also a sorting of waste at the tip into recyclables (eg iron, aluminium). Fighting fires has also been a community effort many times, and Grey now has its own fire tanker for this purpose.

Community building activities include the GCCA annual general meeting held around Easter that includes a social event. The GCCA also produces a community newsletter that is published approximately four times a year and there is a community website that also includes the newsletters. Other community endeavours have included accommodation and activities for several 'Canteen' weekends (kids with cancer and their siblings) including helicopter rides in 1997. The community has also run a fishing competition. Like the Wedge community, the Grey community has an annual ANZAC day dawn service.



3.14 Grey from the west 1997 (Source Margaret Sharp)



3.15 Part of the town plan of Grey gazetted in 1967/68 that did not develop. (Source Margaret Sharp)



Fig 3.16



Fig 3.17



Fig 3.18



Fig 3.19



Fig 3.20



Fig 3.21



Fig 3.22



Fig 3.23



Fig 3.24



Fig 3.25



Fig 3.26



Fig 3.27

Figure 3.16 to 3.27 (left to right) 3.16 Access track from the north prior to Indian Ocean Drive (Source Margaret Sharp); 3.17 The Town Hall one of the first shacks built at Grey located near the boat ramp; 3.18 Fishermen's co-op pick-up shed June 2011, now removed (Source Margaret Sharp); 3.19 Cray fishing boats at Grey 1967/1968 (Source Margaret Sharp); 3.20 Northern 'Dalkeith' beach in 1992 (Source Margaret Sharp); 3.21 Cockies shack after beach erosion; 3.22 Davidson shack pre fire; 3.23 Community group rebuilding the Davidson shack after the fire (source Margaret Sharp); 3.24 Davidson shack re-built (Source Margaret Sharp); 3.25 G54 1967 (Source Margaret Sharp); 3.26 Fred Sharp and friends 1969; 3.27 G54 1969 (Source Margaret Sharp)

3.8 Conclusions

The shack settlements of Wedge and Grey reflect broad historic patterns in the settlement of Western Australia, as well as specific phases in the history of the Central Coast region and Dandaragan Shire that evolved in response to a particular physical environment. Against this background the shacks strongly reflect the postwar phase of Western Australian history that resulted in the development of coastal areas and is associated with the growth of the fishing industry that included many postwar migrants, the boom in recreation time and access provided by the car.

There are five reasons suggested why shack settlement development reflects particular aspects in the pattern of Western Australian history: a cultural history of self-reliance and resistance to government control; a huge length of isolated and less economically productive coastal lands; the slow development of land use planning; the rapid postwar migrant intake; and the growth of recreation time and access to motor vehicles.

The processes leading to shack settlement development have been similar throughout Western Australia and generally reflect a historic layering that begins with seasonal work related visitation and later recreational camping by pastoralists. This pattern was picked up by regional town dwellers, as well as Perth residents for settlements closer at hand. In particular regions such as the Central Coast where Wedge and Grey are located, the settlement history is also associated with wartime occupation by coastwatchers and postwar professional crayfishing use.

Shack settlements are the outriders to coastal development. A number of historic pathways for the shack settlements to follow have been identified here, but in summary the three paths are either absorption and change by mainstream settlement processes, for them to remain standing apart as a counterpoint to formal settlement (such as Wedge and Grey); or for the shacks to be retained but with controlled tenure and use rights such as in several National Parks. The retention of professional fishing shack settlements are an exception to these pathways. The development of Western Australian policy on shacks has played out over three decades and is itself a key part of settlement history and community development. Because of substantial shack removals resulting from this policy, shack settlements have consolidated as shack settlement sites become increasingly rare.

Within the Dandaragan Shire area within which Wedge and Grey are located the shacks relate strongly to local historic themes/periods, including differing responses to the underlying natural landscape by Aboriginal people and the European settlers, and how this impacted later patterns of occupation and settlement prior to the belated postwar discovery of the coast as a recreational resource. These historic patterns have resulted in a degree of antipathy between the coast dweller and rural folk, exacerbated by lack of financial contribution to community infrastructure by shack owners.

The four phases in the development of Wedge and Grey are similar and relate to the postwar establishment of shacks primarily by professional fishers but also recreation fishers and families from Perth, the rapid growth of recreational use in the 1970s, the decline of professional fishing use in the 1980s and the cessation of new shack construction (but not maintenance) following the squatter policy. Within each shack settlement there are strong historic themes relating to aspects of getting to these (once) remote places, making a home, building a community and fighting to stay.

3.9 Endnotes

- 1 Davison, G, Hirst, J and MacIntyre S, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History: Western Australia*, p679.
- 2 Davison, G, Hirst, J and MacIntyre S, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History: Western Australia*, p679.
- 3 Don Newman pers com to Geoff Ashley October 2011.
- 4 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, *From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia* unpublished paper p2
- 5 Davison, G, Hirst, J and MacIntyre S, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History: Western Australia*, p679.
- 6 Davison, G, Hirst, J and MacIntyre S, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History: Western Australia* p678.
- 7 Don Newman pers com to Geoff Ashley October 2011.
- 8 Shack numbers based on those noted in the WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, and the Survey of Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Vol 1 by Midwest Heritage Incorporated 1995-96.
- 9 Heritage Council submission to Legislative Council Shack Site Inquiry
- 10 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, *From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia* unpublished paper, p2
- 11 McConnell M et al, 1993, *The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan* p144
- 12 Don Newman pers com to Geoff Ashley October 2011.
- 13 McConnell M et al, 1993, *The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan* p202
- 14 Baskerville, B, Submission to Regional Strategy 1994.
- 15 Baskerville, B, Submission to Regional Strategy 1994.
- 16 Don Newman pers com to Geoff Ashley October 2011.
- 17 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, *From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia* unpublished paper p6
- 18 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p10
- 19 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p15
- 20 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p15
- 21 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p17
- 22 Heritage Council submission to Legislative Council Shack Site Inquiry
- 23 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, *From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia* unpublished paper p2
- 24 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p142
- 25 Don Newman pers com to Geoff Ashley October 2011.
- 26 Fennell (questionnaire) quoted in *A Survey of Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Vol 1* by Midwest Heritage Incorporated 1995-96.
- 27 Heritage Council submission to Legislative Council Shack Site Inquiry
- 28 A Bateman letter 14 August 1995 in *A Survey of Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Vol 1* by Midwest Heritage Incorporated 1995-96.
- 29 Willock Clive, 1995, *A Survey of Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Vol 1* by Midwest Heritage Incorporated 1995-96.
- 30 Heritage Council submission to Legislative Council Shack Site Inquiry
- 31 *A Survey of Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Vol 1* by Midwest Heritage Incorporated 1995-96.
- 32 Don Newman pers com to Geoff Ashley October 2011.
- 33 *A Survey of Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Vol 1* by Midwest Heritage Incorporated 1995-96.
- 34 McConnell M et al, 1993, *The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan* p4.
- 35 Moore, Brendan, Tejh Wetj Boya (Wedge Island) Aboriginal Sites: An Action Plan September 2007, report prepared for the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) from National Heritage Trust funding.
- 36 Moore, Brendan, Tejh Wetj Boya (Wedge Island) Aboriginal Sites: An Action Plan September 2007, p24
- 37 Nambung National Park Plan of Management CALM p20
- 38 Fred Sharp history notes – claim not referenced.
- 39 McConnell M et al, 1993, *The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan* p101
- 40 Dandaragan Shire Municipal Inventory Chronology.
- 41 McConnell M et al, 1993, *The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan* p201
- 42 McConnell M et al, 1993, *The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan* p214

- 43 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p202
- 44 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p202
- 45 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p241
- 46 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p244
- 47 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p208-209
- 48 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p214
- 49 Colin Wedge, recollections October 2011
- 50 WA National Trust Listing history
- 51 Colin Wedge, recollections October 2011
- 52 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 53 WA National Trust Listing history
- 54 Colin Wedge, recollections October 2011
- 55 Colin Wedge, recollections October 2011
- 56 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 57 WA National Trust Listing history
- 58 WA National Trust Listing history
- 59 File 201/1961, p10, (either Dandaragan Shire of WA State Government department file)
- 60 Ross Robinson, My Recollections of Wedge Island no date
- 61 Ross Robinson, My Recollections of Wedge Island no date
- 62 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 63 WA National Trust Listing history
- 64 Ross Robinson, My Recollections of Wedge Island, no date
- 65 File 201/1961, p10, (either Dandaragan Shire of WA State Government department file)
- 66 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 67 Project on line survey response.
- 68 Ross Robinson, Draft submission to Government, no date; Survey ID 156 (Pentreath).
- 69 Roy Jones and H John Selwood From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia p6.
- 70 WA National Trust Listing history
- 71 Fred Sharp Grey Historical notes and Emergency Cervantes Topographic map
- 72 Cervantes Emergency Edition Map, no date.
- 73 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p6.
- 74 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p5.
- 75 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p217.
- 76 McConnell M et al, 1993, The Plateau, The Plain and The Coast; A History of Dandaragan p217.
- 77 Margaret and Fred Sharp pers com to the authors August 2011.
- 78 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p4.
- 79 Max & Norm Gazeley, Interview GI-2, 8 August 2011.
- 80 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p6.
- 81 Norm Gazeley, Interview GI-2, 8 August 2011.
- 82 Rob Teune pers com to project team 2011
- 83 Fred Sharp History notes
- 84 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p8.
- 85 Hand written notes to the project team from Joy Davidson (G76)
- 86 Fred Sharp, Grey History notes
- 87 Project Survey ID 321 (Evelyn Power).
- 88 Fred Sharp History notes
- 89 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p8.
- 90 Quoted by GCCA but likely to be CALM or Dandaragan Shire
- 91 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p8.
- 92 Illever survey response G75
- 93 Fred Sharp History notes
- 94 Soosie Jobson Generations of Grey Study 2010.
- 95 West Australian Newspaper, West Weekend Magazine, 14 February 2009 p9.

4.0 Shack Communities, Culture and Traditions

4.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the culture and traditions of the two shack communities to illuminate the relationships between each associated community and the place. It provides the basis for the assessment of social and community-held aesthetic values.

It also briefly explains the approach to assessing social significance and the scope of the community-based research undertaken.

4.2 Approach

The social significance of a place means *its strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons*. Research approaches to understanding social significance involve working with communities or cultural groups who have those associations, seeking to reveal any important meanings embodied in the place, its use, activities, traditions and knowledge, etc. Such research therefore crosses the boundaries between understanding tangible and intangible heritage (these concepts are defined in Section 1.4.5).

Key steps include investigating:

- people's association with a place—in each community there may be people with quite different associations. For Wedge Island and Grey it seems that there are:
 - long-term families—where their connections cross several generations;
 - more recent families (say 10 years or less);
 - fishing families - so those whose livelihood came from professional fishing; and
 - Aboriginal families (Wedge only) who have both traditional and contemporary shack associations.
- the meanings (or feelings) that arise from those associations; and
- what aspects of the place embody particular meanings—for example, their own shack, the whole shack area, the landscape as a whole, as well as uses, activities, traditions, relationships, etc.

This information then needs to be considered in terms of the specific heritage criteria and significance thresholds, and compared to similar places.

In relation to investigating the values held by the associated communities, two principal community-based research methods were adopted:

1. Individual perspectives: A survey or questionnaire, supplemented by several interviews.
2. Small group discussions.

In addition, a number of people submitted poems and stories/histories that they had written about their experiences at one of the shack settlements; often these were illustrated with photographs. A list of these is included in Section 9.0: References/Bibliography.

Responding to the survey

The questionnaire survey was designed to seek information from people who were unable to attend the on-site group discussions. It was available as an online survey and in hard copy, and all surveys were entered into an online survey tool to facilitate analysis. Appendix B documents the questions and responses.

A total of 319 responses were received through the survey, the majority through the online tool. Appendix B provides a summary of the responses to each survey question. Of these, 92 were from people associated with Grey and 227 from Wedge, notionally representing around 70% of each community¹. In terms of who responded, a majority (63.2%) were on behalf of a family and most were current shack 'owners' (64.7%), or regular or occasional shack users (32.3%).

Participating in the small group discussions

Six group discussions were held at Wedge and Grey shack settlements, three in each. Two were also held in Perth. Each followed a similar sequence of questions, although the numbers attending varied from a high of 22 through to the smallest group being six. A total of 101 people participated through the group discussions, 54 at Wedge and 47 at Grey.

To supplement the group discussions and enable wider participation, individual and small group interviews were held, five related to Wedge (12 participants) and two for Grey (three participants). There were also many opportunities for informal discussions with individuals and small groups during our visits to Wedge and Grey settlements.

A full list of the group discussions and interviews, with the location and number participating, is included in Appendix C.

4.3 The Wedge and Grey Communities Today

Both the Wedge and Grey shack settlements started as a base for fishing. Each settlement has grown over time and the nature of the community has changed from predominantly fishers to predominantly Perth-based weekenders. Each settlement has a few full-time residents.

Because of the nature of these settlements—and the extended families or networks of friends associated with each shack—there are a limited range of sources available to use as a basis for a demographic profile of these communities, or to demonstrate how they have changed over time. However, the survey undertaken for the present project assists to some extent, as does other recent research², including that undertaken for university research subjects and papers by academics.

4.3.1 Grey

The Grey community is described in a 2008 position paper as:

*...a living, vibrant community where the cultural and social experience of life at the shacks is the real heritage.*³

Research into the history of Grey also helps uncover the processes of community formation and change at Grey (see also Section 3.0):

As crayfishing expanding northwards along the coast, Grey was used first as a sheltered harbour and by the late 1950s there were several shacks lived in by fishing families and at least one occupied as a recreational shack. By the mid 1960s there were around 50 fishermen’s shacks and a few for holiday makers, and the settlement site was surveyed for a permanent township but with the establishment and growth of Cervantes, Grey did not become a town. The 1970s saw more people coming to Grey to build a holiday shack and by 1990 the settlement had reached its present size of 132 shacks. The population of fishing families progressively left as a result of changes in the fishing industry, with the last family departing in 1982. These shacks were taken over by holiday makers.⁴

In 1969 the Grey Conservation and Community Association Inc. was started, an important indicator of the formation of a community from a loosely connected group of households; the Association provided a representative body and a level of self-governance.⁵

A sample survey of the Grey community by Soosie Jobson in 2010 examined ten shacks, identifying the number of regular users and visitors, the generational profile and relationship to the owners, and occupational profile.⁶

Her sample revealed an average of 11.9 regular users per shack, and 32.2 visitors, averaging around 268 person nights per year. Extrapolated across the whole settlement, this suggests around 1430 regular users and 3860 visitors.

The chart below sourced from Jobson reveals an interesting generational structure. She compared the results of her analysis with the Shire of Dandaragan’s tourism statistics, noting that the Grey shack settlement receives around 9% of the Shire’s annual number of visitors (56,300).⁷

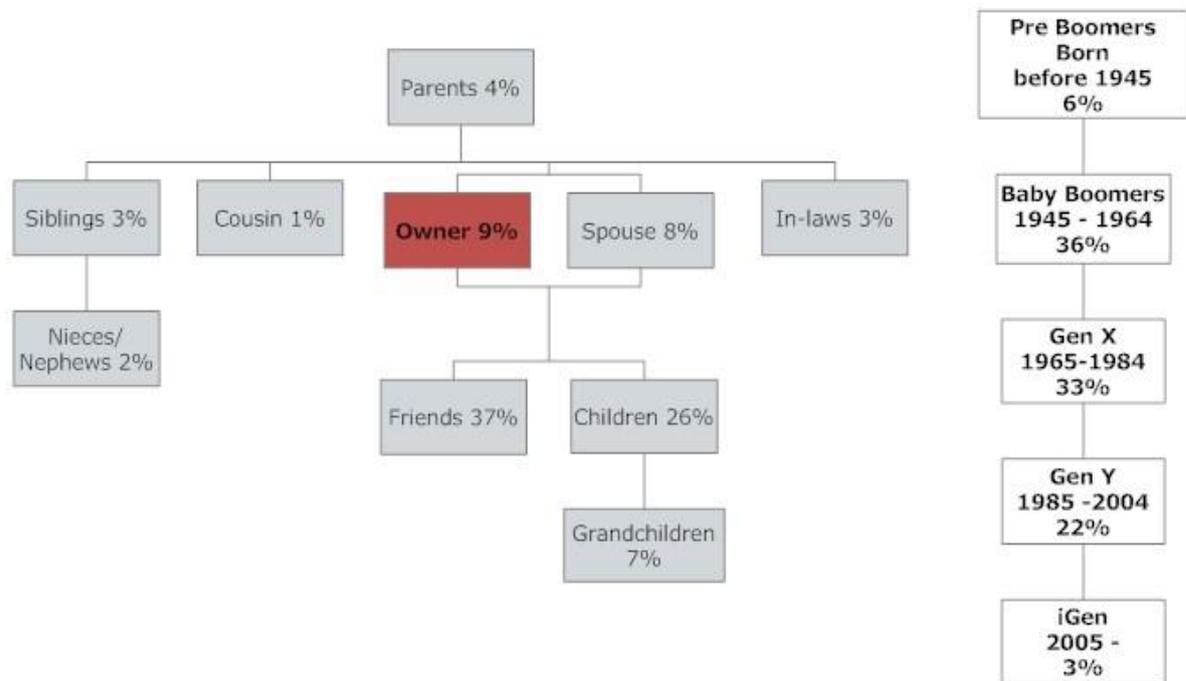


Figure 4.1 Generational structure. (Source: Jobson 2010)

In terms of occupations, she noted that the largest occupational category (using the Australian Standard Classification of Occupation Codes) was professionals and associated professionals (36%), followed by trades & related (27%), and clerical sales & service (19%).



Figure 4.2 Work categories chart. (Source: Jobson 2010)

Responses to the survey conducted as part of the present project offer an indicative demographic profile of the Grey community, based on the sample of 92 responses. The age profile of the Grey community is relatively similar to that of the WA community overall, given that those responding were primarily adults. Most live in the Perth region, typically in the northern suburbs⁸. This may reflect a change from the 1960s-80s when it is understood that more of the holiday-makers were farmers from the wheat belt region.

Nearly half (46%) of Grey respondents have been going to the shack settlement for more than 20 years as owners or family members, with another 28% for 11–20 years. On the other hand, 26% have been going to Grey for less than 10 years, indicating that new people continue to join the shack community, even in this period when the shack settlement has been under threat of demolition.

Asked about their own family connections to the shack 26% have connections going back three or more generations, 31% going back two generations, and 43% are the first generation with an association (although many of these families are likely to have children and grandchildren that may continue that connection into the future if the settlement remains).

In summary, the Grey community today comprises holiday makers, most from Perth, with a large number going to their shacks frequently. Many have a long family connection to Grey, going back two or more generations and a long personal association going back 10 or 20 years or more. They are broadly representative of the WA community in terms of age profile. The community is actively involved in managing the settlement area and providing some basic services through the Association, such as managing the tip and providing a volunteer fire brigade.

4.3.2 Wedge

Like Grey, Wedge started as a fishing settlement, with three shacks there in 1962; this had grown to 30 by 1968 and 54 by 1971, with 14 occupied by fishermen and 40 by holiday makers.⁹

WIPA estimates that 10,000 people use the 350 shacks at Wedge over the course of the year, with 2,500 there at peak holiday times. Four fishing boats operate out of Wedge, run by an extended family of professional rock lobster fishers; around a dozen shacks are occupied by families

associated with professional fishing families. A few retirees and disability pensioners have their primary home at Wedge with balance of the shacks occupied part-time by holiday makers.¹⁰

Responses to the survey conducted as part of the present project offer an indicative demographic profile of the Wedge community, based on the sample of 227 responses. Like Grey, the age profile of the Wedge community is relative similar to that of the WA community overall, given that those responding were primarily adults. Most live in the Perth region, typically in the northern suburbs¹¹.

Like Grey, 46% of Wedge respondents have been going to the shack settlement for more than 20 years, with another 30% for 11–20 years. On the other hand, 23% have been going to Wedge for less than 10 years, again indicating that new people continue to come into the community even in a period when the shack settlement has been under threat of demolition.

Asked about their own family connections to the shack 18% have connections going back three or more generations, somewhat less than at Grey, with 28% going back two generations, and 54% being the first generation with an association (although many of these families are likely to have children and grandchildren that may continue that connection into the future if the settlement remains). Comparing the two settlements, the connections at Grey generally go back more generations.

In summary, the Wedge community today still retains a combination of fishing families and holiday makers, the latter mostly from Perth. Like Grey, people go to their shacks frequently, with around 46% going there at least monthly, and another 23% going for 3–4 times a year. Many have a long family connection to Wedge, although generally not as long at Grey, but with a strong majority having a personal association with Wedge going back 10 or 20 years or more. They are broadly representative of the WA community in terms of age profile. The community is actively involved in managing the settlement area and providing some basic services through WIPA, such as volunteer fire protection and staffing the emergency centre.

4.4 Culture and Traditions

Shack settlements are places apart from the everyday experiences and city or suburban life. They have their own traditions and expressions of a distinctive culture. This section briefly documents some key aspects, drawing on the research of others and the data gathered through surveys, group discussions and interviews as part of the present project.

4.4.1 Life in a Shack Settlement

Life in a shack settlement is a particular kind of life, far from the structured world of suburbia and work. The communities of both shack settlements are predominantly holiday-makers, with a few permanent residents—fishing families, retirees and others. Much of the reflection on life in a shack settlement therefore is presented as a contrast to everyday life.

Community Life

Each shack settlement has a strong community life, formally through the relevant community association, and informally through family, friendship and neighbourly networks. The extent of active engagement in collective endeavours was demonstrated in the participation in this project through the survey and on-site group discussions. There was a remarkably high level of response.

The Community Associations

Each settlement has a community-run association that provides a level of support, governance and external advocacy for the community. These associations were formed in the 1960s, indicating that each community had by then reached the level of maturity that would make formation of an association vital. A characteristic of each settlement is the level of self-reliance and responsibility expected of adult community members. The community associations are an expression of that desire for autonomy and self-governance. While those looking at each settlement from the outside may focus on unruly behaviour or uncontrolled activities and developments, those on the inside see themselves as engaging in a form of participatory democracy where everyone is encouraged to get involved, but no-one is forced to conform to rigid rules.

The community associations are formally incorporated and therefore operate under state legislation: there is an elected committee and office bearers and there are members and membership fees. The level of active involvement appears high, with people helping out with shared responsibilities such as managing the tip/rubbish, revegetating a mobile dune, and building community infrastructure. The culture in these shack settlements is to help out and help others:

... many of the happy times with family and friends have occurred at Wedge. The sense of community is much closer than other communities evidenced when an accident or injury occurs the whole community pulls together.¹²

Making Rules

Life is very casual in a shack settlement. Like the built forms, the dress code is thongs and shorts. There are rules—or more a code of behaviour—and these are well-advocated through the community associations. But in many ways these settlements also operate with a minimum of rules. The rules that do exist are based on tolerance and self-responsibility, reflecting a valued aspect of shack culture. The enforcement of rules is also part of the culture of self-responsibility, with everyone empowered to remind others (especially youngsters) of 'how things are done here'. This approach was very strongly articulated at Wedge, with many of the serious rule-breakers being those from outside the community who do not know how to behave or who don't care:¹³

If someone runs amok, then the men get together and sort it out¹⁴

Working Together

Both shack settlements need ways to achieve large tasks—such as managing their tip site—or responding to emergencies. In both settlements the community association is an important rallying point, but so are some individuals who, having seen a need, take action to address it.

At Wedge the Personal Injury Emergency (PIE) shop and the helicopter landing areas (which together provide emergency medical services for the settlement) demonstrate both individual initiative and collective action. Annie McGuinness, a long-standing Wedge resident, established the PIE shed and runs it with the assistance of several others with medical training, providing an important service in a community that has until recently been remote. From splinters to broken bones and more serious injuries, the PIE shed team are an important part of Wedge, and many people shared a story about the value of this volunteer medical service.

Stabilising a mobile dune at Grey demonstrated the same combination of personal initiative and collective effort. This dune, the 'southern dune', had been moving at up to 5m a year, burying

shacks. Attempts to stabilise it had failed. But an initiative to seek a 'coastal and marine' grant gained the community the resources and expertise they needed to successfully stabilise the dune. More than 20,000 seedlings were planted, native seed collected and scattered among seedlings, a watering system established, fencing to protect plants was built and education/information signs erected. The dune is now called Mount Ivan after Ivan's shack which was lost to the moving dune, an illustration of the quirky humour that is another characteristic of these settlements.¹⁵

Storms and fires can be serious challenges in both settlements. Past storms have seen shacks washed or blown away. People spoke about how they rely on neighbours to check their shacks: for example, how a neighbour had taken action to fix storm damage before it got worse. Fires are also a risk in any dwelling, and with a part-time population can easily destroy a shack before anyone can get there, even though both settlements have well-established fire response systems and equipment:

*In 1989 (on Australia Day) a fire destroyed 3 shacks (at Grey), 1 was insured (and) the community combined together to re-build the other 2 shacks - with the help of a couple of our members (in the building industry) we were able to re-build these 2 shacks.*¹⁶

*Shack communities consist of people from all walks of life with wildly differing backgrounds. Reasons for shack ownership differ and they are all thrown together in one small community. The tolerance of the differences and willingness of others to assist in times of need is particularly rewarding.*¹⁷

Helping each other is an essential part of shack culture: 'The rough track meant that if you do not have something, you could borrow it'.¹⁸ Cars breaking down on the track into either settlement, or on a remote part of the beach, are another potential emergency, and people in need are helped without question or payment. There are many such stories. One was of a 'beach buggy guy' taking an injured child with a badly cut foot for urgent medical treatment in Lancelin, even though he didn't know the child nor the child's family.¹⁹

In every type of settlement, shared community spaces are a vital part of community life: for recreation, sport, socialising. At these two settlements, specific areas have been dedicated as community spaces: at Wedge for example, there is the Gun Club, a large shed moved here from Didie Bay and extended to provide a community hall. Adjoining it is the golf course and cricket pitch. Many of the regular Wedge celebrations are held here, including personal celebrations:

*Every year on Australia Day, a community cricket game is played on the oval. It is a fantastic day where everyone gets together to celebrate our national day. All the children run around making numerous new friends and catching up with other kids that they only see from time to time. All the adults are doing much the same the same thing.*²⁰

*Wedge Girl's wedding ... the wedding starting a week before, spending my last bachelorette days with my Wedge friends. Every part of the wedding came together by all of my friends ... my father built a cool room for the wedding ... This was pre-Indian Drive ... all the food was cooked in the Hollow Log's crematorium aka Flea's pizza oven ... and the reception was 100 odd people sit down for lunch at the Gun Club.*²¹

Grey has fewer community facilities at present: the tennis club building remains but is unused and the court is becoming overgrown. At one time the tennis club was the venue for Christmas Parties.²² Fred Sharp recalls that the tennis court and shack was built in the 1970s, housing 'the "mice and cockroach races", dart board and fridge – all for community use' and other pastimes included 'skeet shooting With a skeet shooting club formed ... (with) many evening spent at Moore's shack where the entertainment was provided by Mrs Moore who played the piano that

resided in the shack'.²³ A recently built monument has been erected in memory all those people who have chosen to leave their ashes at Grey. The monument is built of limestone and adjoins the community noticeboard. It is located at a beachside cross-road close to the boat ramp: the shells are in memory of an early shack (see Figure 5.22).²⁴ The boat ramp area is now an informal meeting area at Grey.

The boat ramp area and the beach near it is an important informal meeting place, and for those who surf, so is the water:

*If the surf is up, that's where I'll be. I love sharing the water with a dozen familiar faces at one of several surf spots. You never know who will be there.*²⁵

At Wedge, there is a tradition of meeting down at The Point, the end of the beach nearest the offshore island that gives the location its present name. The Point is about reconnecting: to the place and the landscape when people arrive at Wedge, and looking to see what changes have resulted from the power of the storms that constantly reshape this beach. Then they reconnect to this particular community, 'checking in' to see who is there and catching up with the news, symbolically re-forming 'community' each time. Meeting at The Point, generally on a Friday evening, has become a ritual, accompanied by a few beers while watching the sun go down. Even on a cold and windy Friday when we were there, no-one seemed deterred:

*The stories you hear when you go to Wedge Point where people congregate and have a social drink and people bring nibbles and we watch the beautiful sunsets at Wedge even in winter. The connection is the people you meet and you have different characters that play a part in the community. It's like coming back to another home and friends*²⁶

*I'd know every local surfer, dad, mums and kids. The crew at the Point are always welcoming.*²⁷

Family Life

Family is a strong feature of both shack settlements with many shacks being occupied by extended and multi-generational families, and a significant proportion of occupiers have links with the settlement that go back several generations. Stories of shack life shared during the project highlighted the importance of the shack settlements to those who have spent significant times during childhood here:

*Wedge is like a big family community and a second home to all. Teaching our children social skills and community interactions and every day to day essential life skills, which our children of today lack. We would just go up there for a weekend to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life, relax and enjoy time with family and friends.*²⁸

*It's a place where family and friends can come together without the hindrances of the outside world. We have loved the isolation and the lack of amenities. Our children have been coming here since before they were born.*²⁹

Parents also reflected on the way that shack culture and experiences helped shaped their children's values and skills.

*These skills transferred to my children. Showing them how to mend a roof, how sacred water is, social contact with other shack holders and occupants. Appreciate the solitude and the respect of each other. The flag up to indicate we are here open for company, refuge for wandering dogs until they get claimed.*³⁰

As is discussed elsewhere in this report, the design and layout of most shacks creates spaces for family gatherings, often in large, shaded outdoor spaces well equipped with BBQs.

Being away from the city and without all its 'electronic attractions' means that families are able to spend more time together, and the community-based social activities appear to be largely based around families. Activities such as 'foursies' (drinks at 4 o'clock) at The Point at Wedge are very much a family activity, as is Australia Day cricket. The Point tradition at Wedge is said to be at least 25 years old.³¹

For some families, having a shack has been vital in supporting their family through challenging circumstances. Many spoke of the family bonding created by the simple shack life, with no electronic media available and a focus on sharing tasks and responsibilities. For some, the shack offers a place where a special needs child has greater freedom than in the suburbs:

*It has been very good for him ... he has a converted quad bike ... space to run ... and for his passion of hammering nails ... with that shack we've been able to stay as a family.*³²

Friendships

Friendships created through shack life were often described as the most significant and enduring, especially those friendships formed in childhood. On the other hand, some expressed the delight of having shack settlement friends who were apart from everyday life—they are the people you spend time with there; perhaps they are people you wouldn't normally meet in your city-based life as well.

*Socially the interactions with friends in other shacks has been really important. The kids were free to come and go between shacks, all would descend at our shack for a "Wedge Spread" one day, another day they'd drift to another family's shack to be fed, or to play or go swimming. In the evenings groups of parents would meet at one or other of the shacks for dinner or a party.*³³

*Over the years, some good friends have been made, many from socio-economic groups with whom we would neither normally meet nor associate with.*³⁴

For teenagers, having a peer group to be part of is always important. Many recounted stories of adventures with their friends and the 'growing up' they did at the shack settlement. It was a place where they could 'run wild' and yet always be certain of help if needed. There was always a 'watchful eye' and yet they were allowed to make mistakes and learn for themselves. Progressively, children and teenagers were inculcated into shack culture:

*I feel I have an extremely strong connection to Wedge because I feel it has played a huge role in me becoming the person I am today as a teenager I enjoyed all that Wedge had to offer in regard to surfing, fishing, making friends and all the things that come with a great family holiday. As I got older and took over control of the shack I learnt a lot about how to fix and maintain things in quite an isolated place and the sense of community that is Wedge.*³⁵

*Memories of growing up, learning to surf, finishing school and going on adventures with my friends. Wedge has been a huge part of my life, for me it is an escape from society, a place to spend time with my family and friends, and many of my best memories have been made there.*³⁶

Adventures abound in people's stories of growing up in a shack settlement, and of places that are important because of those experiences. One example was sitting out a heavy rain storm in the dunes at Grey, now separated from the settlement by the new highway, sheltering under a tree with garbage bags as rain ponchos as the landscape disappeared in a complete rain 'white-out'.³⁷

Gender Differences

Social roles differ for men and women at the shack settlements, much as they do elsewhere. Men are engaged in shack building activities and outside cooking. Women are relieved of housework, and shack tradition says that everyone pitches in to take care of the necessities of shack life. It was, and is, a very different lifestyle from the suburbs.

Out and About

Life at each shack settlement is very much connected to the environment: the beach for surfing, fishing, walking and driving; the ocean and bay for boating and fishing; the dunes for views and a place to play; nearby areas to visit; and the shack settlement itself for walking and socialising.

These activities are an attraction of the shack settlements and form a significant part of people's sense of attachment (see below).

Shack Creation and Maintenance

Shacks are 'owner-built'. They are individual and collective creations, design and shaped to meet the needs of the occupying family or group, and constantly reshaped and adjusted as needs change, materials degrade or storms take their toll.

Decisions about shack siting and design are not controlled by external rules. The approach is to consider others and talk first. Several people told of how they came to build their shack in a particular place. One interviewee said he chose a spot for his shack, and then asked around to check that everyone thought that location would be OK. He said he had two neighbours then and no others have built near him.³⁸ Another group described it as a 'negotiated approach' where there are 'unwritten rules on personal space and people are aware of these boundaries'.³⁹ Because neighbours rely on each other in many ways, people are careful to be reasonable.

Pick the spot - as long as you did not get into their personal space.⁴⁰

In each shack community, the lack of infrastructure services means that each shack occupier needs to provide their own water and power, and deal with their waste. Systems to supply needed water, power and waste disposal are a source of great interest and conversation. New approaches are examined and tested, and ideas that work may become widely adopted. Infrastructure systems are primarily a male domain. At Grey, wind power has become popular:

The shacks are running now on wind and sun ... a real change over the last 15-20 years ... the first wind generator was probably the Loomes and they were one of the first to try solar too ... but perhaps it only took a year before the second wind generator went up.⁴¹

And there is a great sense of achievement in 'just looking after the shack' and in 'making things'.⁴² The challenge and the achievement experienced through building a shack is 'something everyone should get a chance to do'⁴³, working through the design challenges created by the coastal setting and its significant storms. The 'lack of red tape' is seen as benefiting creativity and building a sense of pride and self sufficiency.⁴⁴

Something you have created yourself - it may be a bit of an eyesore but its something you have made⁴⁵

Adapting the shack moved in from Didie Bay, redesigning it to become the Gun Club (a recreational facility) took a team of men working together. The design includes walls that lift open like flaps,

creating a large sheltered space with no barrier between inside and outside, while enabling it to be locked closed against storms.⁴⁶

'Shack style' is diversity. Each shack is different and each reflects the person or family who built it and their needs. Shacks reflect and become part of the identity of the occupants, and collectively they are seen as part of a distinctively Australian identity.⁴⁷

*Everyone puts a bit of themselves into their shacks – it's an extension of themselves.*⁴⁸

Are the shacks beautiful, at least in the eyes of their makers? This was debated in a number of group discussions, with many feeling that they are beautiful or at least 'they have great character' and they reflect the 'effort' that has gone into making them.⁴⁹ For 'shackies', it is easy to 'appreciate the character and design' of shacks. It's about 'successful functionality'.⁵⁰

*I look at how they have been made – to me that is art*⁵¹

Shacks are palimpsests, a 'collage of different inputs over the years—a little bit of everyone who has been here'.⁵² Keeping these layers and odd elements is part of shack culture: one person spoke of 'inheriting a black board in his shack' and keeping it.⁵³ People know and value the elements that remind them of the people who built or added to a shack.

*The bar where we are sitting reflects the four men who were involved in its construction.*⁵⁴

At their shack, people feel able to take actions that they would not attempt at their 'home' in the city: one young couple explained how they had replaced the roof of their shack, something they'd never done before. Here they felt empowered to 'give it a go', a very Australian phrase, indicating an interest in the challenge without any constraining fear of failure. These shacks are highly expressive spaces, created, adapted and constantly tweaked by their owners, and offering space for hands-on creativity.

*Everyone is a builder up here – and it's better if it's not perfect.*⁵⁵

Shack philosophy is that 'everything has its last life up here' and people get a 'kick out of re-using' and finding things at the 'dump' or in the 'Quokka' (Perth classified advertising newspaper) that can be adapted to suit a particular need.⁵⁶ As one participant said 'you do not need a wallet to fix your shack, just ingenuity'.

*You can fix anything at Wedge – and that will be good for Wedge*⁵⁷

Some people even started pre-fabricating elements at their city base and then carting them up to their shack.⁵⁸ The whole process of shack repair and adaptation becomes an engaging endeavour: the shacks are like 'living things ... continual renewal' is needed and 'you just figure it out for yourself'.⁵⁹

Over time the buildings become a repository of ideas, solutions and failures.

*You walk around and see how people build their way – it gives you ideas.*⁶⁰

And the shacks themselves tell the story of their making and all those who have lived there:

*Every piece of every shack and every change has a story associated with it.*⁶¹

*There is some story behind every shack.*⁶²

4.4.2 The Shack Experience

Part of the shack experience is the process of planning for the trip to the shack, the journey, arriving and settling in, and then the journey home. Each speaks of a process of transition, emotionally as well as physically, reinforcing the sense of the shack settlement as a liminal space.

Anticipation

For some, even packing the car to head off to their shack meant that they could feel the pressure of the 'rat race' start to lift from their shoulders.

Just leaving home was to arrive⁶³

The Track

Each settlement was reached by its own 'track', a rough, unmade and unsealed track accessed from the highway. The journey was long and often punctuated by breakdowns, especially in the early years when most people drove two wheel drive vehicles and towed trailers. The track was part of the 'rite of passage' to become a shack occupier. Taking all the building materials in over the track made building a shack a significant challenge. Today, the highway is close to the entrance to each settlement and now many people also have four-wheel drive vehicles; the challenge of the track is no longer part of the experience of getting there.

The track to Wedge often took many hours. After turning off the highway, there were some key landmarks and common stopping points. 'Once you got to South Bay and The Rocks you knew you were getting close to Wedge'.⁶⁴ Another landmark was the 'thong fence', now gone, and sadly missed.

On the journey into Wedge and Grey, people would often meet each other on the track, and stop for a chat and a catch-up. There are many stories of breaking down on the track and the help offered by others travelling in. The track was a place where driving skills were tested and honed, with some young people learning to drive on the track. And getting things through without smashing was seen as a challenge: one participant told us of the 'six pack track' referring to how many bottles of beer you lose on the journey in.⁶⁵

As part of the experience, 'the track' would 'rattle out any problems back home'⁶⁶ even before they arrived at the shack settlement. For some, getting on the track (and off the bitumen) was the moment when they 'arrived'. Travelling the track was part of the shack experience:

(when you) hit the track you were on the home stretch and you knew you were doing something that others wouldn't be doing – not in normal day-to-day life anyway⁶⁷

The old road was what it was all about. To get the pleasure of the beach etc. you had to suffer the pain⁶⁸

The experience of the track is missed by many (although not by all).

Arriving and 'Touching In'

In the group discussions we asked about what people do when they first arrive—to check-in and feel they are really there. The answers were many: common themes included going down to The Point at Wedge to see how the beach landscape had changed since their last visit, to see the island and to see who is around. For many it seems this came before even getting to their shack.

The same was true at Grey: seeing the beach, looking out to see what weather was coming, looking to the islands. Now that the sealed highways has replaced the track, the first glimpse of the ocean or the first dune signals they are about to arrive.

Reconnecting with people seems as important as connecting with the settlement and environment.

When we get here we unpack, and when people see the lights are on they come over and have a few ... and when you hear the ocean in the morning you know you are really here⁶⁹

And at Wedge, meeting others at The Point was how one would catch up with happenings and get back into the local information grapevine where ‘yesterday’s rumour is tomorrow’s fact’.⁷⁰

Many people spoke or wrote about the feeling of freedom and escape they got on the journey or when they arrived: for one person it is like ‘coming through the gates of heaven ... slipping into relaxation mode.’⁷¹

Others took a more pragmatic approach, getting the shack set up first and ‘checking the shack for snakes’.⁷²

Heading Back

Few people spoke or wrote about heading back to ‘city life’ as part of the experience of their regular visits to their shack settlement. One who did said:

When we arrive at the community, my body just naturally heaves a huge sigh of relief that I have made it back to this wonderful place once again and it rejuvenates me. There is always a sadness when we drive away⁷³

4.4.3 Continuity & Traditions

Both shack settlements have developed their own traditions. These include behaviours, language and terminology, activities and events that have become traditions through a remarkable cultural continuity. The generational connections demonstrate both continuity and change, but those living in these shack settlements perceive that there are strongly shared community values that continue and are passed on, despite changes in the people who make up the community. Newcomers may be attracted to join a shack settlement because they share those values already, but those who don’t are said not to stay for long.

Continuity is highly valued. Passing on the shack culture, knowledge and experience is almost universally important. As one person explained:

Our family bought this shack, my father adapted it for our family ... everyone came together here and it was “our mansion” ... I couldn’t change anything because it represents how our family was and how we lived in at our getaway ... its full of memories of my childhood and my father ... and I want my daughter to grow up here.⁷⁴

Newcomers are ‘wood ducks’—a phrase meaning they are not attached and not (yet) locals. Noddy recalled being a ‘wood duck’ to the well-established fishermen when he first arrived, and now he uses the terms to refer to newcomers.⁷⁵ Another tradition is that everyone has a nickname and often people don’t know each other’s surnames. Just keeping up with the nick names was a challenge for us as outsiders. Another is the gentle banter that characterises many interactions.

Putting up the flag when you arrive and are happy to have visitors is another ritual, a sign saying ‘I’m home’.⁷⁶

There are activities at each shack settlement that have become traditions: at Wedge the Australia Day cricket match is a big event, marked by flags flying: it's been going for 30 years and has a 'great feel' and there are 'no hassles'.⁷⁷ Gun Club on New Year's Eve is another, and ANZAC Day commemoration down at The Point (and then back at the Gun Club where a two-up ring is set up) is more recent and was strongly supported. And Jacko who played Father Christmas for the kids created and sustained a memorable tradition.⁷⁸ These traditions are important and highly valued, and are more meaningful than those 'back in Perth': it was suggested that some of these traditions would continue even if the settlement at Wedge was closed.⁷⁹

Some shack settlement traditions are community-wide, while others are particular to an individual family. Both are treasured for their connection to the experience of being at the shack settlement:

The words "the shack" are spoken in tones of longing to be there and it is a tradition to spend Christmas/New Year at the shack⁸⁰

My long standing ties with the place and its significance for my family's cultural traditions⁸¹

4.4.4 Spaces

Earlier work by Dr Reena Tiwari (Curtin University, WA) had examined the poetics of the vernacular built forms at Wedge and Grey—the shacks—and asked whether the government's desire to regulate and regularise each settlement would destroy the very essence of the place. Quoting Tresidder, she suggested that the poetics at Wedge make it akin to sacred space—'as a refuge from modernity in which we can find the organic, the primitive, the original and the expressive'.⁸²

This idea emerges quite strongly from our data. These shack settlements are seen as a place apart from everyday life: they have their own norms, culture, networks, and activities.

Comparing being at the shack settlement with everyday life elsewhere, one of the important differences is in the perceived sense of community: 'we are part of a community here', there is a sense of openness to one another⁸³ and people can learn 'the real values of life' from one another.⁸⁴ There is a remarkable sense of acceptance of others and of being accepted for who you are, with everyone on an 'equal footing' and without 'a sense of difference'. Because of this sense of acceptance, there is a sense that people feel 'enabled' to 'be different here'—that is to be 'who you really are'.⁸⁵

The journey to each settlement, once long and often arduous, reinforced the separation of the shack life from the everyday.

These shack communities serve as a kind of liminal space, outside the passage of normal time and conventions and a place where one can 'be who you really are'. Such places and spaces are increasingly rare in contemporary western societies, and examining such a place and its community offers interesting insights into core human needs for connection, ritual and community.

4.5 Feelings of Attachment

Asked why their shack settlement is important to them from a list of 13 attributes, many survey respondents identified qualities that are aligned to strong and special associations reflected in the social value criterion: including 'history, stories and memories', 'traditions', 'social interactions', 'a meeting place' and 'it feels like home'. The 'natural beauty of the landscape', an aesthetic characteristic was also strongly felt, especially by respondents from Wedge.

Some were able to demonstrate how all these elements come together:

I personally think some of my deep connections with Wedge are the our own and other shacks up there, the magnificent environment and beach, the very kind people who we have met up there, the stronger friendships made with family members and close friends and the overall serenity of the amazing place.⁸⁶

Analysis of the open-ended responses in the survey to the question ‘Social significance is often described as being a feeling of attachment or connection to a particular place. In your own words, what connects you to this place?’ revealed six strong themes, each of which is briefly discussed below. The themes are: escape, nature; home & belonging; identity; shack culture & traditions; and people, family and community.

4.5.1 Escape

This theme encompassed many ideas and expressions that reflected a personal sense of freedom and escape from city life. Words such as isolation, solitude, peace, serenity, lifestyle, freedom, no stress, simplicity, relaxation are repeated across many of the responses to this question:

The serenity of the beach and surrounding bushland, and the fact there is no television, bitumen, traffic lights, shopping centres or crowds takes you a world away from the hectic pace of life in a society always striving to do more, in less time.⁸⁷

Wedge is just one of those spots I love to go to and "disappear" from the hustle and bustle of big city life!⁸⁸

It is a place of refuge and escape from the fast paced pressures of city life where Wedge Island's quiet pristine environment, with many and varied activities such as fishing, swimming, surfing, diving, boating⁸⁹

The lack of formal urban structures is part of the appeal. These settlements lack the formality, physical layout and regulations of suburbia and instead offer self-sufficiency, encourage personal responsibility and enable a different way to engage with ‘community’.

Each shack settlement is very much a place apart from everyday life, a liminal space where the normal world can be cast aside for a time:

the ability to take a breath/time out from the crazy world, away from all the "do this, don't do that" rules that we are bound by in normal society.⁹⁰

Two hours North of Perth and you could be a thousand miles away. A feeling of escape and total relaxation consumes me the moment we reach the shack community.⁹¹

For some, these feelings were triggered by just being at the shack settlement while for others they were experienced through contact with nature (see below), being out on the water (fishing, surfing) or just sitting and contemplating. From ‘action-packed’ days out on the water to ‘red wine on the sand hills at sunset’, there are many different ways that people gain this sense of relaxation and escape.

There is also a connection to ‘shack culture’ in the way that it is about going ‘back to basics’, self-reliance and simplicity:

A feeling of peace and contentment surrounds this unique settlement. We have each other for support and we don't ask for anything - no rules or regulations.⁹²

The sense of ‘escape’ does not always mean solitude. For some it is the quiet, unstructured time spent with others:

At night we sit around the fire and toast marshmallows or cook a meal and enjoy the comforting warmth.⁹³

Appreciate the solitude and the respect of each other. The flag up to indicate we are here open for company.⁹⁴

And often, it is strongly connected to a sense of belonging to the place, the community and family:

Its sense of family and togetherness is reminiscent of old times when kids would play & go on adventures, play 'spotlight' and go running along the beach or the dunes laughing and playing 'chasey' until they were almost out of breath.⁹⁵

These expressions of 'escape' often included strong aesthetic appreciations of the place:

I think anyone who has spent some time at Grey will feel a deep sense of connection to the place. Its natural beauty, peace, and tranquillity simply invite pure relaxation.⁹⁶

I often describe going to Wedge as pulling a blind on the rest of the world ... I go surfing and it is just so peaceful and you really feel at one with nature.⁹⁷

I will never tire of sitting on the cliff and watching the sun go down over the ocean.⁹⁸

4.5.2 Nature

Nature features strongly in many people's expressed sense of connection to their shack settlement. Wildlife, the beach, weather, sunsets and the environment generally feature in many responses, highlighting their aesthetic qualities:

I feel connected to the nature that surrounds the shack, to the roos that rumble through the land, to the families of rays that glide along the beach, to the winds and storms that blow through the community. Grey is a very spiritual place, and I feel connected to that.⁹⁹

These connections are often experience-based: sharing the shack with lizards and carpet pythons, and surfing with dolphins.

For me personally the peaceful closeness to nature (the beach, the birds, the carpet pythons, the bobtail lizards and skinks) give me a sense of being, and puts one's life in perspective in a way which one cannot do in the city or in a glitzy resort.¹⁰⁰

The special memories of interacting with a pod of juvenile dolphins at "north surf spot", finding the perfect wave.¹⁰¹

The 'pristine' qualities of the environment reflect what people see as a low-impact lifestyle that brings them close to nature. Nature is also seen as something to be looked after. Wedge is a more vegetated now than in the past as a result of plantings, and at Grey the community has been active in dune rehabilitation. There is a respect for the animals that share the shacks—pythons and lizards are common and often welcomed visitors:

... the settlement and environs have remained unchanged over the last 36 years that we have been visiting Wedge Island with our parents and now our own children. We love everything about the beach culture the pristine dunes (that remind us all the time that nature is in control). The air is clean and pure to breathe.¹⁰²

Nature offers a reflective and contemplative space, and for some is a spiritual connection:

The feeling of becoming one with nature, sitting on the beach watching the forever changing tides.¹⁰³

The sense of peace and tranquillity, the beauty of a windless sunny day ... sunsets at the island and the brilliant stars at night¹⁰⁴

The aesthetics of nature are part of this valued connection:

... a strong connection to the ocean and the wind ... The hot summer sun reflects off the white sand and when the wind kicks in the fine white sand is blown everywhere¹⁰⁵

My daughter is an artist and one of her paintings, Cold Sand Between My Toes, is so evocative of Wedge. Getting up early to go down to the beach or at night to watch the moonlight on the water, in the clean, clean air and the silence beyond the wash of the waves is so closely associated with my memories of Wedge. Other connections are to the birds when walking along the shoreline. They come in drifts as the tide goes out and are always calling, rising and falling with the water and running or flying to keep ahead of me as I walk along. And of course there is the water and the sand, so blue and so white and so clear. The blue sky and the white etched dunes, the blue water and the white rippled sand, the fish swimming in the shallow.¹⁰⁶

4.5.3 Home & Belonging

One's shack is a home away from home:

I've visited Wedge for my whole life, so I've grown up with it as a second home. It's my favourite place to visit and I'll take any opportunity I get to go up, whether it's for a day or a week in school holidays.¹⁰⁷

... my family lives here and belongs here.¹⁰⁸

People feel a deep sense of belonging to the shack community and the place itself: for many these words are true:

Their roots, like this tree, are down deep and they don't want to leave.¹⁰⁹

For others, it's 'like a flame in your heart' and 'it's in your blood'.¹¹⁰ For some it is the only place that is home.

... (it's) the only place that has always been a constant for me.¹¹¹

the shack is the single place that has remained constant throughout my life from my earliest memories. It is the one place in the world that I have found thus far where I feel truly at home, free to be myself and away from the stress and pressure of 'normal' life.¹¹²

Making 'home' involves connecting to a place, making one's own mark, finding community and sharing rituals.

Talking together, Rosco said 'you feel like you belong here and people welcome you', Anne said that people find comfort here and Noddy added that 'you can just walk into any shack and say giddyay – you are just a part of the place'.¹¹³ This community is a safe place where people feel they belong and are accepted. Another participant spoke about how he gave up the shack once the family stopped going but then bought it back to help get the family back together again.¹¹⁴

I've loved it since the day I was born and I want my ashes scattered here in my favourite skippy hole.¹¹⁵

For many shackies, this place is home, and 'home is where the heart is'.¹¹⁶ And for a number of people, their sense of connection is deepened through memories of loved ones who once stayed here, often with their ashes scattered here:

... (it's) special because my father passed away here.¹¹⁷

... dad passed away and his memory is in the shack.¹¹⁸

My connection to Grey is firstly my late husband. This is the place he loved to be more than any other place on earth. His ashes were scattered at sea near Green Island and he is literally now part of Grey itself.¹¹⁹

4.5.4 Identity

Shaping who I am

Living and especially growing up in a shack settlement is seen as an experience that shapes one's identity and values. Memories of childhood at one of the shack settlements were expressed as strong, experience-based attachments:

All my most vivid childhood memories are of Wedge. It's where my imagination ran wild and I had the freedom to follow it. It's where I learned to swim and learned to fish. When I get to Wedge it feels like coming home. I know all the landmarks so well and I have stories attached to each landmark - eg. those dams out the back - I remember riding my pushbike out there when we were kids and catching yabbies.¹²⁰

... growing up at wedge, the hard work I put in as a 12 year old building our shack with my dad and all the help from friends and family, the people we met, the great place it is, the fishing, the community.¹²¹

All my close friends and myself grew up here. It is a massive part of our lives and will always hold a very special place in my heart. It would be very sad to see it go.¹²²

Growing up in a shack settlement was important in shaping 'who I am' for many:

memories of wedge when I was growing up are some of the most important that I can recall. it is where as a young man I had the chance to explore to become responsible, to recognise that my actions affect myself and the community in which I am part of without the law and courts being brought into play but senior members of our community coaching and helping me to become who I am today.¹²³

Many young adults who participated in the present project, gave specific examples of the unique combination of freedom and responsibility they learnt through shack culture: in the words of one person, the 'you want to ride it then you go and fix it'.¹²⁴ A young woman at Wedge described how, when she was growing up many teenagers had a 'beach car': they'd been gone all day exploring with friends, having saved up money to buy '20 litres of fuel for the holidays' and you'd learn about managing the fuel as a precious resource. Likewise, they would learn about running a shack and getting on with others living around them.¹²⁵ Another spoke about how teenagers would have a lot of freedom to 'run amok' but within the safety of the shack community and many watchful eyes.¹²⁶ Reflecting back over 35 years at Wedge, one participant said the shack settlement had given him 'a happy, helpful and healthy life':¹²⁷

This is my home, I have spent my whole life here, my childhood was unique growing up in a close knit community, learning the responsibilities of driving cars and motorbikes at a young age. In Wedge Island, growing up you learnt respect for the community and other people and I formed lifetime bonds with people from all over West Australia who holiday or lived here when I was growing up. My father and grandfather also taught me how to live off the land and sea and to respect nature and the environment.¹²⁸

For parents too, they felt that being part of a shack settlement community enabled their children to learn the 'real values of life' and to be 'able to talk to one another'.¹²⁹

It encourages a sense of community that we have seem to have lost since we were kids. Our children learn how to entertain themselves without an electronic device and they learn how to run a water pump, dig out a

soak well, refuel the generator, fix leaking roofs, light a fire, dig a car out of being bogged and play freely without us constantly worrying (like we do at home if they are playing in the street). I think our children need to learn the things we did to make them more well rounded people.¹³⁰

This quote, one of many similar expressions from group discussions and surveys, reflects a deeply held value about the way the world is or should be; such values are typically an important part of personal and family or group identity.¹³¹

And it is these experiences of freedom and responsibility that so many people expressed as the key thing they wanted to be able to pass on to their children and grandchildren, often tinged with a sense of sadness that this may not be possible.

Memories

'Memories' was expressed as an important and strong connection for many people: memories of family, friends, and events. Memories are part of who we are, and form part of our sense of personal identity. Memories connect us to and help create our own story, and that of our families.

What connects me to my shack is knowing my grandfather built it so many years ago. His history, my history at Grey, my parents history and my own children are all part of the attachment & history at Grey.¹³²

My family history and spiritual connection with my Aboriginal culture¹³³

Specific places were often mentioned as holding key parts of personal histories:

The entire area holds special memories for me as I have been going there with my family since I was a child. Most significantly, my shack holds special memories as my father passed away there and his ashes are scattered there.¹³⁴

The old friends who introduced me to this place and who have now departed. My mother's ashes which are scattered at sea and under the tree at the rear of my shack.¹³⁵

And for a number of participants, the experience of the place—landscape, shack settlement and people—helped them create a deeper sense of 'who I am':

It is so much part of myself, friends and especially seeing my grandchildren being part of my life at Wedge, enjoying all the things that are so important in life. I feel like I am home, every time I pull up to my shack.¹³⁶

... everyone has their sacred site, this is ours.¹³⁷

Passing on to the next generation

Another aspect of identity linked to the shack settlement is that of being part of an ongoing story, as traditions, knowledge and culture are passed from one generation to the next, offering an inter-generational connection that is highly valued:

Family present and past. Can still feel, recall - almost hear the stories of my grandfather's shack days, even though he had passed. My children can tell their great grandmother of their shack holiday and she can share her past stories with them. Fishing all night, the pet Carpet Snake ... the Bobby lizards, the loo etc.¹³⁸

The sense of community is an important part of Wedge. Also the fact that my father took us there regularly and now I take my children there for the same experiences that I had as a child.¹³⁹

Childhood memories of holidays spent with family and friends. Introducing my husband and son to the lifestyle and watching them enjoy the same activities I enjoyed my whole life. Every New Years Eve of my life has been celebrated at Wedge since I was eight years old and that now includes my husband and son. Family togetherness.¹⁴⁰

The fear of loss

The sense of potential loss is deeply felt by those with these long connections, especially for those with childhood memories and connections:

All my close friends and myself grew up here. It is a massive part of our lives and will always hold a very special place in my heart. It would be very sad to see it go.¹⁴¹

Losing Wedge would be akin to losing a part of our culture. And once lost, it will be lost forever.¹⁴²

Some people at both Wedge and Grey moved there after losing a shack somewhere else along the coast. The experience of 'losing a shack' is described as devastating.

From the survey, 69 respondents (27%) had a connection to another shack, mostly through family or friends who had a shack elsewhere. Five responses mentioned that they had been associated with a shack in another location that was now gone: these shacks were in Gum Tree Bay (1), to the north of Jurien Bay (1), Dick Bay (1) and in Sandy Cape (1). Some commented on what the loss meant to them, for example: 'a community lost – Gum Tree Bay'.¹⁴³

Speaking about the shack settlement at Billygoat Bay, Gary Cream said it was a sad day we had to pull our shacks down; he felt 'gutted' and said that some people cried, while others expressed their sadness and anger by burning their shacks on the beach or blowing them up. Having to demolish their own shacks was tough for most people, destroying what they had created and felt strongly attached to.¹⁴⁴

Fearing the potential loss of their shack settlement, a number of people expressed their feelings:

there is nothing to bring back memories in way of the shacks. There is nothing to remind us or tell our grandchildren how it was.¹⁴⁵

The loss of Wedge would devastate the threads of life for thousands of West Aussies.¹⁴⁶

We can't imagine our life without the place and it brings me to tears that it may not be 'ours' to enjoy very soon.¹⁴⁷

There aren't many places left like this in this day and age due to development. It would be sad to see yet another family environment bulldozed due to development for monetary gain.¹⁴⁸

The sense of connection to other shack settlements was expressed in the comment:

And the Gun Club at Wedge was once a shack at Didi Bay and when they pulled it down ... (it) became the gun club so a part of Didi Bay still lives on'.¹⁴⁹

Part of broader cultural identity

For those who saw the history of shack settlements and shack lifestyle as important, they generally mentioned the connection to Western Australian history or to Australian culture and values:

... the shack settlements at Grey and Wedge are a really fantastic part of Western Australia life. They have a long history and a central place in the traditions of many WA families. Those families are able to share their good fortune with their friends and relatives.¹⁵⁰

It is a culture particularly in Australia that should be preserved. It engenders in people a feeling of mateship. A reliance on the need to help others and be helped and to be self reliant. In much of our society today we have lost the ability to be self sufficient, to make do with the simple necessities of life. Not so with "shack life".¹⁵¹

Its an Australian way of life We are losing so much of our Australiana and would be sad to remove or demolish any more shack settlements anywhere in Australia. We are Australians and should be Bloody proud of it and so should the decision makers.¹⁵²

I have a close connection to all shack settlements because we are almost all the same and we all share the same kindred Aussie spirit.¹⁵³

But for some it was more specific: they appreciated a link between shack cultures across different parts of Australia based on their own experience or that of their family, reflecting a family tradition of shack owning:

... my dad had a shack at Betty's Beach (near Albany) when we were kids.¹⁵⁴

My in-laws from a previous marriage had a shack at Point Peron, which introduced me to shack dwelling and the laid back lifestyle.¹⁵⁵

Close family friends own a beach shack in settlement at Port Augusta, South Australia, which was a regular destination for my family holidays when young. Visited shack community at Port Broughton in South Australia on family holidays as a child.¹⁵⁶

Brother in law & family have a shack in Tasmania ... My grandfather had a shack (where my mother often spent time with her father) at Little Anchorage (since demolished). My step father had a shack & we often spent holidays at Didie Bay (since demolished). My family & I often stay at shacks at Desperate Bay-Leeman. Often as a young child through to teenage years we stayed at Billygoat Bay-Green Head (since demolished).¹⁵⁷

Wedge reminds me of our family beach house down in Waikiki that had to be sold years ago before i had children. I feel like this is a replacement for the memories my kids won't have of that place, but can build at Wedge. My kids have been coming to Wedge now for about 10 or so years.¹⁵⁸

I grew up with the Shack culture in Dampier on Malas Island, and this has continued with the Shack community at Wedge Island. I feel like the member of a very special community, a place where everyone knows everyone, where everyone is only too happy to help out a neighbour. I feel Wedge or the shack community is where adults and children mix together more so than in everyday life in Perth, its where children listen, see and learn from not only their parents but from other adults.¹⁵⁹

For shackies, all shacks settlements and shack cultures are connected.

4.5.5 Shack Culture & Traditions

Shack culture and traditions, expressed as a significant source of connection, is both subtle and complex. There is seen to be a shared culture across all shack settlements (see above) and across each of the two shack settlements being investigated in the present project. Traditions in all forms—activities, language, and ways of doing things—help build and continue culture. Some are shared across a whole settlement, while others are personal and family traditions.

Shack culture is about 'shack living' or 'shack lifestyle': the way that one lives in a shack, engages with neighbours and the community, and the way one interacts with the environment. Generally shack culture and lifestyle is seen as distinctive and highly valued by comparison with suburban lifestyles:

What connects me to the place is my family and the culture of shack living, it is very much a place where as a child growing up we had the freedom to explore and learn life skills and traditions which get passed on through the generations. It's somewhere I have always felt safe and extremely happy.¹⁶⁰

Everyone cares and looks out for all within the compounds of the settlement.¹⁶¹

Our connection is the village type life you just don't get in suburbia any more, similar to what I grew up with as a pre teen in the UK. Everyone looks after the kids, no one is too busy to stop for a chat, and most people aren't afraid to tell the kids to "pack it in" if they are being stupid.¹⁶²

It's a heart warming experience when a stranger waves to you. Whether it is whilst driving past another car or walking passed someone on the beach. It's a unifying experience knowing most people are there for the same reason, love and respect for the place and love for the life.¹⁶³

These are expressions of shared values, deeply held and highly regarded.

Each settlement has its own particular traditions, some long-standing and others more recent. These traditions are part of the glue that bind people together into a community: some of these have been described above.

Similarly, challenges faced together are seen as important parts of community bonding and contrast to a lack of similar community connection in suburban settings:

Another major thing with Wedge is every one pitching in when it is needed. For example me and many other people have helped out when fires have threatened people's shacks. It is amazing how many people will come running when they are needed. It restores your faith in human nature so much different than in the city were everyone's attitude is "not my problem" and no one will help anyone.¹⁶⁴

I liked the isolation and the need to be self sufficient this in turn leads to a good shack community where we help each other out which has built some great friendships. These friendships and the community environment is what draws me back.¹⁶⁵

4.5.6 People: Family & Community

For many, their connection to the shack settlement is also experienced as strongly linked to family, friends and other people.

The connection is the people you meet and you have different characters that play a part in the community. It's like coming back to another home and friends.¹⁶⁶

For families, the shack settlement appears to be a place where family bonds are strengthened:

In this place we call the shack, we come together as a family, and live together like we used to. Being on holidays we are relaxed and are able to enjoy the very best of each other.¹⁶⁷

Went up there 30 years ago with my father to build the shack, was one of the few things that we ever done together at this time, and it's one thing that kept the family together.¹⁶⁸

It's where my family all gets together to just be with each other. We've been through such tough times and The Shack has always been there to help us get through it and be grateful we can all get together away from it all and relax.¹⁶⁹

Relationships with their neighbours at the shack settlement are seen as quite special, offering opportunities outside of what they find in everyday life. These 'shack friendships' can be enduring even if they are only enjoyed while people are at the shack settlement.

There are no social divisions. Everyone is equal. The shack lifestyle comes first and foremost. Shackies socialise in Grey, but very rarely would have had the chance to mix in their original suburbs.¹⁷⁰

... the nature of those relationships is that your life is at Wedge, you generally don't exchange last names and rarely have need for phone numbers. You just catch up like old mates whenever your visits coincide.¹⁷¹

The neighbour to our shack I have always called uncle even though there is no relation. I think it is hard to imagine the community and friendship of the place unless you are part of it.¹⁷²

These relationships, built up over years, create the strength of the community:

The community spirit between all the shack owners and the friendships that have been formed will be long lasting. We have had many years at the shack and the socialising with others has been very memorable.¹⁷³

I did a lot of growing up here. I was taught the value of helping others out and how rewarding that can be. As a young man I got myself into a few situations where complete strangers were more than willing to stop and help me out. For example broken down in the middle of the night in the middle of the bush going nowhere fast and people were more than happy to stop and spend two hours patching up my car and then follow me into wedge to make sure I arrived safely (this happened many times). I have now been lucky enough on many occasions to help many other people in the same situations.¹⁷⁴

There is an equality in the shack settlement: everyone is equal and social distinctions that might be important outside the shack settlement are not relevant here. The use of nicknames helps separate the 'shack person' from their 'other' self:

People when here act in a shackie way no matter what their roles outside.¹⁷⁵

The family and friendship bonds form a network of interconnections across each community, and along with the continuing presence of an external threat and an effective community association, have shaped a remarkable sense of community spirit in each settlement:

... connection to a family based community that enjoys a simple lifestyle, with a common purpose to protect the community and the environment.¹⁷⁶

'They are just like family, everyone is welcome in their shacks, even when helping restore or renovate their shacks or just watching the footy.¹⁷⁷

It is a place of refuge and escape from the fast paced pressures of city life where Wedge Island's quiet pristine environment, together with the many and varied activities such as fishing, swimming, surfing, diving, boating and a host of considered important community activities such as the Anzac Day memorial service, cricket matches, barbecues, tip clean ups, sand dune restorations. All these socially and environmentally rewarding events at Wedge Island have given my children, my friends and their friends and our Wedge Island neighbours a different and real perspective of respect, with the constant helping of others and looking after the environment. Respect has a more complete and real meaning that we would not have gained if we all hadn't

*been exposed to life at Wedge Island. That evolvment will continue with us all at Wedge Island for generations to come.*¹⁷⁸

*We look forward to the weekend and getting away to Wedge, to catch up with whoever is there. There are BBQ's to attend, social events and watching the sun go down every evening at the Point.*¹⁷⁹

*The community centre is a focal point for many events. We never miss a gathering here.... a great time is always had catching up with everyone. The shack itself connects us to this place. It is a focal point for us to base ourselves. It feels like home. It's cold as hell in winter and cooks you in summer... but we love the rusty old corrugated thing. You gotta love Wedge!*¹⁸⁰

*Everyone is equal as we are all brought back to the basics in life!!!! A shelter and being with your family and friends and relaxing together!!*¹⁸¹

4.6 Conclusion

This section has sought to present some key aspects of the culture and community life of the Grey and Wedge shack settlements, along with analysis of the cultural, social and spiritual connections and aesthetic values expressed by those who are part of those communities.

This data will form the basis of the assessment contained in Section 7.0. Further, Section 7.0 also considers the extent to which the associations and connections expressed by the Wedge and Grey shack settlement communities are part of the cultural identity of Western Australians. In doing this, Section 7.0 integrates the social research reported on here with the historical overview (Section 3.0).

The shack settlements at Wedge and Grey are communities: inter-connected networks of families and individuals, many with long connections to the place and to each other. Each community has a representative organisation that speaks on behalf of the community. While not all shack owners are members, both organisations demonstrated their ability to connect to and activate a large network of shack owners during the present project. Further, these are communities in another sense: they look out for and after each other and work together on things of mutual and shared interests, such as emergency services, environmental protection and settlement management. Each community, through the individuals we spoke to, has strongly-held and shared values, particularly around personal responsibility. Both communities have valued traditions and rituals that are actively maintained and that continue to evolve. Along with shared knowledge and language, these form part of a rich intangible heritage.

Each community appeared to be socially cohesive and well able to manage any inter-personal conflicts that emerged.

For people in each community, there are many shared experiences that create a bond between them, and with the place itself. Being in and close to nature, appreciating its beauty and its power, and interacting with other species is a powerful aesthetic and spiritual experience shared by many across both communities.

The experience of living simply and taking responsibility for basic necessities of life is widely shared and highly valued. The process of living on the landscape of each place has built an intimate knowledge and sense of connection. The rituals of 'checking in' with the place on arrival for example are widespread and reflect this valued intimacy with the landscape and the desire to witness its changeability.

The process of building and sustaining a shack also engages people in understanding and working with the natural cycles of the place, especially the weather. Nothing is ever certain nor immutable. Sustaining a shack is never-ending, and yet it is a shared delight, especially for men. There are rituals involved in checking out new solutions to shared challenges—water, power, waste—and in working together to make improvements. Technological innovations may be rejected or taken up strongly, such as in the adoption of solar and then wind power systems at Grey.

For many people in both communities, their experience of the shack settlement goes back to their own childhood, and for some it goes back one or more generations in their family. Their experiences have influenced how they see the world and how they relate to other people. The link between the experience of living in the shack settlement and their sense of personal identity was strongly expressed by many people. A felt connection to the past was equally apparent, with many speaking of the shack settlement as a place for remembering those who had handed on to them the opportunity to experience shack life and indeed 'life' in general. Continuing this process of handing-on was seen as important.

These shack settlements, located in isolated places and with their own distinctive values, culture and communities, offer a liminal space: a place outside everyday life and conventions. An escape and a place where people feel free and unburdened. Many people spoke of how 'shack culture' allowed them to be their true selves, while some reflected on the importance of the opportunity they had when young to explore who they were and might become.

Symbolically, these shack settlements also represent the past alive in the present—past values, pioneering, community—things seen as lost from contemporary life.

Will all this change, now that each settlement is much more accessible? This is a difficult question to answer. Every community evolves, and both these communities have changed over time. The community profiles from the present project indicate that there is a small but continuous turn-over of shack ownership. On the other hand there is considerable continuity and integrity in 'shack culture'. So the question becomes whether the transmission of this culture from old to new shackies will continue, and to what extent it will change (while recognising that all culture changes). Certainly, the challenge of building and sustaining a simple dwelling will continue to reinforce an appreciation of nature and its forces, and will build bonds between the 'builders'. The expressed attachments to the place come experiencing it, and for many current shackies this is a long-standing, cross-generational connection.



Fig 4.3



Fig 4.4



Fig 4.5



Fig 4.6



Fig 4.7



Fig 4.8



Fig 4.9



Fig 4.10



Fig 4.11



Fig 4.12



Fig 4.13



Fig 4.14

Early days (Wedge): 4.3 Lockwood shack, c1960, with Nanna Powell, family friend Lance Oliver, and 9 year old Graham Lockwood in the background; 4.4 Ron Lockwood and Norm Taylor preparing cray pots c. 1963; 4.5 Collecting fresh water in milk churns, and transporting them in the ex-bread van. (Lockwood photos courtesy of the Lockwood family); 4.6 In front of Vic Davis' shack in 1962 (photo courtesy Terry Egan).

Travelling on the track (Wedge): 4.7 The old track, and bog holes 4.8 Two trees marked the half way point (photos courtesy Ailsa McMullan)

Looking after the place: 4.9 Some of the dune revegetation volunteers – Grey; 4.10 Northern face of the dune following rehabilitation works in 2009, Grey; 4.11 Clean Up Australia Day, Wedge (Photo Alisa McMullan);

Community spaces and facilities: 4.12 Grey Volunteer Fire Brigade shed and equipment (Photo C Johnston); 4.13 Courtside and the old tennis court, Grey (Photo C Johnston); 4.14 Two Up ring (Gun Club), an Australia Day tradition, Wedge (Photo C Johnston);



Fig 4.15



Fig 4.16



Fig 4.17



Fig 4.18



Fig 4.29



Fig 4.20



Fig 4.21



Fig 4.22



Fig 4.23



Fig 4.24



Fig 4.25



Fig 4.26

Community spaces and facilities: 4.15 The dance floor in the Gun Club (Photo C Johnston).

Activities & traditions: 4.16 Wedge beach wedding (Photo Alisa McMullan); 4.17 Easter Races, Wedge 2008 (Photo Alisa McMullan); 4.18 Sunset at the Point, Wedge (Photo C Johnston); 4.19 Dawn service, ANZAC Day, Wedge (Photo Alisa McMullan); 4.20 Australia Day cricket, Wedge (Photo Alisa McMullan)

At the shack: 4.21 Upgrading a toilet: maintaining the shack is part of the experience, Grey (Shack 22); 4.22 Creating and maintaining water, power and communications systems, Wedge (Photo C Johnston) 4.23 Outside spaces to gather and eat support family and community networking, Wedge (Photo C Johnston); 4.24 Interior gathering places - Creamies bar, Wedge (Photo Alisa McMullan); 4.25 Closing and opening up the shack, Grey (Photo C Johnston); 4.26 Simple spaces and facilities are a desired part of the experience, Grey (Photo C Johnston);



Fig 4.27



Fig 4.28



Fig 4.29



Fig 4.30



Fig 4.31



Fig 4.32



Fig 4.33



Fig 4.34



Fig 4.35

At the shack (cont.) 4.27 and 4.28 Quirky and individual decorations (Photos C Johnston); 4.29 Insulation perhaps? (Photo C Johnston).

Natural beauty: 4.30 Beach at Wedge (Photo Lanna Robbins); 4.31 Looking inland to the dune – Wedge (Photo Johnston); 4.32 View along the coast, Grey.

Social research gatherings: 4.33 At Grey; 4.34 At Wedge; 4.35 Meeting at Ross Robinson's, Perth (Photos G Ashley)

4.7 Endnotes

- 1 This calculation should be treated as indicative only as there was no 'control' to ensure that only one response was received from each shack. Nevertheless, the response to the survey can be considered to be 'strong' across both shack settlements.
- 2 For example, research by Soosie Jobson into the history and demographics of Grey; research by Roy Jones and Reena Tiwari, Curtin Unnversity.
- 3 Grey Conservation and Community Association Inc (GCCA)., 'Position Paper', presented to the 2008 Task Force on Grey and Wedge, 2008.
- 4 Soosie Jobson, 'Generations – Occupations & Occupancy. Grey.' 2010.
- 5 Soosie Jobson, 'Shades of Grey', 2010.
- 6 Soosie Jobson, 'Generations – Occupations & Occupancy. Grey.' 2010.
- 7 Soosie Jobson, 'Generations – Occupations & Occupancy. Grey.' 2010.
- 8 Please note that the postcode analysis was combined for both Wedge and Grey.
- 9 Correspondence File 201/1961
- 10 WIPA, Submission into the Enquiry into Sacks Sites in WA', submission to the Parliamentary Enquiry, 2010.
- 11 Please note that the postcode analysis was combined for both Wedge and Grey.
- 12 Project Survey ID 154.
- 13 Small group discussion, Knowles shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-1).
- 14 Small group discussion, Knowles shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-1).
- 15 GCCA, 'Round 10 Coastal and Marine Grant 64995 Final Report', 2009.
- 16 Project Survey ID 62.
- 17 Project Survey ID 61.
- 18 Small group discussion, Foley shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref. Code GG-2).
- 19 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 20 Project Survey ID 81.
- 21 Tara Scott, Wedge Stories, personal and family history stories written as a contribution to the project, July 2011.
- 22 Interview, Norm & Max Gazeley, Cervantes, 8 August 2011 (Ref Code GI-2).
- 23 Fred Sharp, 'Snippets from the past, no date.
- 24 Small group discussion, Foley shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref. Code GG-2)
- 25 Project Survey ID 88.
- 26 Project Survey ID 282.
- 27 Project Survey ID 300.
- 28 Project Survey ID 106.
- 29 Project Survey ID 29.
- 30 Project Survey ID 295.
- 31 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 32 Small group discussion, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-2).
- 33 Project Survey ID 65.
- 34 Project Survey ID 61.
- 35 Project Survey ID 53.
- 36 Project Survey ID 33.
- 37 Interview, Colin Hill, Grey, 8 August 2011 (Ref Code GI-1).
- 38 Interview, Grant McGinnis, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-4).
- 39 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1).
- 40 Small group discussion, Foley shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref. Code GG-2)
- 41 Interview, Colin Hill, Grey, 8 August 2011 (Ref Code GI-1).
- 42 Interview, Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and Herman, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-1).

- 43 Interview, Grant McGinnis, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-4).
- 44 Small group discussion, Knowles shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-1).
- 45 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 46 Robin Adair pers. comm. 5 August 2011.
- 47 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
- 48 Small group discussion, Laundon shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-3).
- 49 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 50 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1).
- 51 Small group discussion, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-2).
- 52 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1).
- 53 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1).
- 54 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1).
- 55 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
- 56 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
- 57 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 58 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 59 Small group discussion, Sheppard shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-3).
- 60 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1)
- 61 Small group discussion, Sheppard shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-3).
- 62 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
- 63 Small group discussion, Foley shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref. Code GG-2)
- 64 Murray Knowles, pers. Comm. 5 August 2011.
- 65 Small group discussion, Sheppard shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-3).
- 66 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
- 67 Interview, Colin Hill, Grey, 8 August 2011 (Ref Code GI-1).
- 68 Project Survey ID 173.
- 69 Interview, Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and Herman, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-1).
- 70 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
- 71 Small group discussion, Knowles shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-1).
- 72 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
- 73 Project Survey ID 210.
- 74 Interview, Brad Glew and Tanya Stanton, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-3).
- 75 Interview, Annie McGuinness, Ross (Rosco) Knipe, Colin (Noddy) White, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-2).
- 76 Small group discussion, Sheppard shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-3).
- 77 Interview, Brad Glew and Tanya Stanton, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-3); Robin Adair pers. comm. 5 August 2011.
- 78 Interview, Grant McGinnis, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-4). .
- 79 Interview, Grant McGinnis, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-4). .
- 80 Project Survey ID 171.
- 81 Project Survey ID 204.
- 82 R. Tresidder quoted in Reena Tiwari 'Embedded poetics and surrounding politics of a coastal squatter settlement', 2009.
- 83 Interview, Annie McGuinness, Ross (Rosco) Knipe, Colin (Noddy) White, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-2).
- 84 Interview, Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and Herman, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-1).
- 85 Interview, Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and Herman, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-1).
- 86 Project Survey ID 270.
- 87 Project Survey ID 203.

- 88 Project Survey ID 140.
89 Project Survey ID 122.
90 Project Survey ID 121.
91 Project Survey ID 88.
92 Project Survey ID 306.
93 Project Survey ID 271.
94 Project Survey ID 295.
95 Project Survey ID 213.
96 Project Survey ID 213.
97 Project Survey ID 44.
98 Project Survey ID 40.
99 Project Survey ID 210.
100 Project Survey ID 171.
101 Project Survey ID 75.
102 Project Survey ID 242
103 Project Survey ID 224.
104 Project Survey ID 75.
105 Project Survey ID 70.
106 Project Survey ID 65.
107 Project Survey ID 272.
108 Project Survey ID 301.
109 Small group discussion, Laundon shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-3).
110 Small group discussion, Laundon shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-3).
111 Interview, Colin Hill, Grey, 8 August 2011 (Ref Code GI-1).
112 Project Survey ID 182.
113 Interview, Annie McGuinness, Ross (Rosco) Knipe, Colin (Noddy) White, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-2).
114 Small group discussion, Lime Industries, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-2).
115 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
116 Small group discussion, Lime Industries, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-2).
117 Small group discussion, Laundon shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-3).
118 Small group discussion, Loomes Shack, Grey (7 August 2011, Ref Code GG-1).
119 Project Survey ID 40.
120 Project Survey ID 311.
121 Project Survey ID 273.
122 Project Survey ID 261.
123 Project Survey ID 227.
124 Small group discussion, Laundon shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-3).
125 Interview, Brad Glew and Tanya Stanton, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-3).
126 Small group discussion, Timewell shack, Wedge (6 August 2011, Ref. Code WG-2).
127 Small group discussion, Robinson house, Perth - Wedge (10 August 2011, Ref. Code PWG-1).
128 Project Survey ID 298.
129 Interview, Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and Herman, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-1).
130 Project Survey ID 186.
131 These concepts arise from the field of consensus building.
132 Project Survey ID 322.
133 Project Survey ID 94.
134 Project Survey ID 94.
135 Project Survey ID 304.

- 136 Project Survey ID 112.
- 137 Project Survey ID 18.
- 138 Project Survey ID 323.
- 139 Project Survey ID 22.
- 140 Project Survey ID 175.
- 141 Project Survey ID 261.
- 142 Project Survey ID 148.
- 143 Project Survey ID 323.
- 144 Interview, Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and Herman, Wedge, 5 August 2011 (Ref Code WI-1).
- 145 Project Survey ID 173.
- 146 Project Survey ID 306.
- 147 Project Survey ID 279.
- 148 Project Survey ID 264.
- 149 Project Survey ID 156.
- 150 Project Survey ID 260.
- 151 Project Survey ID 205.
- 152 Project Survey ID 101.
- 153 Project Survey ID 294.
- 154 Project Survey ID 44.
- 155 Project Survey ID 304.
- 156 Project Survey ID 222.
- 157 Project Survey ID 79.
- 158 Project Survey ID 201.
- 159 Project Survey ID 197.
- 160 Project Survey ID 293.
- 161 Project Survey ID 295.
- 162 Project Survey ID 241.
- 163 Project Survey ID 84.
- 164 Project Survey ID 236.
- 165 Project Survey ID 221.
- 166 Project Survey ID 282.
- 167 Project Survey ID 280.
- 168 Project Survey ID 238.
- 169 Project Survey ID 220.
- 170 Project Survey ID 310.
- 171 Project Survey ID 241.
- 172 Project Survey ID 127.
- 173 Project Survey ID 265.
- 174 Project Survey ID 236.
- 175 Interview, Colin Hill, Grey, 8 August 2011 (Ref Code GI-1).
- 176 Project Survey ID 165.
- 177 Project Survey ID 102.
- 178 Project Survey ID 122.
- 179 Project Survey ID 88.
- 180 Project Survey ID 88.
- 181 Project Survey ID 186.

5.0 Physical Analysis of the Shack Settlements

5.1 Introduction

The evolving form of the Wedge and Grey settlement landscapes has been analysed using: aerial photography over a period of five decades; the other documentary information noted in Section 3.0; the interviews noted in Section 4.0, and fabric recording and analysis undertaken during the site visit. This section also contains an analysis of the design and construction of the shacks, and provides several case studies.

While the underlying natural topography and spatial arrangements of the two settlements are different, there are strong similarities in the historic patterns of settlement associated with the processes of establishment, expansion and consolidation. The analysis here supports the definition of the phases in the development of these two shack settlements noted in Section 3.0, namely:

- the establishment of the core areas of the settlements in the late 1950s and 1960s;
- the definition of the overall extent of the settlements by the end of the 1970s; and
- infilling during the 1980s before the prohibition on new shacks in 1994 associated with the WA Government's Squatter Policy.

The first phase, establishment, is most strongly associated with professional fishers and other family visitors from the local region and Perth while the second and third phases are more strongly associated with Perth-based-family recreation. See Figures 5.2 and 5.16 for a graphic representation of this evolution.

5.2 The Settlement Landscape of Wedge

5.2.1 The Evolving Landscape of Wedge

Like its name, Wedge really is a wedge or triangular shaped landform, with the southern headland and beach of 'The Point', and Wedge Island itself, located at the right angle intersection of dunes that form its north-south and east-west sides. Another dune roughly defines the hypotenuse of the triangle. Between the dunes and inside the wedge is a low interdunal swamp area that is prone to inundation in winter and during storm surges.

The Wedge and Grey Masterplan, 2000, prepared by CALM (now DEC), notes that Wedge is:

located on a large sand spit or cusped beach ridge promontory that extends seaward to the near shore reef. The landform is varied and comprised of dune ridges with low-lying areas or swales located between ridges. Slopes are moderately undulating resulting in a relatively exposed site. Large bare mobile sand dunes north and north east of Wedge rise dramatically providing a strong landscape contrast to the surrounding moderately undulating and vegetated landscape.

It also notes that:

*Most vegetation is low lying, a result of the wind swept nature of the coast. Little shelter or shade is found on dune faces and ridges. Thickets of tall shrubs and some trees occur in the more sheltered interdunal areas. Heath of low scrub dominated by *Acacia lasiocarpa* and *Melaleuca acerosa* can also be found.*

A key factor in shaping the urban form of the Wedge settlement is the need to find shelter from the prevailing winds. Winds are from the south and southwesterly direction for 60% of the year with hot east-southeasterlies in the summer months.¹

A key feature of the landscape, community identity and sense of place for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities is Wedge Island (which is a Nature Reserve). The physical relationship between Wedge and Wedge Island is constantly changing and a land bridge, or tombolo, occasionally forms to connect the two. This changing relationship is also a feature of the Wedge 'experience'. The aerial photos analysed in this report show that Wedge and Wedge Island were connected in 1969, 1972 and again in 1980 but are not connected in 2011.

Late 1950s and 1960s: Fishing Shacks and Local Holidays

The aerial photograph from 1956 (Figure 5.1) appears not to show shacks; however, the alignment of the clearly visible access track from the south set the foundations for the form of the shack settlement to follow. This track skirts inland around the large dune southeast of Wedge, then continues into Wedge at the base of the southern dune, before moving north beside the swamp and crossing to the beach approximately where the current first crossing occurs. This photo also shows that the dune areas to the north of Wedge were more extensive than currently—the fore dune area where many of the shacks are now located appears to be bare sand. Over time the main northern dune has moved north, with vacated areas colonised by vegetation.

The aerial photograph from 1969 shows the first core areas of the Wedge settlement at its south end. Here shacks were sheltered from the prevailing winds (noted above), located behind the dune system that runs east-west and then turns north. The first groups of shacks are around the Weigh Shed area associated with the professional crayfishers. A straight row of approximately a dozen shacks was located behind the north-south dune. A small number of shacks are also located either side of the low central marsh area, either on or just behind the dune at the southern end of the main beach or at the south end of the second dune immediately east of the low interdunal swamp area.

The history in Section 3.0 noted that in this period most shacks were associated with professional crayfishers or families from the local pastoral area, although some Perth amateur fishermen had also started to build shacks.

1970s: The Overall Form Defined

Aerial photographs from 1972 and 1980 show that by the end of the 1970s the overall form of the Wedge settlement had been established, with shacks extending up the beach to the north and along the second dune system immediately east of the interdunal swamp. Another track is visible to the east of Wedge near what appears to be a race track.

The aerial photo from 1972 shows multiple defined tracks from the east of Wedge and more tracks criss-crossing the lowland area to the shacks on the second dune ridge. There are more shacks along both of these dunes than in 1969. The main dune appears to be moving north.

This period was one associated with both professional fishing and holiday recreation, mostly involving people from Perth.

1980s: Infill and Recreation

As noted in Section 3.0, changes to the professional fishing system meant less professional fishers were located at Wedge from the early 1980s. This period also coincided with the boom in families

looking for cheap holiday accommodation away from Perth, the advent of 4WD vehicles, movement from other shack settlements that were being removed, and a resultant transfer of some shacks from fishers and local farmers to Perth families.

The aerial photograph from 1990 (Figure 5.1) shows that over this period there was an intensification or infill of the overall form of Wedge that had been developed in the 1970s. The areas infilled were the more exposed dune areas to the south and west of the first areas developed, as well as inland from the northern beach area and to the east of the second dune.

Although there were heath scrub areas available to the east of Wedge, the distance to the beach and its more exposed location meant that once the northern and southern extent of Wedge had been reached, infill and consolidation were preferred over further expansion to the east.

An environmental impact that emerged around this time was vegetation loss and sand dune blowouts that resulted in the inundation of about 11 shacks over a 2-year period. This was as a result of an inappropriate track over the dunes 'in a gully behind Maurie Herdsman's shack'.² This impact on the environment and on the shacks led to much more conscious community management of tracks and resulted in active dune stabilisation and tree plantings.

1990s to 2011

Following the issuing of leases in 1994 the overall form of Wedge has remained the same. While not allowed in lease conditions, the continued sale of shacks has no doubt resulted in some changes to individual shacks with each ownership change. The extent of vegetation does seem more in 2011 from the aerial photograph than in 1990 (see Figures 1.3 and 5.1).

5.2.2 Current Wedge Settlement Landscape

The high point at the turnoff from the new Indian Ocean Drive allows for a distant view of Wedge as a vegetated area where individual shacks are not noticeable. The track enters the settlement along the original entry into Wedge from the southeast. A metal dump that was mounded up when the bitumen entry road was formed is unsightly; however, it is understood that plans are afoot to remove this material.

The settlement is visually contained in the south by the steep southern dune fronting the ocean and in the north by the huge dune system (see Figures 1.3 and 5.7).

Apart from the high dune that runs east-west at the south end of the settlement, the overall topography is defined by low north-south running dunes with vegetated swales. Between the two main north-south dunes is the central interdunal swamp that is a strong visual feature of the site—it provides a good separation between parts of the settlement creating distinct areas, such as the shacks that line the second dune to the east.

Shacks are generally sheltered behind dunes and located a reasonable, but varying distance apart. Dune tops, or the one or two lookouts built with shacks, provide a view across the landscape of shacks, low trees and shrubs (see Figures 1.5, 5.4 and 5.5).

A recent landscape pattern is that of the addition of new technology to shacks with wind generators and solar PV cells. Another recent pattern is some second-level lookouts.

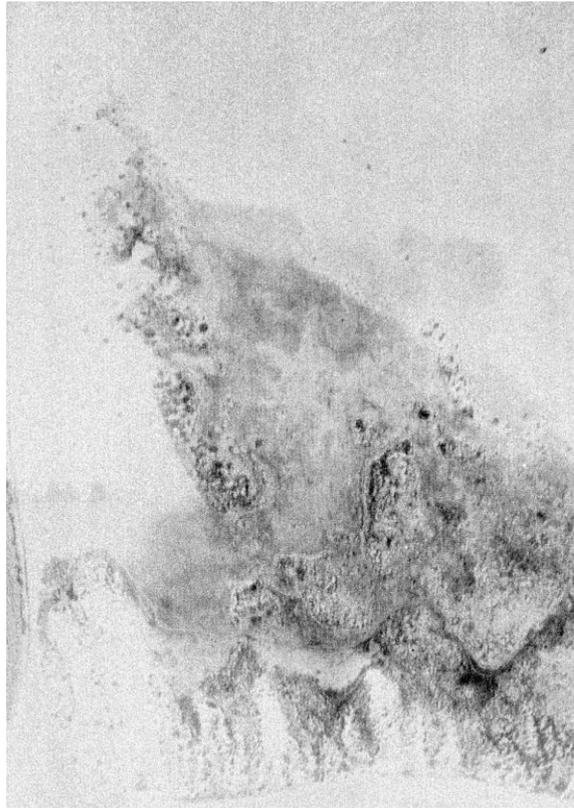
There are two types of tracks: tracks for through traffic and tracks to individual and groups of shacks. While the nature of the tracks gives them the appearance of recent or random creations, the aerial photos indicate that the primary circulation tracks have remained fairly constant.

The increase in vegetation in the settlement over time seems to be the product of the dunes moving north and vegetation colonising these areas. This has also made more land available for shacks. The 1956 photo shows what appears to be an extensive sand area behind the beach that later became vegetated and became an area for shack development, by the end of the 1970s.

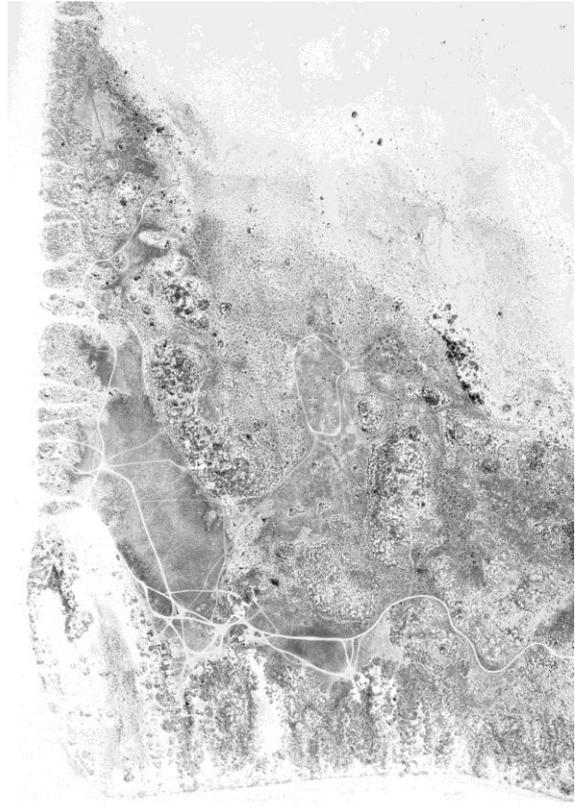
There are a number of locations that are associated with particular uses and activities. The Point on the beach facing Wedge Island is where people traditionally meet for a sunset drink. The Gun Club area is east of the settlement and is a recreation area that includes a golf range, a cricket pitch and a hall used for meetings and parties. The PIE shop in the centre of the settlement is actually where first aid equipment is permanently set up and accessible.

A number of distinct areas or precincts are evident in the shack landscape, namely:

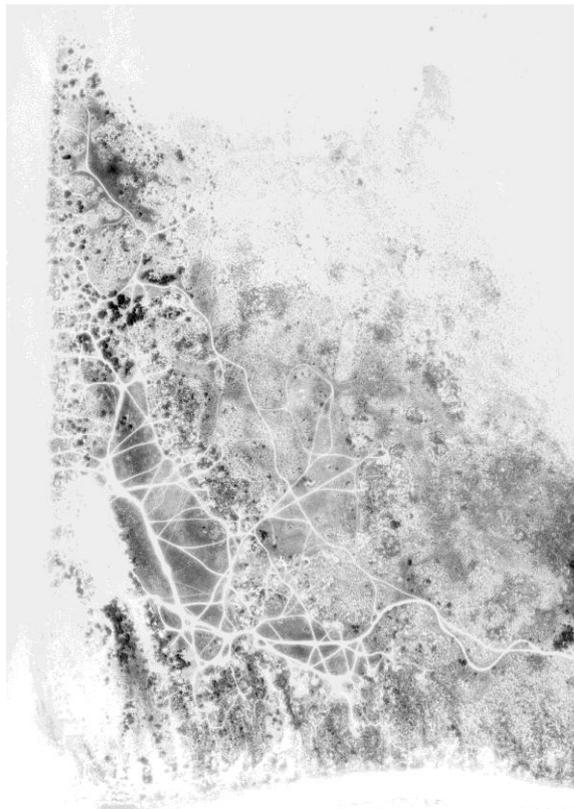
- the area around the Ice Shed where ice is sold to shack owners by one of the professional fishers. This area includes a number of pine trees and appears to be one of the first areas established (Figure 5.3);
- the street of shacks lined with tamarisk trees, located behind the north-south dune in the south of the settlement, is where professional fishers built shacks early on (Figure 5.42); and
- the circle of shacks located at the north end of the swamp area, where shacks appear to have been constructed in a grouping around an open area.



1956



1969



1980



1990

Figure 5.1 The development of the Wedge shack settlement at four periods. An analysis of this development is provided in Figure 5.2. (Source: Landgate photos)

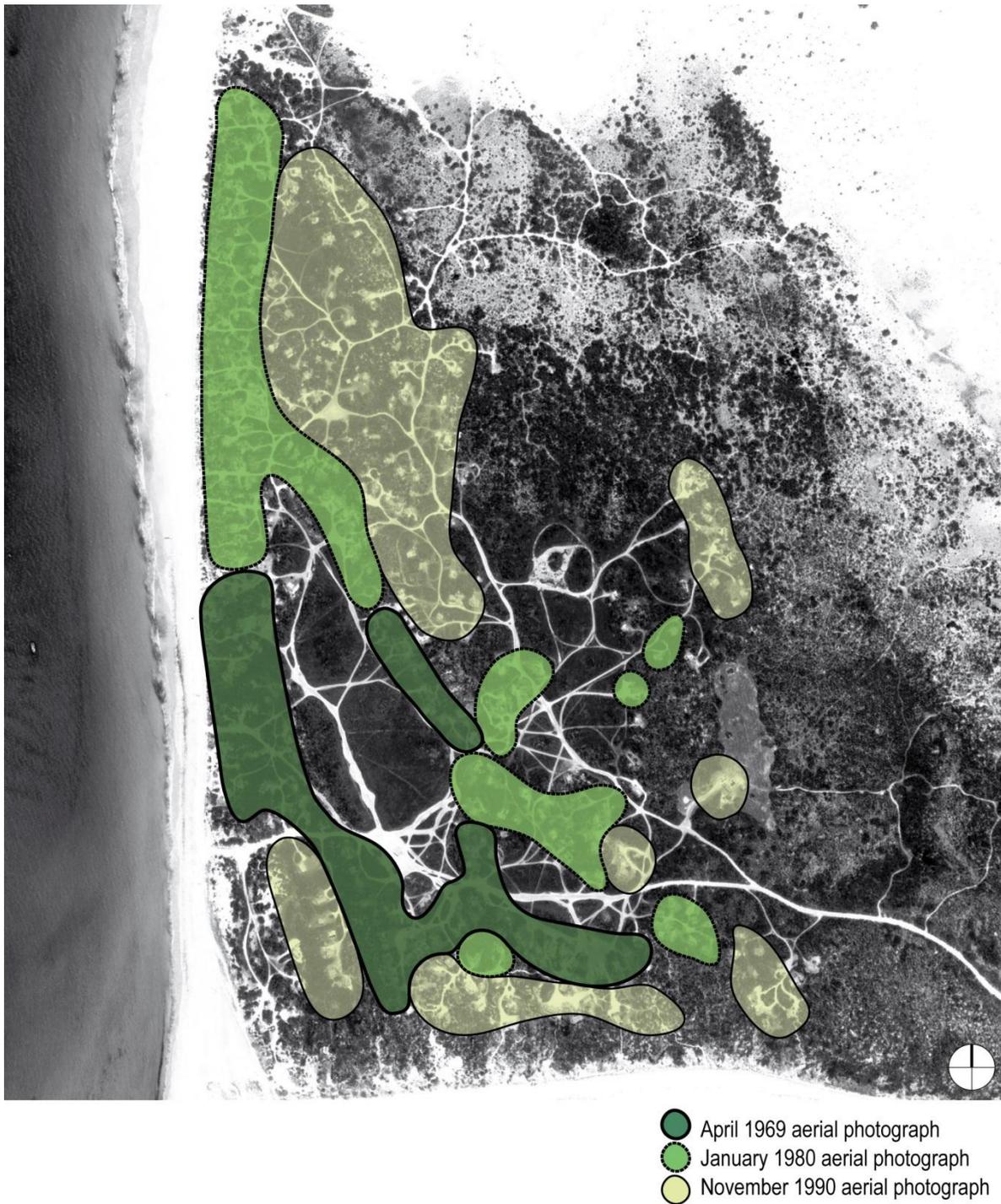


Figure 5.2 Analysis of aerial photography from different periods for Wedge shown on Figure 5.1 to show the key phases described in this section: establishment phase up to the end of the 1960s (dark green), expansion/settlement definition phase by the end of the 1970s (light green) and consolidation infill phase at the end of the 1980s (yellow). Note that the areas shown are for indicative purposes rather than indicating the specific dates of construction of individual shacks. (Source GML over Google image)



Fig 5.3



Fig 5.4



Fig 5.5

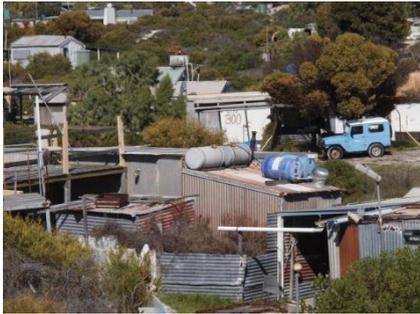


Fig 5.6



Fig 5.7



Fig 5.8



Fig 5.9



Fig 5.10



Fig 5.11



Fig 5.12



Fig 5.13



Fig 5.14

Figures (left to right) 5.3 An early area of Wedge—the Ice Shed with planted pines; 5.4 Typical shack landscape of coastal heath and shack roofs; 5.5 View from south towards northern dune; 5.6 Corrugated landscape with 'Wedge car'; 5.7 View from northern dune south to Wedge Island; 5.8 View from dune southwest to crayfishing boats at anchor; 5.9 The Gun Club community building with cricket pitch in the foreground; 5.10 Drinks at The Point; 5.11 View east over central interdunal swamp and track after rain; 5.12 Rainbow over shacks and planted trees; 5.13 Coastal heath and Wedge Island from Indian Ocean Drive area; 5.14 Crayfishing boat off the beach. (Source: GML)

5.3 The Settlement Landscape of Grey

5.3.1 The Evolving Landscape of Grey

While the overall coastal plain landscape and associated vegetation communities are similar at Wedge and Grey, one difference is the presence of two rocky limestone headlands. As noted in the Wedge and Grey Masterplan 2000, these headlands ‘form a small, protected bay offering an attractive contrast to the predominant beach shoreline’.³

In a similar manner to Wedge, it was the original track access points to this protected bay, sheltered from the prevailing winds by the southern headland that provided the foundation for the establishment of Grey.

The Masterplan states that the southern limestone headland is unstable and the ‘foredune south of the main [southern] headland is steep with sand blow outs through access ways’. It notes two other natural features of Grey—the inland dunes and the northern beach:

*Two high north-south dune ridges are found in the centre of the settlement, with a large sheltered swale between them. Dune slopes are moderately steep. Grey’s northern beach is narrow with small coves that provide discrete beach areas.*⁴

As discussed below, it is the natural landform features of the southern limestone headland, the nearby coastal dune, the two central dunes and swale, the central beach area and the northern beach that have each created distinct shack areas of specific character.

Late 1950s and 1960s: Fishing Shacks and Local Holidays

While the aerial photograph of 1954 obtained for this project does not clearly show shacks at this time, access tracks from the north and south (the current entry) enter into the sheltered central bay at two points where the current boat ramp and memorial are located. The original access track to Grey was established as part of the WWII coast watching operations.

The 1967 aerial shows a number of tracks and shacks around the southern headland, as well as around the central beach area (Figure 5.15). The dunes are not too prominent compared to the southern dune shown in photos of 2004 and 2011.

A track can be seen along the back of the central sheltered beach. It is understood that this was washed away along with several shacks from wave action (during storms) that followed the dynamiting of the reef between the Green Islets.⁵

At this time some tracks also go the southern end of the north beach and several shacks appear here. At some stage this area became known as Dalkeith.⁶ This may be a reference to a wealthy suburb in Perth by the same name and at least points to the beginnings of an influx of Perth residents at some time—and may also be a tongue-in-cheek reference to differentiate the financial resources available to different groups of shack owners in Grey.

At this time a number of shacks had also been constructed in the second valley area behind the central beach.

It does not appear that the gazetted town allotment plan of Grey from 1968 impacted the form of Grey and in fact it was withdrawn with the creation of Reserve 43284 in 1995. As noted in Section 3.7, at least one shack was located within one of the gazetted town lots.

1970s: The Overall Form Defined

In the 1978 aerial most of the shacks that currently exist in the southern and central areas have been constructed (see Figure 5.15). The track now extends north behind the beach and the shacks extend north to their current extent, but are more spread out. For example, shack G123 was constructed at this north end in about 1982 when it was moved from Garden Island.⁷

The southern dune has started to be more noticeable at this time and the areas of sand around and between shacks is more noticeable than is the case currently.

1980s: Infill and Recreation

In the early 1980s the crayfishing industry became very capital intensive and there were reduced pot licences (in response to over fishing) resulting in bigger boats; the result was that the last fishing family left Grey in 1982. However, as noted above:

as the fishing families left, Perth families eagerly took up ownership of the buildings.⁸

As shown on the aerial photo of 1983 (Figure 5.15), most of the shacks currently in Grey had been constructed except for one or two at the north end of the beach and inland in the southern area. Infilling has occurred along the northern 'Dalkeith' beach in the late 1970s and early 1980s as noted above.

There was a flurry of building along the northern bay referred to as Dalkeith, with another 50 or so shacks appearing...⁹

An aerial photo of 1989 shows a grey area in the centre that is most likely the tennis court. At this time the dune to the south of Grey had still not blown out.

1990s to Present

An aerial photo of 1994 also shows the tennis court area and that some areas near the southern dune appear to be cleared, apparently (initially) caused by an inappropriately placed beach access track.¹⁰ The aerial photo of 2004 shows that the dune had blown out and was enveloping shacks in that area (see Figure 5.20).

In summary, most of the shacks appeared in the period 1967 to 1983, with some probably there in the late 1950s. Most started around the sheltered central bay area where the road came in and the boat ramp is located. The northern beach area had only a few shacks in the late 1960s. By the late 1970s they had extended to the current extent north and from the early 1980s they were more densely in-filled along this northern beach.

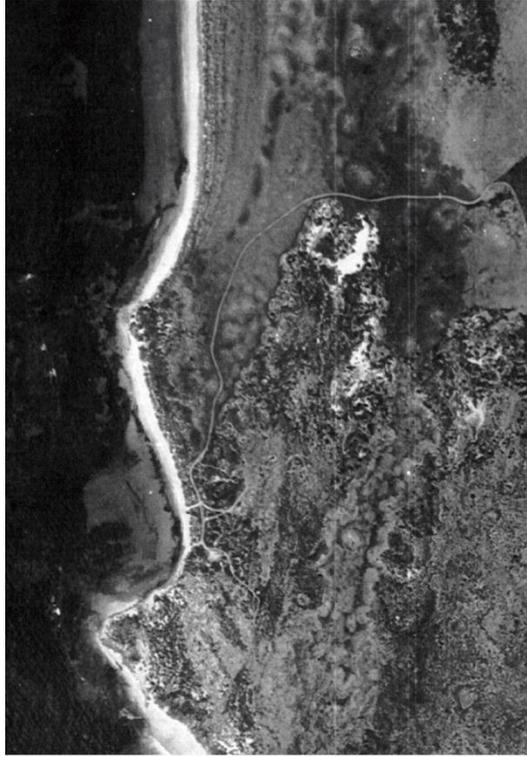
5.3.2 Current Landscape of Grey

While the recent Indian Ocean Drive passes very close to Grey (and some shacks in the north are visible from the road) the actual entry track follows along one of the original entries. The entry experience of a winding entry track that ends on the straight row of shacks behind the beach is an example of the differing landscape areas of Grey. These strongly differentiated areas are defined primarily by the undulating topography of the two limestone headlands and the two main dune systems. This underlying topography creates the following character areas:

- the southern headland group that is fairly exposed, and because of this lacks much relieving landscape (Figure 5.27);

- the shacks around the sheltered central bay in two areas, with features being the cliff edge shacks, the boat ramp and the memorials;
- the southern inland area between the two dunes—here the more pragmatic character of shed like shacks is probably associated with fishing use and as a result of being closer to the boat ramp;
- the northern inland area—that is like a hidden valley among the various swales and nooks; and
- the northern beach group, known as Dalkeith, which was more recently developed and probably more strongly associated with family groups than the southern inland areas, which are more associated with access to the boat ramp and fishing.

Evidence of change over time includes the former tennis court site in the centre of the settlement and the recent second-level lookouts along Dalkeith. These second levels, while providing better ocean views, are starting to impact the otherwise single-level scale of the group.



1954



1967



1978



1983

Figure 5.15 The development of the Grey shack settlement at four periods. An analysis of this development is provided in Figure 5.16. (Source: Landgate photos)



- December 1967 aerial photograph
- March 1978 aerial photograph
- March 1989 aerial photograph

Figure 5.16 Analysis of aerial photography from different periods for Grey shown on Figure 5.15 to show the key phases described in this section: establishment phase up to the end of the 1960s (dark green), expansion/settlement definition phase by the end of the 1970s (light green) and consolidation infill phase at the end of the 1980s (yellow). Note that the areas shown are for indicative purposes rather than indicating the specific dates of construction of individual shacks. (Source GML over Google image)



Fig 5.17



Fig 5.18



Fig 5.19



Fig 5.20



Fig 5.21



Fig 5.22



Fig 5.23



Fig 5.24



Fig 5.25

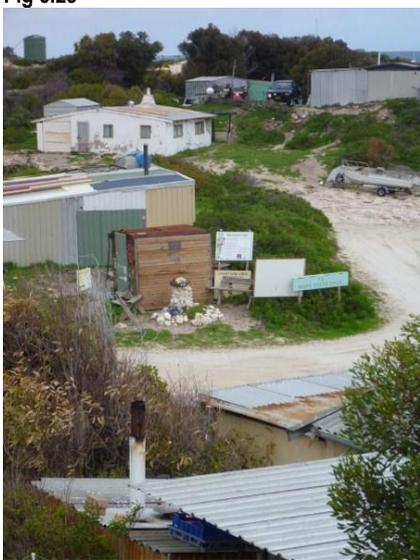


Fig 5.26



Fig 5.27



Fig 5.28

Figures (left to right) 5.17 Coloured shack forms; 5.18 'Dalkeith' northern beach; 5.19 Tennis court and Courtside shack; 5.20 This sand dune engulfed shack is now stabilised; 5.21 Sheltered bay from southern headland; 5.22 Inland area at south end; 5.23 Memorials and DEC signage; 5.24 Inland area in central area; 5.25 Second-level lookouts; 5.26 Area near boat ramp and memorials; 5.27 Sheltered bay with shacks on southern headland; 5.28 Shackscape. (Source GML)

5.4 Shack Design and Construction—Wedge and Grey

The analysis below is based on the results of a survey distributed to shack owners, the meetings and interviews held during the site investigations, and the records of photography undertaken by the project team and shack owners.

5.4.1 Shack Construction Surveys

A survey was provided to the two shack community organisations to distribute to owners regarding the construction of shacks. This survey included date of construction, alteration dates, the wall structure and cladding, the roof form and cladding, and other fields on length of association and builder, where known.

A statistically significant number of forms were returned and tallied for Wedge (148 from 320). While the small number of returns at Grey (14 from 100) are probably not statistically conclusive, a large majority of shacks at Grey were photographed by the project team.

In relation to a question on construction date, an analysis of the 89 responses received to this question at Wedge shows that over half were constructed in the 1970s and 1980s (56/89), with the highest number in the 1970s (30/89). A small number were constructed in the 1950s (5/89) but there were more constructed in the 1960s (11/89).

In terms of construction data, an analysis of the 88 responses received at Wedge shows that the large majority (77/88) include a pitched (gable) roof form, while a significant number have both a pitched and gable roof form (17/88)—most likely reflecting the typical skillion addition made to the original gable form. (In relation to skillion roofs, the number noted is likely to be greater as shack owners may not have noted the roof form of additions on surveys.)

In relation to structure, the large majority of shacks have timber post and beam frame construction (78/88) while about a third also have a stud frame in either the primary part or an addition (28/88). Only one shack has a steel stud frame and one shack has a load bearing wall (a stone addition to W69).

In relation to cladding, the large majority of shacks use corrugated iron as external wall cladding (82/88) and a reasonable number (including additions) use another metal profile (such as Trimdeck) (24/88). A small number of shacks have external claddings of fibro (AC) (10/88) (including additions). In relation to roof sheeting, while a small number of shacks have fibro roof claddings (6/88), the very large majority use either corrugated iron or Trimdeck metal sheeting.

5.4.2 Factors Affecting a Design Ethos

The historical process of the development of Wedge and Grey, the types of people who were attracted to establish shacks, family and friend relationships, the lack of tenure and difficulties of transport during the period when shacks were constructed, all have strongly defined a shack design ethos. While not written down as rules, these are part of the *modus operandi* of how people designed and built shacks.

Additional factors that were articulated by shack owners during meetings and interviews (see Section 4.0) include the use of second hand materials, make-do design and innovation that balance conflicting notions of individuality and fitting in. While shack owners agreed that their shacks are not beautiful in the traditional sense, they had a community aesthetic value that reflected an individual response to a collective attitude to the reuse of materials and use of technology. Approvals to build,

siting and design were not so much needed as unofficially sought and given—one tended to be invited to build a shack, and its location was a process of quiet negotiation or ‘checking’.

Interviews with shack owners elucidated responses on a number of aspects of design ethos that have been grouped in relation to: shacks shaping personal identity and achievement; shacks shaping team/community identity; life skills and aesthetic values.

Shacks and Personal Identity/Sense of Achievement

Discussion on the aesthetic values of the shacks most often related to aspects of individual identity or identity within the group/community and how the act of shack construction, maintenance and adaptation was seen as self-defining or character building.

The idea of personal transformation through action or ‘practice’ has been identified in the writings of Tiwari:

to make a spatial practice is to engage in a transformation – practice offers a model of a more active process than consumption. Practice offers opportunities for empowering the self-identity formation and a release of the spirit of creativity. The creative aspect is very prominent in places like Wedge which do not work as mere ‘spectacle sites’ but afford an opportunity for the users to participate in their creation thereby participating in the creation of ‘self’.¹¹

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

A sense of achievement after a day’s work

You need to put in the effort to get the rewards

Something you have created yourself – it may be a bit of an eyesore but it’s something you have made

Each is unique and shows the personality of those who built it

Pride in your shack

The fact that you go through 11 hours to bring the material here and then you get to bang the nails in

The difference between shacks is the important thing

We are all the individual creators of these places – they express ourselves

The shack is an extension of the person who built it and reflects their character

Shacks Defining Community Identity

The corollary of individual identity is the sense of belonging to a group that shack construction brings. The individual ideas create a resource of ideas for the group.

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

You walk around and see how people build their way – it gives you ideas

Everyone’s a builder up here – and its better if it’s not perfect

It (the shack) has the same use for me as the ‘men’s shed’

Part of the battler spirit – people who don’t have the opportunity to go anywhere else and this is where we made our community

If you are missing something someone will let you have it – it may 'costa slab'

Collectively a piece of Australiana – we are losing this identity

Clubbing together to put on a new roof

There are community expectations rather than hard and fast rules

Life Skills

Related to the community identity aspects are those broader life skills that shack owners feel the shacks bring them.

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

It levels everyone out

We get used to being in groups and talking – learning and communication skills

Its talk – it's all talk (the process of negotiation)

Learning that the lights are not always on – they learn where these things come from

Plumbing on display – you see how it works

From time to time you need to rely on each other; therefore you need to be reasonable

Being in shacks in wild weather – feel the elements

You don't sweat the small stuff

People learn skills that while they may be learning traditional principles they think they are inventing something new (so they learn from first principles)

Aesthetic Values

Associated with each of the above aspects of shack design ethos is that of a community held aesthetic value. Most shack owners felt the aesthetic values were not to do with a traditional understanding of beauty, but were strongly connected to both shared community values of 'low-key' appearance and individuality of expression—a careful balance between personal expression and fitting-in. In this situation creativity and innovation are appreciated as an aesthetic value. While there are no actual limits on individual expression, fitting in within a group creates self-imposed limits.

Tiwari states that:

The highly unregulated aesthetic at Wedge is revealed in the various ways of dealing with water collection and heating systems, refrigeration, and toilets. Inventive and unconventional use of materials and methods of construction, and the persistently intrusive relationship between the interior of buildings and the wilderness of the exterior world have created a shack architecture that is site specific.¹²

Tiwari also discusses the broader dimension of aesthetic values at Wedge:

In relation to aesthetics, there is a notion of an evolutionary sense of place defined by inaccessibility, natural environment and unique community dynamic.¹³

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

Successful functionality

Things get done by necessity – you don't do things to impress the neighbours

Ingenuity has an aesthetic component

Shacks as unique structures – but there is a sense of order

Lack of red tape helps you to be creative

The best thing is seeing the shack and the Island together

If they became houses it would not be a shack community

Aesthetically pleasing? To us they are – beauty is the eye of the beholder

Not quite perfect is a bit of the character

You would not say that they were beautiful, but they all have great character

Are they beautiful – yes they are – I look at how they have been made – to me that is art

5.4.3 Phases of Use and Construction

Phases of Shack Use

The phases of shack use are related to changes in ownership and the growth of families. Change in ownership is related to the general shift from professional fishers to recreational users, particularly in the 1980s as changes in the crayfishing industry meant less on-site stays—many shacks built by crayfishers are now owned by recreational users. As noted in Section 3.6.1 and shown on Figure 3.12 the first phase of shacks was constructed quickly as shelter with driftwood frames and earth/sand floors covered in carpet.

As shack settlements have been removed elsewhere, the owners of those shacks have sought to move to Wedge and Grey.¹⁴

While not allowed under the post 1994 lease conditions, shacks have continued to change hands and new ownership is likely to result in physical changes to the shacks. A few owners, including some older residents, do occupy the shacks on a close to permanent basis—shacks of these residents often define an area of land with fences and pavilion forms.

A typical change in use that impacts the form of shacks is the growth of families and the number of generations that are accommodated over holiday periods—this is reflected in large skillion and pavilion additions filled with beds.

Phases of Shack Construction

People first camped or stayed in shacks of friends while fishing at Wedge or Grey. Longer term shack occupation typically started with the construction of a simple shack or shelter which often led to a second more substantial shack as families started staying. Finally this process ended with additions to extend the shack.

Ross Robinson notes that when he started coming to Wedge it was a couple of years before the first rudimentary tent-like dwellings (or canvas shacks) were replaced by shacks with corrugated-iron roofs from which water was gathered. Robinson notes that because of this desire to have a roofed structure which captured water:

spare time was taken collecting flotsam off the beach. This was mainly pine logs and planks which had been jettisoned at sea by freighters heading for Freemantle. Most of the timbers were marked with Japanese writing so it was evident where it came from.¹⁵

The first shack that Robinson built was a 'pretty basic' structure, which, like many shacks, had a shell grit earth floor covered with carpet. When his family started staying, concerns over the fauna (including snakes) that lived around the floor prompted a second shack phase that had a raised floor and was partly prefabricated in Perth. A friend assisted with transporting the frames to site:

Come Saturday I began putting in the stumps. Imagine my surprise when six of my neighbours turned up ready to help. All the stumps and floor joists were in by lunch time. This was the norm in those days.¹⁶

A typical typology of shack phases of construction started with the timber wall framing (sometimes with steel posts) and a steel truss roof frame of the type used in garage construction. These garage frames are in standard Imperial measurements from the 1960s, eg 20 foot frames (6.1m). These tend to be garage width gable forms with fairly low pitches. The light materials are selected for transport by car over rough tracks. A typical wall cladding is corrugated iron, mostly unlined and uninsulated. The first phase typically had an outside pit toilet.

Subsequent stages involved skillion additions, external covered areas with internal toilets and showers (Figure 5.35). Some shacks have extended in the same form as the original (Figure 5.102). Some shacks that started with a narrow garage roof truss width have extended the roof form sideways (Figure 5.33).

An alternative form is the addition of a number of pavilions around open spaces. This approach has the advantage of small, easy to erect units, privacy for family members, shack territory definition and the use of outdoor spaces linked under shade cloth (Figures 5.30 and 5.89). As noted above, those owners who are on site more regularly tend to have a number of pavilion form parts to their shack.

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

The shack tells its story of construction: nails and jarrah – my grandfather; nails and tin – my father; zincalume and tech screws – me!

A collage of different inputs over the years

A little bit of everyone who has been here – I inherited the black board in my shack and I keep the chalk notes from an earlier owner.

Julia talked about the bar where the interview group were sitting and how it reflects the four men who were involved in its construction

My shack started as a 12 foot by 20 foot steel frame shed structure that I bought from a crayfisher. It was rusted so I re-built it and re-clad it and am very satisfied with the result

The shack had central walls of packing cases that I took out to make a bigger space

5.4.4 Form and Functional Components

Shack Forms

As noted in the survey summary above, the most typical shack form is a simple gable-roofed garage form with small skillion roofed additions (Figures 5.29 and 5.30). Only one shack has a hip roof (Figure 5.32). Many shacks have a series of skillions (Figure 5.34).

Less typical are the more complex groupings of several gable-roofed forms (Figure 5.35).

Some shacks have a strange form resulting from level changes and expressed staircases (Figure 5.36).

A more recent trend are second levels and lookouts (Figures 5.25 and 5.37).

Shack Components

One of the classic shack elements can be seen in the hinged window covers that serve multiple functions: when the shack is unoccupied they act as a security screen and when occupied they act as a sun awning or a form of external verandah (Figure 5.38).

I love the shutters and the props to hold them open – it's very beachy

Major features of most shacks, associated with an outdoor lifestyle, are the verandahs and outdoor covered areas (Figures 5.30 and 5.39).

Other external elements include: fishing cleaning benches and generator sheds (Figure 5.40); toilets (Figure 5.94); external toilet and header tanks (Figure 5.93).

Services, pipes and wires often hidden in urban dwellings are exposed and form a dominant element in the landscape (Figure 5.41).

What is in the suburbs interior and mysterious is exterior and prominent at Wedge. Here domestic space often appears to have been turned inside out.¹⁷

5.4.5 Defining Boundaries / Spatial Arrangement / Landscape

An interesting aspect of settlements that have developed 'without rules' is the dynamic between respecting, on one hand, the local norms on designing and locating shacks and defining boundaries—the 'unwritten rules'—while at the same time expressing personal preferences and defining territory. The nature and pattern of human habitation in the shack settlements may therefore have anthropological value that sets them apart from 'normal' urban environments. This anthropological value may also be a heritage value.

Once people had been invited to build a shack, or had sought and received local concurrence of some sort to build, the location of shacks was generally determined by the existing topography. For example, at Wedge the north-south dune at the south end of Wedge, known at one time as Snake Gulley, became a generator for what has become a straight line or 'street' of shacks (Figure 5.42); another example being the long beach at Grey. In some circumstances the spatial arrangement of shacks seems to have been to create a common area between shacks. At Wedge there is a circle of shacks around an open space 'green' where apparently groups gather to socialise.

At Wedge the shacks are generally dispersed, while at Grey the shacks along the waterfront are more closely located.

The boundaries associated with each shack appear to be more to do with defining a necessarily associated area rather than defining 'my land'. Boundaries between shacks are sometimes defined with metal sheet or Super 6 fibre cement fences (Figures 5.43 and 5.45)—particularly where a children play yard is created (Figure 5.100). Generally, however, there are not fences but plantings (Figure 5.113), rope loops (Figure 5.108), cars (that are used only locally) (Figure 5.96) fishing equipment (Figures 5.69 and 5.71), outdoor covered areas (Figure 5.112), clothes lines, generators, fish-cleaning areas, toilet sheds (Figure 5.94), tanks and tracks, which are all used to define 'private space'.

External spaces are used for activities that would normally be done internally. One shack has a mini pool that double as entertainment for children and a good way of washing off sand (Figure 5.87). Where sand movement is an issue, old carpet is used around shacks—which also defines the space.

The natural heath landscape has colonised areas between shacks and is a critical aspect of dune retention at Grey. Plantings have been used to define both shared space (Tamaresk 'street' trees in Wedge) and private spaces with Rottneest and Norfolk pines (Figure 5.88) now providing landmarks in the shack landscape. Shack W139 at Wedge has used trees and driveway edging stones as a way of creating a carriage loop entry space (Figure 5.113) that is more formal than the shack itself (see Figure 5.114).

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

There are unwritten rules on personal space and boundaries – people are aware of these boundaries

You would just pick your spot – as long as you did not get into another shack owner's personal space

5.4.6 Structure and Cladding Materials

Shack Structures

Structures are almost all of a light framing type; most typically a timber stud or post and frame with a metal truss or open web roof frame. Few seem to be constructed with full corner posts and frame, such as found in slab huts in alpine areas of NSW. Many have a vertical post and horizontal girt system found in garages rather than full stud framing with the wider spacing of the framing that suits unlined corrugated-iron sheeting. Some structures are fully pre-fabricated steel post and trusses most typically from a second hand garage purchased in Perth (Figure 5.46)

The use of masonry is very limited, with the only recorded use being stone walling around an earlier steel frame shack by one the professional fishers at Wedge associated with longer periods of occupation (Figures 5.116 to 5.121).

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

Everything has its last life up here

We always go past chuck out days

Shack Cladding

Cladding materials are generally light and hardy for ease of transport on rough tracks and are second hand reused materials. While some shacks are asbestos cement (AC) or post mid-1980s fibre cement, the brittle nature of these materials meant that they are not generally used (Figure

5.45). By far and away the most common material for walling and roofing is corrugated iron with more recent Klip Lock and Trimdeck also used (Figure 5.48).

Unusual materials include the use of second hand signs (Figure 5.49) and bus windows (Figure 5.51)

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

My shack was made of three steel frames with timber girts (horizontal framing) – the corrugated iron was from a 90 year old shearing shed

We used Lysaght cover wrapping sheets from around corrugated iron rolls

My shack was five or six second hand garden sheds

You can fix anything at Wedge

Prefabrication

Some shacks are reused prefabricated structures such as the Nissen Hut at Wedge (Figure 5.52) and the re-cycled Pizza Hut roof at Grey (Figure 1.8).

Some shacks are recycled building site sheds (Figure 5.53) or appear to be typical shearer's sheds (Figure 5.54).

Some shacks use refrigeration panels in their wall construction (Figure 5.50).

5.4.7 Interiors

An aspect of shack design is that of the multi-use, or varying use, of spaces according to accommodation needs. Many areas throughout shacks are filled with beds for use in peak periods (Figure 5.98).

Many of the shacks express a masculine 'men's shed' character, at least in parts. For example, the Cream shack at Wedge (W287), has a large open room dominated by a long hardwood bar (Figure 5.99). A number of shacks create a hotel bar atmosphere with the use of posters and pool tables and other bar paraphernalia (Figures 5.78 and 5.57).

The interiors are an eclectic mix of furniture and decoration, with sea shells and other maritime collections featuring (Figures 5.59 and 5.57).

Quotations from a shack owner during group meetings or in online project surveys:

The layout of shacks is important – a big central space that is comfortable and you feel at home in.

5.4.8 Services and Technologies

The use of services technology is an absolute necessity given there are no services to either settlement (apart from a pay phone). The use of technology is also a way in which shack owners express personalisation with make-do independence and the creative use of new technology.

Water and power are the critical needs and the technology for these has evolved over time. In terms of water rain water tanks fed by roof gutters is one source of water but bore water is another source that is typically pumped to header tanks and gravity fed to use mainly for toilets, showers and clothes washing. Some shacks share a generator and pump to access the bore water (Figure 5.60). In recent years plastic soft drink concentrate tanks in frames have been widely re-used in place of

gal tanks (Figures 5.61 and 5.62). The tanks form a strong visual aspect of the landscape—often located at high points on roofs (Figure 5.63) and sand hills (Figure 5.62).

The Loomes family at Grey (Shack G106) described the set up for water supply:

A few bores that feed two tanks on the hill – one of which is ours – these feed a line of 4-5 shacks. You got invited into ‘town water’, ie the bore water system –I just got a bill, jokes Rob. We use bore water for toilets (2000 gal septic dug into ground) and fish cleaning. Different toilets – boys outside – girls inside. There is another tank on top of the toilet that provides fresh water to the shack – 500 gal [see Figure 5.91]. Gen set as back up to PV cells in the shed and more batteries in the house. Two fridges run off the battery pack. Fresh water also used to clean off the boat motor.

The typical manner of obtaining hot water is with small commercial chip heaters (eg Metters) where chips of timber are used to heat pipes filled with water that with a syphoning action heat a large tank of water (Figure 5.79). A pressure relief valve is needed and goose neck vents and circular flues are a feature of many roofs (Figure 5.41).

Kerosene fuel was historically the main way to power lights and fridges and has been replaced mostly with gas tanks and the use of electric power. Traditionally a petrol driven generator set was used to provide electric power (Figure 5.40), but increasingly power is provided by photovoltaic cells and wind turbines (Figure 5.62). Many shacks have banks of batteries for 12 volt systems and invertors that convert the power to 240V to run freezers and TVs (with associated satellite dishes). (Figure 5.80)

5.4.9 Recycling, Innovation and Personalisation

The vast majority of shack fabric is recycled and free selections advertised in the Quokka newspaper in Perth were a source of a lot of this material.

A good example of innovation in providing insulation is a shack that uses water sprinklers on the roof of the shack to cool it in summer (Figure 5.81). Another insulation technique is the use of empty beer cans to insulate ceilings (Figure 5.64). Innovation in the reuse of second-hand materials is provided by the former cable roll that is now used as an outdoor table (Figure 5.83), the use of an old tank as a garden shed (Figure 5.65), the use of beer kegs as bar stools (Figure 5.66) and finally an outboard motor casing as a letter box (Figure 5.82).

Signs are used widely, either reused to indicate an interest in licenced premises (in a similar way to a number of the interiors (see Section 5.3.7) or for humour (Figure 5.85) or to personalise the shack (Figure 5.84).

The shacks associated the professional fishermen often have associated relics such as the whale bones at Wedge (Figure 5.69) or the whale arch at Grey (Figure 5.86) or current equipment near the shacks such as floats (Figure 5.70), ropes and octopus traps (and 5.71).

A lot of pride is associated with outdoor cooking and a number of shacks have ingeniously designed ovens and BBQ grills, such as the shack with a bicycle driven rotisserie BBQ (Figure 5.73).

The use of unusual construction techniques provides for a ‘make-do’ personal expression—an example being eave and gutter supports (Figure 5.74).

While the natural aging of shack exteriors adds to their character (Figure 5.75) many shacks have used paintings and murals for decorating the shacks (Figure 5.76) or decorated them with bottle tops (Figure 5.55) or even a collection of hats (Figure 5.67)

Quotations from shack owners during group meetings or in online project surveys:

You never brought new stuff because we never knew how much longer we would be here – we cobbled together what we could

Oh, that would be good for Wedge (on throw out days in Perth)

You want to ride it – then go and fix it

Individual expressions: sun decks, colours, and power systems

You make the effort to go to the tip

Innovation in how you build them, how you run them and how you live in them

The sound of rain on the roof is nice – but you wonder where the next drop will come from

I used a string under a hole in the roof to direct water away from the bed

Individuality – that's a bloody good idea

The uniqueness is the individuality there – you keep looking at better ways of doing things



Fig 5.29



Fig 5.30



Fig 5.31



Fig 5.32

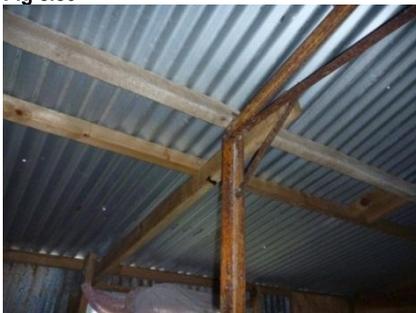


Fig 5.33



Fig 5.34



Fig 5.35



Fig 5.36



Fig 5.37



Fig 5.38



Fig 5.39



Fig 5.40

Figures (left to right) 5.29 Typical shack form of gable and skillion; **5.30** Covered area linking pavilion forms with mesh, rubber matting and floats; **5.31** Typical form of reused garage with mesh enclosed skillion verandah; **5.32** The only hip-roofed shack (Grey); **5.33** Extension of roof form—timber extension of original pre-fab steel frame; **5.34** Many shacks have long skillion extensions; **5.35** One of many shacks made of linked pavilion forms; **5.36** Second level and staircase form creates unusual shapes on some shacks; **5.37** Lookouts on some shacks; **5.38** Lift up shutters are typical; **5.39** lattice enclosed open areas are typical; **5.40** Separate generator shed that doubles as fish cleaning area. (Source GML)



Fig 5.41



Fig 5.42



Fig 5.43



Fig 5.44



Fig 5.45



Fig 5.46



Fig 5.47



Fig 5.48



Fig 5.49



Fig 5.50



Fig 5.51



Fig 5.52

Figures (left to right) 5.41 Roofscapes of chip heater chimneys, vents and wind turbines; 5.42 Streetscape of early shacks in a line with tamarisk trees; 5.43 Corrugated-iron fencing; 5.44 Super 6 fibre cement fencing; 5.45 lowfencing to define spatial areas and to keep sand at bay; 5.46 Reuse of second-hand garage as shack W195; 5.47 One of the few fibro shacks; 5.48 A Trimdeck steel profile shack; 5.49 Reuse of signage as cladding; 5.50 Insulation panel cladding, W263; 5.51 Bus window windows; 5.52 Prefab Nissen hut shack, W328. (All images Wedge, source GML)



Fig 5.53



Fig 5.54



Fig 5.55



Fig 5.56



Fig 5.57



Fig 5.58



Fig 5.59



Fig 5.60

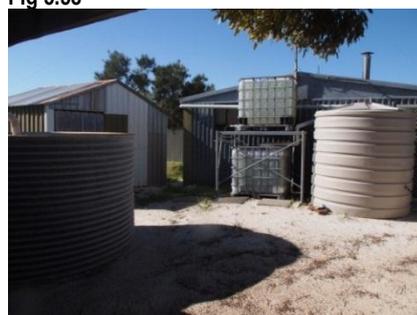


Fig 5.61



Fig 5.62



Fig 5.63



Fig 5.64

Figures (left to right) 5.53 Reused site shed, Grey; **5.54** Reused sheds—possibly shearer’s sheds, Grey; **5.55** Bottle top signage, Wedge; **5.56** Typical shack interior, Grey; **5.57** Atypical shack interior Greyslands, Grey; **5.58** Home from home interior, Wedge; **5.59** Many shacks have marine themed collections, Grey; **5.60** Bore pump (base of sand hill) with header tank serving multiple shacks, Grey; **5.61** Multiple types of water storage, Wedge; **5.62** Shared header tanks on hills with wind turbines are a landscape feature, Wedge; **5.63** Individual shack header tank, Wedge; **5.64** Beer cans used as insulation, Grey. (Source GML)



Fig 5.65



Fig 5.66



Fig 5.67



Fig 5.68



Fig 5.69



Fig 5.70



Fig 5.71



Fig 5.72



Fig 5.73



Fig 5.74



Fig 5.75



Fig 5.76

Figures (left to right) 5.65 Tank reused as garden shed—note door, Wedge; 5.66 Kegs reused as bar stools, Wedge; 5.67 Hat collection; 5.68 Personal signage, Wedge; 5.69 Whale bone front yard feature; 5.70 Professional fishers floats, Wedge; 5.71 Octopus traps, Wedge; 5.72 BBQ in mesh enclosed covered area, Wedge; 5.73 Bicycle-powered rotisserie BBQ, Wedge; 5.74 Innovative gutter support, Wedge; 5.75 Shack patina, Grey; 5.76 Shack mural, Wedge. (Source GML)



Fig 5.77



Fig 5.78



Fig 5.79



Fig 5.80



Fig 5.81



Fig 5.82



Fig 5.83



Fig 5.84



Fig 5.85

Figures (left to right) 5.77 Many shacks have bar themed interiors, Wedge; 5.78 Professional fisher's shack interior, Wedge; 5.79 Power and heating technology—white chip heater & timber with hot water tank over and PV cell inverter at right, Wedge; 5.80 Photovoltaic cell battery set, Wedge; 5.81 Garden sprinklers used to cool roof, Wedge; 5.82 Outboard motor 'letter box', Grey; 5.83 Cable roll used as table, Wedge; 5.84 bright colours and signs to personalise some shacks, Wedge; 5.85 Reused signage is a part of visual landscape, Wedge. (Source GML)



Fig 5.86

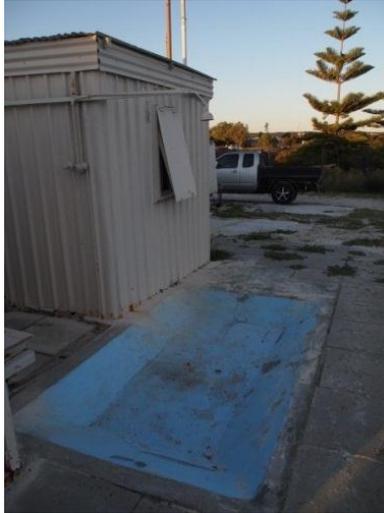


Fig 5.87



Fig 5.88



Fig 5.89



5.90

Fig

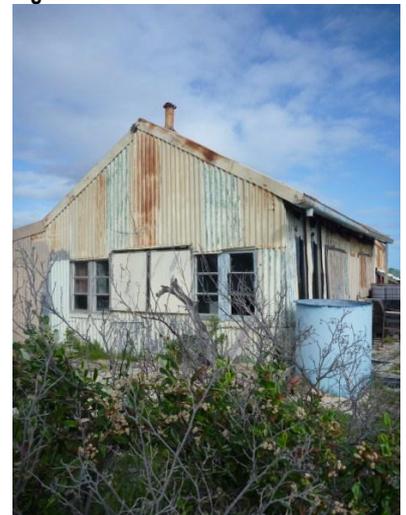


Fig 5.91



Fig 5.92



Fig 5.93

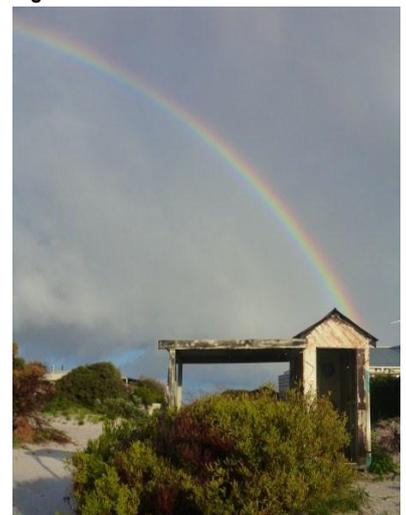


Fig 5.94

Figures (left to right) 5.86 Whale bones at entry statement, Grey; **5.87** External combined bath/shower, Wedge; **5.88** Rottneest and Norfolk pines, Wedge; **5.89** Covered areas between separate shack pavilions, Wedge; **5.90** An atypical stove 'nook'- note shadow of earlier stove (for fire separation), Grey; **5.91** Older shack, Grey; **5.92** Two level shack, Wedge; **5.93** Innovation—header tank over external dunny (toilet), Grey; **5.94** Rainbow over dunny, Wedge. (Source GML)

5.5 Case Studies

Shack W287, 'Cream', Wedge

This shack has been constructed in many phases with the core kitchen area having a metal truss roof and with many skillion additions. Other typical shack features include the window hoods and the many beds located in various spaces. An unusual feature of this shack is the very long bar in the living room complete with bar stools. Externally the shack features three external covered areas, an enclosed children's play area and a 'local' car that helps to define this shack's 'patch'.

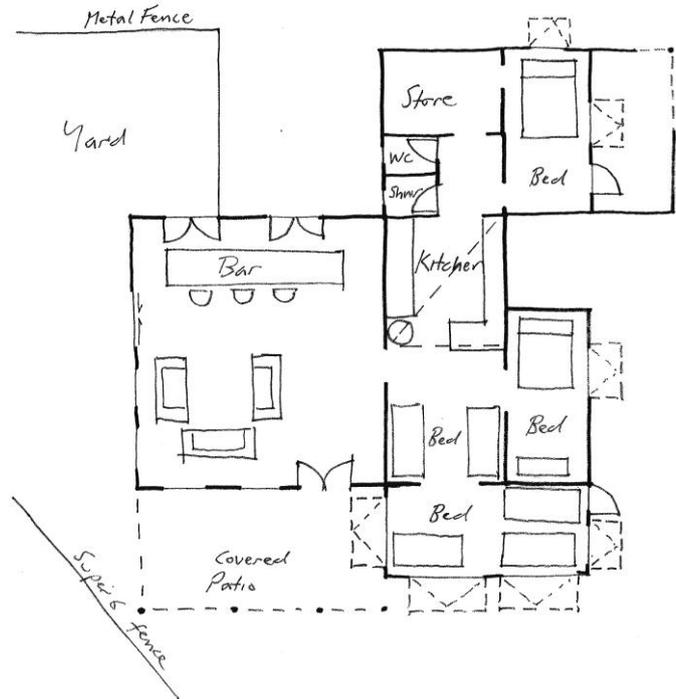


Fig 5.95



Fig 5.96



Fig 5.97



Fig 5.98



Fig 5.99



Fig 5.100

Figures (left to right) 5.95 Cream shack exterior with top hinges window shutters; 5.96 East elevation showing several skillion additions; 5.97 'Local' car helps define spatial area; 5.98 Kitchen with multiple beds nearby ready for peak occupation; 5.99 The bar; 5.100 The enclosed play area. (Source GML except for 5.96 by Ailsa McMullan.)

Shack G123, Grey

This shack was moved from Garden Island near Perth to Grey in 1982/83 to Grey. The Hill family has owned it since 1987. It was originally a prefabricated garage structure of 7 x 3.5m with galvanised steel round posts with steel king post roof trusses and with a skillion of the same size. An extra bay was added to the south by the Hills. Like a number of other shacks there is a gender differentiation in bathrooms with an internal women's bathroom and a separate external men's bathroom pavilion. Like many shacks PV cells and batteries have replaced a generator, and window covers are used as both security screens and awnings. Features of this shack are the four fridges and the collection of used Emu Bitter beer cans that have a new life acting as roof insulation.

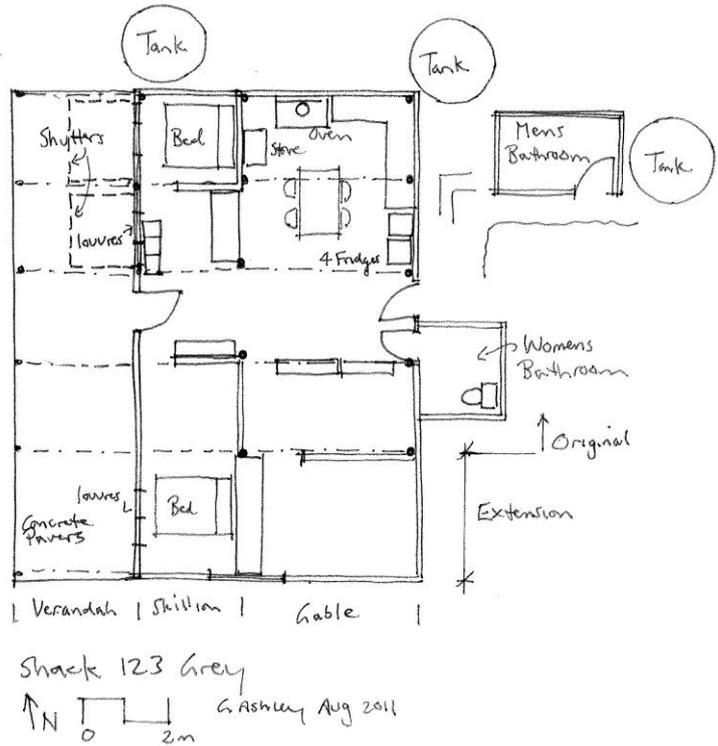


Fig 5.101



Fig 5.102



Fig 5.103



Fig 5.104



Fig 5.105



Fig 5.106

Figures (left to right) 5.101 View from north west showing gable, skillion, verandah and tank; 5.102 View from southeast showing extended gable section and various claddings; 5.103 Steel truss frame with beer cans used as insulation and Bundy bottles as a visual diary; 5.104 Kitchen pantry; 5.105 Kitchen area showing multiple stoves and fridges; 5.106 Carpet snake visitor. (Source GML)

Shack W301, Chick Inn, Wedge

The Chick Inn is typical in many ways: its core is a low pitched gable form and has skillion additions, with an external covered space and window covers that double as sun awnings. It is an interesting case study with the definition of 'private' external space created with the subtle use of landscape elements and low chains to create a front yard. An unusual feature is the reuse of a water tank as a garden shed (Figure 5.65).

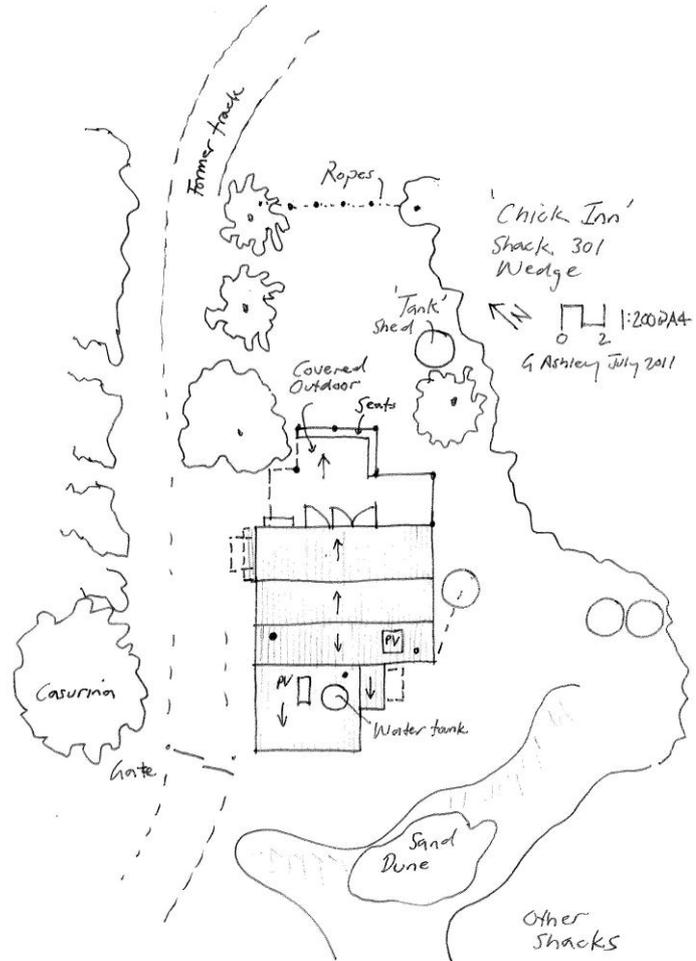


Fig 5.107



Fig 5.108



Fig 5.109



Fig 5.110



Fig 5.111



Fig 5.112

Figures (left to right) 5.107 Chick Inn from north; 5.108 Trees and rope used to define front yard; 5.109 View over shack from a nearby lookout; 5.110 Rear of shack showing roof architecture of chimneys, PV panels, skylights, header tanks and vents; 5.111 Addition with lift-up window cover; 5.112 Front enclosed porch. (Source GML)

Shack W139, Gower's, Wedge

A feature of this shack is not the shack itself but the planted landscape setting of eucalypts that create an entry drive complete with stone edging and a turning circle. Like many shacks located behind the primary dune there is a shelter on the dune that overlooks the beach.

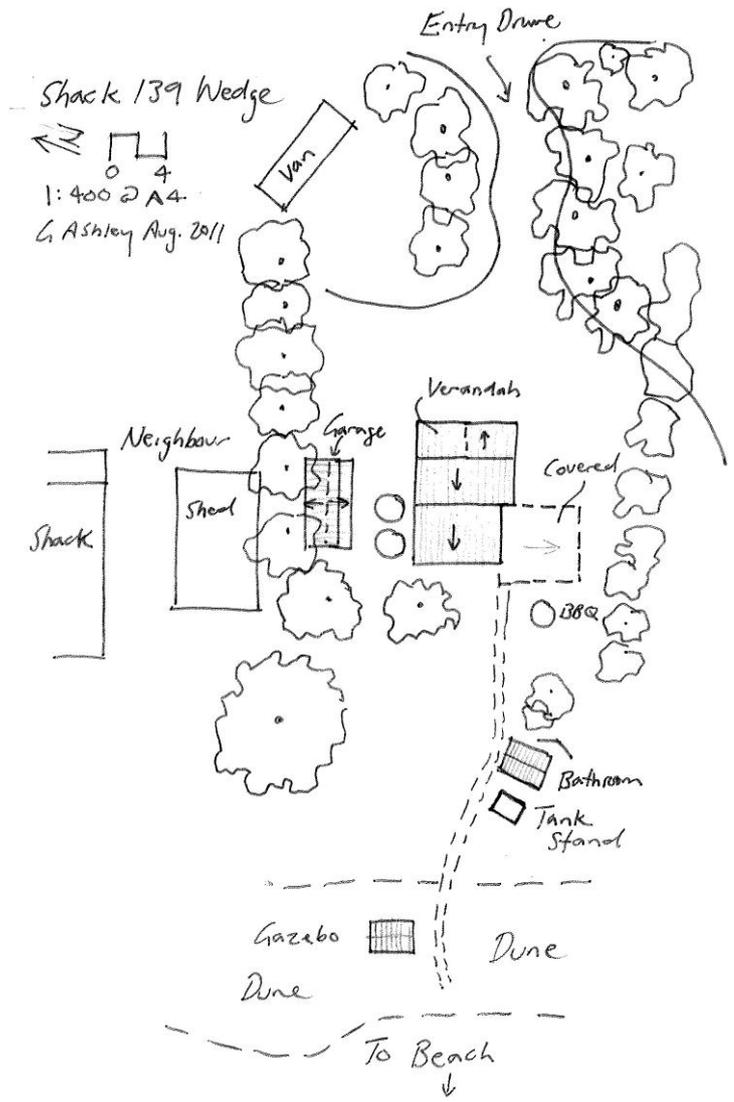


Fig 5.113



Fig 5.114

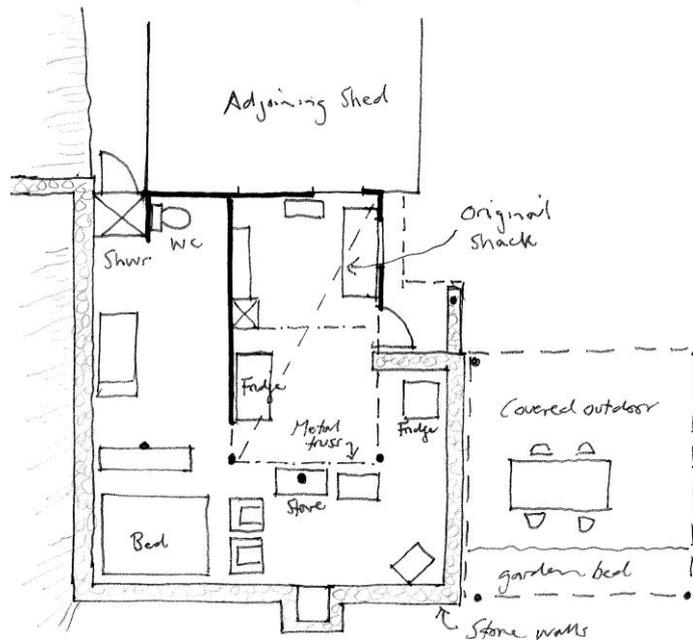


Fig 5.115

Figures (left to right) 5.113 Entry to tree-lined drive; 5.114 The shack; 5.115 Rear area of shack with separate shower/toilet block, hot water heater and header tank. (Source GML)

Shack W069, Wedge

This shack strongly reflects phases of use and construction as well as the longer periods of occupation by its owner who is one of the few professional crayfishers remaining at Wedge. The shack has a prefabricated steel frame core with a steel truss roof and with fibro cladding. Features of the shack include stone wall additions and retaining walls and a shower-in-doorway.



Shack 69 Wedge
 ↑ N 0 2m Gashley Aug 2011



Fig 5.116



Fig 5.117



Fig 5.118



Fig 5.119



Fig 5.120



Fig 5.121

Figures (left to right) 5.116 Stone wall of shack from south; 5.117 Entry court to shack with covered eating area to left; 5.118 Room with toilet and shower in the rear doorway; 5.119 Interior looking south with original part in front and stone addition at rear; 5.120 View from south towards original section now kitchen; 5.121 Kitchen area with glazed gable infill to allow light. (Source GML)

5.6 Conclusions

While the themes of history that led to the creation of Wedge and Grey are those primarily of isolation associated with the unproductive nature of the underlying landscape (through European eyes), the actual cultural landscapes established at Wedge and Grey are a result of the physical protection from prevailing winds afforded by Wedge Island and the limestone headlands at Grey. Thus, both the historic isolation and landscape qualities of the actual sites have defined the particular aesthetic characteristics at both of these places, resulting in significant cultural environments.

While different in their particular landscape qualities, the protection from winds and the presence of reefs at both sites provided the underlying landscape environment that has supported three phases of settlement evolution: establishment, settlement definition (within the physical confines of the place) and later consolidation and infill. This cultural landscape evolution is evident in the historic and physical record of both places.

The evolution of the settlement is also evident in the history and fabric of individual shacks that result in a particular aesthetic characteristic for the settlements as a whole. The historical evolution from car-based camping to rough shack construction and later rebuilding or consolidation is also evident in the phases of construction of shacks, often reflecting changes in ownership (fishers to recreation) and/or family growth.

The phases in settlement history and shack construction include the changing use of technology over time, reflecting innovation and changing attitudes to energy, the environment, and available technology over time.

The site and owner surveys undertaken for this project reveal two themes that may initially appear to be conflicting, but actually contribute to the particular aesthetic characteristics of the settlements. These are: strong consistency in the overall form, type of structures and the dominant material use but with differences between each individual shack reflecting the opportunistic sourcing of materials (reuse and driftwoods), and a collective ethos versus individualism in design choices and the constraints on capitalisation arising from an uncertain tenure.

This remote environment makes personal engagement a mandatory activity rather than an optional one—notwithstanding the community help that is available. Many of the owners report a strong sense of personal affirmation that comes from doing the construction and maintenance themselves, although most of them are not usually engaged in these activities in their day-to-day lives. More broadly this is an aspect of the cultural environment of the settlements as a whole, as sites of 'practice' rather than 'spectacle'. The particular aesthetic characteristics of the settlements reflect this sense of personal affirmation.

In parallel to the particular aesthetic characteristics that come from individual choice and expression in design, innovation and decoration, there is also a strong sense of a shared community aesthetic ethos in relation to siting and boundary definition, material choices (second hand over new) and consultation (checking). The community aesthetic is therefore a combination of shared and individual values, where the personal affirmation aspects noted above also form part of the shared community aesthetic value. While 'beauty' is not often articulated by owners, the shacks both individually and collectively are very important to the community for aesthetic reasons, with a certain beauty residing in the space between the shared ethos and the individual response.

5.7 Endnotes

- 1 WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)Wedge and Grey Masterplan, 2000, p8.
- 2 Ross Robinson, My recollections of Wedge Island
- 3 WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)Wedge and Grey Masterplan, 2000, p6.
- 4 WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)Wedge and Grey Masterplan, 2000, p7.
- 5 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p6.
- 6 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p8.
- 7 Hill per com and survey form 2011
- 8 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p8.
- 9 Soosie Jobson University Research Project HIS285 p8.
- 10 Soosie Jobson University Research Project EGL234 p5.
- 11 Embedded poetics and surrounding politics of a coastal squatter settlement, In Journal of Landscape Architecture, Autumn 2008
- 12 Dr Reena Tiwari Embedded poetics and surrounding politics of a coastal squatter settlement, In Journal of Landscape Architecture, Autumn 2008
- 13 Tiwari R and Churchill L; 'Shack' Architecture; a produced landscape, 2004, *Landscapes* 2:1–13.
- 14 Rob Teune pers com to project team August 2011
- 15 Ross Robinson, My recollections of Wedge Island
- 16 Ross Robinson, My recollections of Wedge Island
- 17 Dr Reena Tiwari Embedded poetics and surrounding politics of a coastal squatter settlement, In Journal of Landscape Architecture, Autumn 2008

6.0 Comparative Analysis

6.1 Shacks in Other Australian States and New Zealand

The Western Australian cultural heritage assessment criteria and the Western Australian Heritage Policy make it clear that multiple examples of similar types of places can be added to the State Register of Heritage Places so that it is a comprehensive list of places in the State having cultural heritage significance. Nevertheless, a comparative analysis is still necessary to assist in determining that a threshold of State significance is met. There is also value in identifying similar places elsewhere outside Western Australia to understand more clearly the different historic processes at play in the State and the physical outcomes of these processes in relation to elsewhere in Australia.

The focus here is on other similar recreation shack places in Australia that are located on public lands and with some form of permissive occupancy agreement, lease or licence with the land management agency.

6.1.1 New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory

Royal National Park Cabins

There are approximately 220 shack settlements in Royal National Park (RNP), 35km south of Sydney, located around four beaches on the coast (from the south: Bulgo, Burning Palms, South Era, Little Garie) and one at Bonnie Vale on Port Hacking, in the northern part of the Park. The coastal shacks were built from the late 1930s until the late 1950s on land that was originally privately owned but was later added to RNP (Figure 6.1). The coastal shacks, known as cabins in NSW, are accessible only via a walking track. The shacks at Bonnie Vale were built by their owners in an organised 'village' accessible by vehicle, and planned and managed by the (then) State Park Trust. The RNP Plan of Management retains the coastal shacks with owners having a licence of 5 years, with 3 x 5 year extensions. However, the shacks in Bonnie Vale are being removed as the owners die—there were 171 and now only a few remain (Figure 6.2). The NSW Heritage Council has recently considered a joint nomination to the NSW State Heritage Register by the RNP Coastal Cabins Protection League and the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and has recommended listing proceed for the Burning Palms, South Era and Little Garie groups.¹ The form (gables and skillion additions) and materials of these shacks is similar to Wedge and Grey, but they are generally smaller structures—perhaps as a result of foot-only access, but also as a result of a long period of management controls on additions and changes generally.

Kosciuszko National Park Huts

Over are over 60 huts in many locations within Kosciuszko National Park (KNP) in the alpine area of southern New South Wales—mostly associated with summer grazing of sheep and cattle from the early 1900s until the 1950s (Figure 6.3). Some huts are also associated with mining, recreation skiing, trout fishing and water management as part of the Snowy Mountain Hydro Scheme. These huts are available for public use as 'emergency overnight accommodation' with no sole use or prior bookings allowed. The Kosciuszko Huts Association is a volunteer umbrella organisation of caretaker groups who with NPWS undertake conservation works in accordance with approved work plans. Following the bushfires of 2003, a KNP Huts Conservation Strategy was prepared to provide the basis of rebuilding or repair of a number of the huts lost based on social and cultural landscape

values.² Similar groups of huts are located within Namadgi National Park in the ACT and managed under similar arrangements.

Other NPWS Shacks and Huts

Prior to the 1990s, many shack settlements were removed from NPWS lands, including large groups at Yagon, in Myall Lakes National Park, that were associated with working families from Newcastle and the Hunter Valley. A state-wide study of NPWS huts in 1992 identified a number of other hut and shack places within NPWS lands in New South Wales, most of which still remain.

At Crater Cove, at Dobroyd Head in Sydney Harbour National Park, there are seven former fishers' shacks that have volunteer caretakers who have a role in their conservation (Figure 6.4). A handful of individual cottages exist along Mullet Creek in Brisbane Waters National Park. A group of 13 fishing cottages exist in three groups at Sandon in Yuraygir National Park. These were originally constructed on Crown Lands in the 1930s with a Permissive Occupancy (PO) agreement with the Lands Department. A small number of professional fishers' shacks exist on Broughton Island and prawn fishers' shacks at Tamboy, both Myall Lakes National Park.

Other New South Wales Shacks/Cottages

In the early twentieth century shacks were constructed throughout New South Wales on Crown Land such as the ones at Sandon, noted above. Two groups are known to remain on Crown Lands and are administered by the Catchments and Lands Division of the Department of Primary Industries (Crown Lands). One group is located at Little Pelican, Lake Macquarie. A 2010 Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Little Pelican group identified them as having local heritage significance. The CMP recommends retention and conversion of the POs to leases. The group of six cottages at Dark Corner, Patonga, Broken Bay, are included as a heritage item on the Gosford City LEP (Figure 6.5). A CMP was prepared for the Crown Lands Division of the NSW Government in 2011.

A small group of approximately ten fishing shacks exist at Boat Harbour at Kurnell, south of Sydney.

A group of nine cottages was constructed in the early 1950s at Currawong, Pittwater, north of Sydney, as weekend recreational accommodation for workers and their families by the Labour Council of NSW, the peak trade union body at that time. The group is now privately owned and was included on the NSW State Heritage Register in 2009.

Most of the buildings noted above are more substantial 'cottage' structures to those at Wedge and Grey, generally gable roof form, and of timber frame and fibro cladding.

6.1.2 Victoria

There are relatively few shack settlements remaining in Victoria after removals in the 1970s and 1980s; for example, 200 shacks were removed on Murray River in 1978. In 1992 removals were continuing and it was estimated that as few as 40 remained at locations including Cape Otway, Cape Conran, Murray River, the Grampians and Gippsland.³

Like Kosciuszko National Park, there are a large number of huts located in the Alpine National Park which form a continuation of KNP into Victoria. The huts are conserved and administered in a similar manner to those in NSW.

6.1.3 Queensland & Northern Territory

There are a number of shacks in northern Queensland administered under the Land Act 1995. Some of these have a 'permit to occupy' that is non-transferrable and there is no proviso to convert sites to freehold tenure. No history of shacks in Queensland has been identified and numbers are not available; however, policy is being developed to 'better manage shack sites'.⁴

In 1992 contact with the South East regional office of the (then) Department of Environment and Planning indicated that five or six huts existed in national parks in that region, with several on Morton Island.⁵

6.1.4 South Australia

There is a long history of coastal recreation shack construction in South Australia that appears to be similar in many ways to Western Australia. Associated with a narrow strip (about 30m) of unalienated land on the coast (mainly the Spencer Gulf south of Port Augusta, and the Yorke Peninsular) and the Murray River, camping (and later shack construction), on this land was condoned though licences that mostly became the responsibility of Councils. State Government policy from the early 1970s created two paths for management: environmentally acceptable sites that resolved into freehold and non-acceptable sites that resolved into life tenure leases and then removal. Since the mid-1990s further review has led to a greater proportion of shack sites being identified as being available for freehold. Of a total of 1926 shacks at 150 'sites', over 1664 were recommended for freeholding and by 2010 97% had been made freehold.⁶

Shack sites exist in a number of South Australian national parks, including Innes National Park on the Yorke Peninsula and on the Murray River within Coorong National Park; some 97 existed in 1992.⁷ It is understood that the owners of these shacks have been given a life tenure lease with the stated policy being removal at the end of the lease.

6.1.5 Tasmania

There is a long history of shack use in Tasmanian and the practice of 'shacking it' is a way of life and a cultural phenomenon 'that's about as Tasmanian as it gets'.⁸ The Premier in 2009 was quoted as saying 'family shacks are part of the Tasmanian lifestyle and many of them have been in the same family for generations'.⁹

The first shacks were built from 1944 on Crown Lands—mainly associated with trout fishing in the central highlands (see Figure 6.6) but also on the coast, such as the miners' fishing shacks at Letts Bay.¹⁰

Like South Australia, two management paths have been followed: one with the removals of shacks in environmentally sensitive areas and, in other areas, either conditional leases or freehold.

In 2004 there were 'thousands' of shacks in Tasmania and some 1,335 on Crown land.¹¹ In 2008 there were 1,160 Crown land shacks assessed in 30 locations: 1013 to be offered for sale to the shack owner; 93 for lease and 54 for removal.

During the WA Shack Inquiry, Dandaragan Shire submitted that the Tasmanian shacks were different because of different historical associations (forestry and hydro) and that they were built with approval under lease conditions. This is true; however, the physical and use characteristics of these shacks seems similar, although the settlements themselves are sometimes more organised

like townships (see Figure 6.5). Like other states, there are numerous huts associated with mining, pastoralism and bushwalking located in national parks.

6.1.6 New Zealand

The *bach* is the New Zealand equivalent of the shack, with the term coming from an abbreviation of the term bachelor, with baching referring to the rather basic level of living that single men are traditionally inclined towards.¹² The bach is a cultural institution in NZ that is also facing threat of removal in environmentally sensitive areas or loss of character from upgrading that tends to come with more secure tenure.

6.2 Other Shack Settlements Remaining in Western Australia

6.2.1 Overview

This section follows on from the discussion of history of shack settlements in WA in Section 3.3 but focuses on an assessment of the shacks that remain.

The shacks tabled during the WA Shack Inquiry (including those at Windy Harbour) are shown in Table 6.1 and discussed further below. Some of these shack settlement sites are shown on Figure 3.1.

Table 6.1 Shacks in WA in 2010

Location	Number	DEC/ Shire
Wedge and Grey	450 (320 Wedge 130 Grey)	Unvested reserves: Wedge Reserve 43283, Grey 43284 Managed by DEC
D'Entrecasteaux NP Donnelly River	63	DEC lands
Dampier Archipelego	33	DEC lands
Peaceful Bay	203	Shire Denmark
Naval Base	178	City of Cockburn
Windy Harbour	220	Shire of Manjimup
Blowholes (Quobba)	35-42	Shire of Carnarvon
Lucky Bay	31	Shire Northhampton
Israelite Bay		Shire of Esperance
Cliff Head (near Dongara)	40 professional rock lobster shacks	Shire of Irwin
Coolimba (near Dongara)	20 professional rock lobster shacks	Shire of Carnamah
Totals	1,280	

The WA Heritage Council submission to the Shack Inquiry also noted some 30 entries in its database—some of these are also included on Table 6.1. While listed from a keyword search of 'shack', some of these include sites of former shacks, such as those removed at Sandy Cape, and some have a very different history and associations to the squatter shacks. For example, Wilsons Hut comes up under 'shack' in the WA Heritage Council Database and is noted on the Dandaragan Shire Local Government Inventory as c1876 wattle and daub Blue Gum Cottage. Eighteen of the 30 entries in the Heritage Council submission are located in D'Entrecasteaux National Park

(numbers 12-30)—some are multiple shacks, such as Donnelly River Mouth group, while many are earlier pastoralist huts.¹³

The Dandaragan Shire Local Government Inventory does not list any extant shack settlement sites. However, it does include some sites that relate to the establishment of the crayfishing industry and the use of the coast during World War II. These sites include: Cacker Alley (a camp and shack site south of Jurien townsite that was used by crayfishermen with the name coming from the name for illegal undersized crays), Army Sites, Mahomet's Cottage, Ross's Jetty, Processing Factory Site, and First Jetty site.

6.2.2 Shacks in the Great Southern and South West Regions of WA

Peaceful Bay

Peaceful Bay near Denmark is associated with the development of farming and forestry industries. Shacks were constructed after the road was improved in 1954. After concerns about sanitation, the Land Board defined 160 lots and these were taken up by 1963. A further 40 sites were created in 1980. A new subdivision of 40 sites in 1980 and other changes since 1990 has resulted in changes to ownership and upgrading of the shacks.¹⁴

The Peaceful Bay settlement is defined by informal vernacular style holiday cottages on compact blocks with no fencing but separated by native peppermint trees and narrow gravel grid style lanes. The cottages are predominantly timber and fibrous cement construction. Some cottages were relocated from the mill towns around the Shannon and are clad in jarrah weatherboards. The individual low-key elements of the precinct; its original grid layout, siting of cottages among lawns and shady trees, and its remote bushland setting help to create a distinctive informal character (Figures 6.7 and 6.8).

A Peaceful Bay Heritage Precinct Conservation Plan prepared in 2003 noted that:

A large proportion of the leases remain with the original leaseholders and their families, and this has created a strong sense of community within the Peaceful Bay Heritage Precinct.¹⁵

The WA Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program of 1997 identified Peaceful Bay on List B: Places assessed for social value which did not meet the threshold.¹⁶

While the Shire of Denmark removed other shacks on the coast in the 1970s and 1980s, it supports Peaceful Bay and is committed to 'normalising the town site' by continuing to improve services and facilities. The Shack Inquiry concluded that it found Peaceful Bay differs in significant material respects from other shack sites in WA, appeared to be working well, and that the present management arrangements should continue.

These cottages are quite different in history and construction to Wedge and Grey—a different cultural landscape that is undergoing changes.

Windy Harbour

Timber workers from towns north of Windy Harbour started camping here from 1920s and shacks were built from 1940s. In the 1950s there were 80 shacks and the local Land Board created blocks and collected annual rents. By 2002 there were 220 cottages.

The Report of the Western Australia Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program (Non Indigenous) Part A, Project Documentation, December 1997, identified Windy

Harbour as one of a number of places to be considered for listing on the Register of the National Estate.¹⁷

The Manjimup Shire includes Windy Harbour on its Local Government Inventory (WA Database 23447) and has a policy to retain and conserve this settlement if possible. However, Jones notes that there appear to be differing perspectives in the community over retaining its basic charm while improving places as tourist destinations and as a second home location. A 1999 Management Plan for Windy Harbour favours preservation; however, improved standards and services have increased the pressure to allow more development to fund these changes.¹⁸

D'Entrecasteaux National Park

The DEC manages 62 shacks within D'Entrecasteaux National Park. There are 19 huts in the Park generally that are associated with earlier pastoral and timber getting uses—these were addressed in a Heritage Assessment and Conservation Recommendations report in February 2000. Some 43 shacks are located at the mouth of the Donnelly River. A further 10-15 shacks are located at Brooke Inlet.¹⁹

The Donnelly River shacks are located along a 2km stretch of river at southern end of Donnelly River and are accessible only by boat.²⁰ It has been reported that the first shacks were built in the 1920s although most were built between 1950 and 1975 (Figure 6.9).²¹ The Shack Inquiry concluded that the Minister should work with the Lower Donnelly River Conservation Association, with the aim of retaining the huts for use by the public and members of the association on condition that health and building standards are met.

The Report of the Western Australia Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program (Non Indigenous) Part A, Project Documentation, December 1997, identified a number of hut sites in D'Entrecasteaux National Park as worthy of Register of the National Estate listing.

Parry's Beach Settlement

Parry's Beach, Denmark Shire, is a fishing settlement located on a large bay with native dune vegetation reaching down to the beach line. The settlement site is included on the Denmark Local Government Inventory 1999 and is noted on the WA Heritage Database as place 14398.

Shacks in the Metropolitan Perth Area

Naval Base

The Naval Base Caravan Park was established in 1933 and was a local government controlled recreational and camping reserve, and residents paid a small leasing fee. From the start the Council allowed people to add permanent extensions to their caravans. The Reserve is managed by the City of Cockburn with annual leases (Figure 6.10).

It has been noted that these 178 shacks are becoming more uniform in style with prefabricated or 'pattern book' structures. The bitumen roads also provide an air of formality; the result of which, according to Jones, is that:

*the settlement is rapidly losing its idiosyncratic appearance and being transformed into a more conventional looking compact holiday chalet subdivision.*²²

The shacks are listed on the City of Cockburn Municipal Heritage Inventory but development of the shacks and open market sale means that the 'exceptional social historical value' is under threat.²³

Trigg Island

There are two listings for recreational cottages on the WA Heritage Database: one (04044) comprising two single-storey residences that includes a timber-framed, weatherboard and asbestos-clad cottage with an iron roof; and a brick house with concrete floor and asbestos roof that was constructed between 1932 and 1965. A second listing is for a Beach House, Trigg Island, 352 West Coast Drive, Trigg (02150), which is a single-storey timber-framed, weatherboard and asbestos-clad cottage with a corrugated galvanised-iron roof that was constructed in c1914 and had changes in 1937. The listing statement of significance notes that they are:

Part of the initial Trigg settlement as a beach resort predating increasing settlement of the 1930s and 1940s and illustrate the typical siting of beach holiday homes to gain protection of a coastal dune and the place is a reminder of a phase of development, the holiday cottage at a beach close to Perth that has all but disappeared and demonstrates a way of life and the customs of Australians using the beach for recreation and as a holiday location. ²⁴

Shacks in Northern WA

Dampier Archipelago

The 33 shacks in the Dampier Archipelago are located in reserves that are vested in the Conservation Commission of WA and are managed by DEC under a management plan. The shacks were built between 1960s and 1980s and are located on three islands (Figure 6.11). There is a licence with 2 community groups (one for 32 shacks and one for one shack). The licence allows for public access to the shacks by residents of Roebourne Shire.²⁵

Abrolhos Islands

There are a number of professional crayfisher shacks on the Abrolhos Islands off Geraldton. Access to the islands that are part of a marine reserve is strictly controlled. The shacks have a similar form and scale to the Wedge and Grey shacks, but their use and access is very different (Figure 6.12).

Blowholes (Quobba)

The Shire of Carnarvon manages 42 shacks at the Blowholes. There is some evidence that the first shacks were constructed around 1954 but some have been erected since 1985. They are used by people of Carnarvon. This area is used by many people camping and holidaying. The Shack Inquiry did not make a determination but recommended that Carnarvon Shire and the Minister resolve this. The Shire of Carnarvon has endorsed a Management Plan that includes the redevelopment of the existing shacks and continued access by the shack owners. The Shire is awaiting a long term tenure decision by the Minister for Lands.

Shacks in the Central Coast Region

Lucky Bay

Thirty-one shacks managed by Northampton Shire remain near Port Gregory and Horrocks Beach (south of Kalbari). Northampton will allow them to remain under a Memorandum of Understanding but intends to install better management arrangements with the establishment of a lessee governing body, the demolition and replacement of unsafe or derelict shacks, and a lease term of 21 years, after which the shack will either be removed or revert to the Shire

Cliff Head, Dongara

The Shack Inquiry estimated that there are 40 shacks managed by the Shire of Irwin for professional fishers; private recreational shacks at Cliff Head have already been removed by DEC.

Coolimba

The Shack Inquiry estimated that there were 20 shacks managed by the Shire of Carnamah for professional fishers; private recreational shacks at Coolimba have already been removed by DEC. (

Israelite Bay

The Shack Inquiry noted one shack managed by the Shire of Esperance.

Sandy Cape

Sandy Cape Beach Shacks site in Dandaragan Shire is noted as place 15824 in the Heritage Council of WA Places Database as constructed c1940 (see Figure 3.9). Three shacks were initially retained when the settlement was removed but subsequently these were removed following vandalism.

6.3 Australian & Western Australian Historic Themes

6.3.1 Australian Themes

The Australian Historic Themes: A Framework for Use in Heritage Assessment and Management was developed by the Australian Heritage Commission (now Australian Heritage Council) to assist in the development of common national standards for the identification and conservation of heritage places. The aim is to enable a balanced approach across regions and to reveal previously ignored places. It provides a very broad and general framework at the national level, with the expectation that State and local historic themes would reflect both the national themes and the nuances of their own specific histories. The Framework defines nine key Theme Groups (based on the idea of *activity*) and within these are Themes and Sub-themes. The full list is included as Appendix E, with Table 6.2 showing the themes for which there are attributes in the documentary and physical evidence of the Wedge and Grey shack settlements.

Table 6.2 Australian Historic Themes for which there are shack settlement attributes

Australian Themes: Group/Theme/Sub-Theme	Attributes at Wedge and Grey
2 Peopling Australia	
2.2 Adapting to diverse environments	The different responses between Aboriginal peoples and pastoral settlers to the coastal landscape in this region that underpins the history of settlement.
2.4.5 Changing the face of rural and urban Australia through migration	The impact of postwar migration on both recreational pressure and the workers who began crayfishing that led to the establishment of the shack settlements.
3 Developing Local, Regional and National Economies	
3.3.2 Surveying the Continent: Looking for overland stock routes	The use of this coastal plain for early stock routes from near Perth up to arable lands near Geraldton—some of the stock camps and wells were near these settlements.
3.4.2 Surveying the Continent: Fishing and Whaling	The importance of the crayfishing industry to postwar WA history—an image of the west that is retained—as well as the specific association in the establishment of Wedge and

	Grey. It is a continuing activity at Wedge and reflected in the shacks of both settlements.
4 Building Settlements, Towns and Cities	
4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia	Shack settlements often evolved into rural coastal townships and Wedge and Grey are evidence of this early phase of settlement creation.
7 Governing	
7.7.2 Defending Australia: Preparing to face invasion	The Second World War coastwatching in this area is an important part of WA history and this activity was a factor in the improved access that assisted establishment of the shack settlements.
7.8 Establishing regional and local identity	Shack settlements are an important part of WA and regional history and identity.
8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life	
8.1.4 Organising recreation: Enjoying the natural environment	Enjoyment of the natural environment is an important part of shack settlement history and culture, encompassing deep relationship with place and landscape. The natural setting is a key element in the cultural landscape value of these places.
8.2 Going to the beach	A key aspect in the establishment of these settlements, and a counterpoint to more organised urban beach experiences.
8.3 Going on holiday	The shack settlements are key examples of postwar affordable recreation and holidays in WA.
8.5.1 Forming associations: Preserving traditions and group memories	Traditions, such as 'foursies' at The Point and Australia Day cricket (Wedge) and retaining memories such as the memorials at Grey are an important part of shack culture
8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid	The creation of community associations at both Wedge and Grey
8.9 Remembering public spectacles	Both settlements have community activities on days such as ANZAC day and Australia Day
8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements	The shack settlements offer a distinctive example of cultural life in country and rural settlements, reminiscent of past rural values, and are counterpoints to 'normal' rural settlements in relation to services, etc.

The shack settlements reflect in their attributes many Australian themes; some as a background and/or influence to their history, such as Adapting to Diverse Environments, or Preparing to Face Invasion. Some are counterpoints to 'normal' examples under these themes, such as Living in Rural Settlements.

The two key Australian historic theme areas relate to Developing Settlements, Towns and Cities and Developing Australia's Cultural Life (with sub-themes of *Going to the Beach* and *Going on Holidays*). While the more obvious theme association is *Going to the Beach*, it is the *Going on Holiday* theme and the role of shack settlements as a forerunner to formal settlements (in some cases), and as a continuing counterpoint to normal and formal settlements, that are the most interesting thematic connections for Wedge and Grey in a broader cultural sense.

6.3.2 Western Australian Themes

The Western Australian historic themes are grouped in a similar manner to the Australian themes with themes (really more like theme groups) and sub-themes (see Appendix E for the full list). Table 6.3 shows the themes and sub-themes for which there are attributes in the documentary and physical evidence of the Wedge and Grey shack settlements. The most directly relevant theme is Recreation in the Sport, Recreation and Entertainment (405) sub-theme of Social and Civic Activities. Like the Australian themes the other most relevant themes relate to both broad Western Australia settlement themes and processes such as fishing and recreation.

Table 6.3 Western Australia Historic Themes for which there are shack settlement attributes at Wedge and Grey.

WA Historic Theme	Attributes at Wedge and Grey
1 Demographic Settlement and Mobility	
102 Aboriginal occupation	Both Wedge and Grey have strong evidence of prior Aboriginal occupation and ongoing associations with both places, including shack ownership in the case of Wedge
104 Land allocation and subdivision	These historic process and patterns are part of the forces that resulted in shack settlements
107 Settlements	Settlement building by a mix of pastoral families, fishers and city dwellers
108 Government Policy	A key aspect of the last half of the twentieth century land management policy development in WA.
109 Environmental change	Settlements have been associated with both impacts and environmental conservation
2 Transport and Communication	
201 River transport; 203 Road transport; 204 Droving	The evolving pattern of transport to these places— Aboriginal tracks, pastoral stock routes, defence tracks and evolving pattern of roads associated firstly with pastoralism, then mining and now tourism
209 Technology and technological change	Development of simple technological solutions for the supply of water and energy at the shacks
3 Occupations	
305 Fishing and other marine industries	The strong associations between the settlements and the postwar professional fishing industry
4 Social and Civic Activities	
405 Sport, recreation and entertainment	The complex patterns of community building and social activities with the most directly relevant theme relating to recreation
409 Environmental awareness	Increased awareness and action in the settlements
5 Outside Influences	
506 Tourism	A potential issue and opportunity
6 People	
604 Innovators	Technological innovation by individuals in creating power and water systems for their shacks; extensive sharing of knowledge.

6.4 Conclusions

Three different characteristics can be used to describe the remaining shack settlements in Western Australia: their physical attributes (construction materials, forms, and location/setting), their historical themes of establishment and use, and their tenure and management. While the Wedge and Grey shack settlements appear to be similar to some other Western Australia shack groups in some aspects, they differ from that group in other respects. Taken together, it is our assessment that the Wedge and Grey shack settlements are substantially different from other remaining groups in Western Australia, not only in the size of the settlements, but also the mix of the characteristics noted here.

The physical attributes of the Wedge and Grey shacks and their landscape grouping/settings are different to most other shack places. Many other shack settlements may have started, like Wedge and Grey, in an opportunistic manner in an uncertain environment, but over time have been upgraded and their character and characteristics changed in the process. The typical timber frame construction and fibro cladding of these places result in cottage-like forms in more regular settings. With Wedge and Grey, the uncertainty has remained and this has influenced the physical form and fabric of the shacks that have evolved organically in appearance, as opportunity arises with access to reused materials or from necessity when reused materials 'having had their last life' at Wedge or Grey eventually failed.

While the historical evolution of Wedge and Grey is similar to other places, it is the mix of both fishing and Perth residents in a dynamic social mix that is quite different. They are also the only remaining shack settlements that reflect an alternative holiday and lifestyle experience associated with Perth (but not in Perth) that also provides a counterpoint to a city that is generally not backward in its display of material culture—a display that is actively rejected at Wedge and Grey.

The third typology of difference relates to tenure and management. Many of the shack settlements such as Peaceful Bay, Windy Harbour and Naval Base have a form of tenure that has influenced the nature of these places and may continue to change the character of these places; the result being orderly cottage-like hamlets. Donnelly River in the D'Entrecasteaux National Park may be retained, but national park management arrangements may impact the social values and character of this place. Many of the few other remaining settlements are associated, in use and tenure with professional fishers and are connected to the controls and 'ups and downs' of this industry.

In our opinion the remoteness of Wedge and Grey has positively influenced the distinctive organic and idiosyncratic form of the settlement landscape and the shacks themselves. The lack of certainty over the future of the settlements may also have influenced their form and fabric.

Wedge and Grey also appear to be different to many other remaining settlements in Australia. While established for similar types of reasons, many others have evolved into physically different places—often 'neater'—through the 'mainstreaming' processes at play in their management and tenure.

The shack settlements of Wedge and Grey reflect a number of national and Western Australian historic themes. In our opinion, Wedge and Grey provide a variation or direct counterpoint to the typical examples of some themes. For example, in relation to the Australian theme of *4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia*, Wedge and Grey, and other places such as Lancelin, reflect the reality that these settlements sometimes evolved organically rather than being 'planned from a distance' that the theme may imply. Equally, these settlements provide a good example of the

range of *Going on Holiday* experiences (Australian theme 8.3). The settlements remain as a living reminder of types of holidays that for most people are a thing of the past.



Fig 6.1



Fig 6.2



Fig 6.3



Fig 6.4



Fig 6.5



Fig 6.6



Fig 6.7



Fig 6.8



Fig 6.9



Fig 6.10



Fig 6.11



Fig 6.12

Figures (left to right) 6.1 Cabins at South Era, Royal National Park (RNP) NSW (Source: Geoff Ashley); **6.2** Bonnie Vale cabins RNP, now mostly removed; **6.3** Pastoral hut Kosciuszko National Park (Source KHA); **6.4** Crater Cove (Source www.Pacific-edge-info/Russ Grayson); **6.5** Tasmania Central lakes settlement shacks (Source Geoff Ashley); **6.6** Dark Corner Patonga NSW (Source Australian Heritage Council website); **6.7** Peaceful Bay cottages, near Denmark WA, settlement grid form (Source WA Shack Inquiry report); **6.8** Peaceful Bay cottages, near Denmark WA (Source WA Shack Inquiry report); **6.9** Donnelly River Shack D'Entrecasteaux National Park WA (Source WA Shack Inquiry report) **6.10** Naval Base cottages Cockburn City south of Perth (Source WA Shack Inquiry report); **6.11** Dampier Archipelago shacks (Source WA Shack Inquiry report); **6.12** Abrolhos Island fishers shacks (Source: WA Heritage database).

6.5 Endnotes

- 1 NSW Heritage Council Royal National Parks Cabins State Heritage Register listing assessment 2011.
- 2 Godden Mackay Logan, 2005, KNP Huts Conservation Strategy prepared for the NSW NPWS.
- 3 NSW NPWS Huts Study Part A Statewide Overview, 1992, p34.
- 4 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p22
- 5 NSW NPWS Huts Study Part A Statewide Overview, 1992, p34.
- 6 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p38.
- 7 NSW NPWS Huts Study Part A Statewide Overview, 1992, p32.
- 8 Morcatta G 'Environmental Upgrades for Tassie Shacks', Australian Geographic Issue 73 2004 p20 quoted in WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p27.
- 9 Morcatta G 'Environmental Upgrades for Tassie Shacks', Australian Geographic Issue 73 2004 p20 quoted in WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p27.
- 10 Respondent to survey on comparative examples for this project.
- 11 Tasmania Dept of Primary Industries in WA Report
- 12 Thompson P, The Bach, Government Printer Wellington NZ 1985 p7
- 13 Heritage Council submission to Legislative Council Shack Site Inquiry
- 14 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia, unpublished paper, p4
- 15 Shire of Denmark Town Planning Policy Manual: Policy 35 – Peaceful Bay Conservation Plan Development Guidelines
- 16 Report of the Western Australia Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program (Non Indigenous) Part A, Project Documentation, December 1997
- 17 Report of the Western Australia Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program (Non Indigenous) Part A, Project Documentation, December 1997 p46
- 18 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia, unpublished paper, p5
- 19 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p121.
- 20 West Australian 14 February 2008
- 21 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, p121.
- 22 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia, unpublished paper, p10.
- 23 Roy Jones and H John Selwood, From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads: Coastal Recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia, unpublished paper, p10.
- 24 WA State Heritage Register listing (02150)
- 25 WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Report 21 Shack Sites in WA, April 2011, pviii.

7.0 Cultural Heritage Assessment

7.1 Introduction

What is Cultural Heritage Significance?

The terms 'cultural significance', 'cultural heritage significance', 'heritage significance' and 'heritage value' can be used interchangeably and cover a range of cultural values.

The Burra Charter states as Article 1.2 that:

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.

Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

The assessment of cultural significance endeavours to establish why a place or item is considered important and why it is valued by the community.

What are Tangible and Intangible Heritage Attributes?

The cultural heritage significance of any place comes from both tangible and intangible attributes. As identified in Section 1.4.5, the *tangible* heritage attributes make up the physical fabric of the place and provide evidence of the assessed cultural heritage values.

The *intangible* heritage attributes are cultural practices, traditions, language and knowledge that arise from or demonstrate the associations of people with the place.

The assessment of significance notes under each criterion the particular tangible and intangible attributes that provide evidence of the assessed value. A cumulative list of attributes is also provided in Section 7.7.

Two Shack Settlements—One Assessment

This project was required to undertake a cultural heritage assessment for the shack settlements of Wedge and Grey. The assessment criteria are those used for the assessment of places for entry into the Register of Heritage Places under Section 46 of the Heritage of West Australia Act 1990.

This cultural heritage assessment considered the two shack settlements together as a serial place. This is appropriate because of their similar history, construction, links and associations, responses to state regional and local historic themes, similar physical evidence, proximity to each other and rarity as the only two remaining similar places in Western Australia. As noted in the report, while there are differences resulting from location and access, and the topography of the two places vary, there are strong similarities in the phases of evolution of both places.

7.2 Discussion of Cultural Significance

The following discussion of cultural heritage significance is drawn from the conclusions offered at the end of Sections 2.0 to 6.0.

The 'shack down the coast' is an icon of postwar recreation history in Australia; it is a type of building and recreational experience becoming increasingly rare with capital intensive coastal development and changes in public land management and recreational practices.

Shacks and shack settlements are a particular vernacular building and settlement type reflecting particular historic processes (often associated with fishing and beach recreation), that usually have a particular connection with the landscape within which they are located. As discussed in Section 6.0, while there are examples of shack settlements in other states in Australia (notably South Australia, Tasmania and NSW) these shack settlements differ in a number of ways. The Wedge and Grey settlements are also different to other remaining shack settlements in Western Australia. The establishment and evolution of the Wedge and Grey settlements reflect both broad WA historic themes and specific regional and local historical patterns. While the post War boom in recreation time is similar to the east, there are historic patterns evident in the history of these two sites that are uniquely Western Australian, reflecting the establishment of other shacks in WA, initially by pastoralists, then fishers (some of whom were postwar migrants) and then townspeople. Because of the substantial number of shack removals both before and after the Western Australian Government adopted the 1989 Squatter Policy, shack settlements have become increasingly rare. Of those that remain most are going through a process of 'normalisation' through planning controls or indeed the expectations of the owners.

Wedge and Grey strongly reflect the historic themes in the history of Dandaragan Shire, including coastal pastoralism, defence during the Second World War and postwar crayfishing. The challenging coastal landscape, not suited to intensive cropping and pastoralism, was a remote place until very recently, notwithstanding its relative proximity to Perth. The underlying nature and inaccessibility of this landscape, together with the inland pastoral focus of the Shire, created an environment within which the shack settlements were established and transferred through generations. However, in cultural landscape terms, it is the protection provided by Wedge Island and the limestone headlands at Grey that 'ground' the actual settlements and their similar phases of development: establishment, expansion and consolidation.

These two shack settlements are socially cohesive communities. Located in isolated places the communities offer a liminal space: a place outside everyday life and conventions. Many people spoke of how 'shack culture' allowed them to be their true selves, while some reflected on the importance of the opportunity they had when young to explore who they were and might become. Symbolically, these shack settlements also represent the past alive in the present—past values, pioneering; community—things seen as lost from contemporary life. While the shack settlements and their communities have this particular identity, they have demonstrated an increasing responsibility to the broader physical and social environments in which they are located by reducing their environmental impacts (both the shacks and the settlements) and by accepting increased access over time by the broader community.

The shack settlements strongly reflect aspects of evolution and community aesthetic value. The settlements reflect the phases in development noted above, and the changes in the form and fabric of individual shacks reflect phases of construction and use. The community aesthetic values of the settlements relate to simultaneous individual and community motivations; a community-based ethos

that influences the design and siting of shacks, but which also supports self-reliance and innovation. The individual, in turn, gains benefit from his or her design innovation and respect within the community. The results of these two factors lead to a group aesthetic cultural landscape value that underlines differences between each shack, which is rarely found elsewhere in contemporary society in Australia.

7.3 Western Australian Heritage Assessment Framework

7.3.1 Legislative Framework

Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990

Section 46 of the Heritage of Western Australia establishes the Register of Heritage Places. The stated intent is a comprehensive register, rather than an index of examples, with each place making a unique contribution to the story of the development of Western Australia and its people.

The criteria for entry in the Register include where the place:

- (i) is of cultural significance; or
- (ii) possesses special interest related to or associated with the cultural heritage and is of value to the present and future generations.

Section 48 of the Act enables the Minister to register a group as a Historic Precinct even though the component places individually may not satisfy cultural significance criteria.

The assessment criteria relate to the nature of cultural significance noted in the Burra Charter definition above, as well as to two 'degree of significance' criteria: rarity and representative. Each of the criteria have sub-criteria that provide a finer grain to the criteria and also act as inclusion and exclusion guidelines in the absence of such specific guidelines.

The criteria guidelines also include a need to address condition, integrity and authenticity in the assessment (see Section 7.6).

Apart from general references to Western Australia and the State in the criteria (except Aesthetic Value that has no reference to WA) there is no specific guidance on what constitutes state level rather than local level significance in the criteria.

While the criteria do not indicate how many criteria are needed to be met, it is understood that one or more criterion are required to be met for listing on the State Register to proceed

Heritage Council of Western Australia

The WA Heritage Council in association with National Trust of Australia (WA) published a State Cultural Heritage Policy under the auspices of the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990. It identifies policy objectives for the recognition, protection and promotion of cultural heritage, and partnerships with agencies and owners in this work.

As noted in Section 3.3.3, the Heritage Council, in its submission to WA Shack Inquiry, stated that it could not consider a nomination to the State Register, as listing would be contrary to the stated WA Government Policy on the illegal occupation of Crown land.

Local Government Inventories

Section 45 of the Heritage of Western Australia Act requires Local Government authorities to identify places and areas of heritage significance through Local Government Inventories (previously known as Municipal Inventories). The inventory in itself does not have statutory weight, but reflects heritage places in a local district which in the Shire's opinion are, or may become, of cultural heritage significance and may be reflected in a (statutory) Local Planning Scheme.

The Heritage Council publishes Criteria for the Assessment of Local Heritage Places and Areas. These criteria are similar to the State criteria, except that the wording relates to the local district rather than Western Australia. In place of sub-criterion, the local criteria have inclusion and exclusion guidelines.

The local criteria also have additional considerations with regard to Heritage Areas that are not found in the State criteria. The local criteria guidelines state that heritage significance of Heritage Areas needs to be clearly distinguished from the broader concept of urban character.

Under the Local Assessment Criteria, a Heritage Area will be of significance for the local district if it meets one or more of the other criteria. It must also demonstrate a unified or cohesive physical form in the public realm, with an identifiable aesthetic, historic, research or social theme associated with a particular period, or periods, of development.

At the end of each State criteria section in Section 7.5 is a response regarding the relevant Local Heritage Places and Areas criteria.

7.4 Heritage Listings and Similar Assessments

7.4.1 Heritage Listings

Neither the Wedge nor Grey shack settlements are included on the State Register of Heritage Places. Both appear as simple entries on the Heritage Places Database maintained by the Heritage Council; Wedge as place 18400 and Grey as place 10521.

The shack settlements at Wedge and Grey are not included in the Dandaragan Local Government Inventory (formerly known as the Municipal Inventory).

The introduction to the Dandaragan Municipal Inventory notes that:

The main economic concerns in the shire are wheat and pastoral farming, tourism, wildflowers, mining and a thriving rock lobster industry centred on the coastal towns of Jurien Bay and Cervantes.

While the Shire's published history also acknowledges the development of the coastal areas of the Shire from the early twentieth century, the majority of Inventory places are inland. Several places associated with the Army occupation of the area during WWII are included on the Inventory, as are several crayfishing sites and jetties. Sandy Bay is the one shack settlement site on the Inventory; however, it is an archaeological site as the shacks were removed by the Shire in 1968.

The National Trust of WA has separately Classified both the Wedge and Grey shack settlements and these Classification listings are attached in Appendix A. While the National Trust is a respected heritage advocate which has acknowledged heritage expertise, its listings have no statutory force.

The Wedge and Grey Masterplan of 2000, prepared by the (then) Department of Conservation and Land Management, did not assess the cultural heritage values of the settlements.

The Western Australian Legislative Assembly Shack Inquiry of 2010 did acknowledge that there are cultural heritage values at Wedge and Grey—as assessed by the National Trust—and more specifically these places have ‘social heritage’ but was not persuaded that there was ‘building heritage’.¹

7.4.2 Assessment of Similar Places

The Survey of Coastal Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia in 1995–96 was undertaken just after a number of shack settlements had been removed and just before most of the remainder were removed (apart from the Wedge and Grey shacks). As noted in Section 3.4, these shacks had a similar history and physical form to that of Wedge and Grey. This report used the WA State Register Criteria in its assessment.

The report concluded that the shacks had aesthetic value, not in the singular, but as a group, forming a cultural landscape with a relationship between shacks and surroundings. The shacks exhibited a high degree of creative achievement in materials relating to isolation and environmental conditions. Historic value related to the process of opening up of the coastline and association with gazetted towns, demonstrated demand for recreational places and association with the crayfishing industry which is significant to Central Coast history. The shacks reflected a way of life dying out, a strong sense of community with family links, as well as being held in high esteem by a broad cross section of people. The report concluded that the shacks were representative of a type and were increasingly rare as a result of the implementation of the Squatter Policy.

7.5 Application of Western Australian Assessment Criteria

This section presents our assessment of cultural heritage significance.

7.5.1 Aesthetic Value

Criterion 1 It is significant in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

1.1 Importance to a community for aesthetic characteristics.

1.2 Importance for its creative design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.

1.3 Importance for its contribution to the aesthetic values of the setting demonstrated by a landmark quality or having impact on important vistas or otherwise contributing to the identified aesthetic qualities of the cultural environs or the natural landscape within which it is located.

1.4 In the case of an historic precinct, importance for the aesthetic character created by the individual components which collectively form a significant streetscape, townscape or cultural environment.

Introduction

This criterion and its sub-criteria address community-held values, technical aesthetic values, and landmark and precinct values. These are separately addressed below under the relevant sub-criterion.

The community-held aesthetic values sub-criterion requires that the aesthetic characteristics of the place are identified along with the community holding those values. Taking the Macquarie Dictionary as a responsible source, aesthetic means ‘having a sense of the beautiful, characterised by the love of beauty’ and beauty means ‘that quality or characteristic which excited an admiring pleasure or delights the eye or the aesthetic sense’.² Aesthetic response is generally considered to

be derived from the experience of an environment or place, and often has a strongly emotional character.

Response to Criterion

1.1 Importance to the community for aesthetic characteristics

The beauty of the surrounding landscape of both shack settlements evokes a strong aesthetic response, linked to the experience of nature as a powerful force that frequently reshapes the land-sea edge, interactions with wild animals, the beauty of the sky, stars and sunsets over the water, and the drama of the sand dunes within and adjoining each settlement. These landscapes are powerful emotionally, particularly because of the experienced forces of nature. The liminal nature of the shack settlement adds force to such experiences.

The shacks themselves evoke a sense of personal and crafted places, hand-wrought with care using second hand and found materials. The ingenuity of the crafting is appreciated aesthetically as well as technically, and discussions with shackies revealed this strongly. The aesthetics of shack construction is about the expression of individuality, and these expressions are valued by the shack community. As well, there is a community ethos that guides the form and fabric used in the shacks and encourages innovation. The aesthetic characteristics in turn reflect strong social and historic values and a broader Australian 'make-do' ethos.

The aesthetic characteristics valued by the community include simplicity as an expression of function, reuse of materials as part of a demonstrative expression of economy, and modesty in display of material culture as a social leveller. All of these shared characteristics are combined with a strong sense of individual choice, expression and wit (but not in an ostentatious way). The particular aesthetic characteristic of the shack settlements is therefore a complex mix underpinned by common approaches but strongly defined by individual variance.

Shack owners surveyed or interviewed for this report felt the aesthetic values were associated with beauty; not with a traditional understanding of beauty, but one strongly connected to both shared community values of 'low-key' appearance and individuality of expression—a careful balance between personal expression and fitting-in. This is a culturally specific response to the idea of aesthetic that is different from 'normal' places and ideas of beauty. While being a culturally specific response, this particular aesthetic can still be interpreted and appreciated by visitors.

The aesthetic characteristics of the settlements also relate to non-visual aspects of aesthetic significance – where the sense of quietude in nature and being in a 'different place' is important to an individual's sense of being.

Meets this sub-criterion

Tangible attributes:

- the changing nature of the wider coastal setting of each settlement: coastline, water, dunes, islands, etc;
- the protective qualities of the islands and dunes;
- the deliberate choice of reused and found materials over new;
- the essential functionality of the shacks, combined with innovation and wit in their design and decoration; and

- diversity of shack built forms, features and decorative strategies.

Intangible attributes:

- experience of observing nature at close quarters, over the seasons and years;
- opportunity for (relatively) unfettered freedom of expression, linked to shack culture and expressed shack societal values;
- care for the environment and community; and
- personal sense of achievement in shack construction for untrained people, that is also an essential requirement for being part of the shack community.

1.2 Importance for its creative design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.

Innovation and creative responses to both function and appearance are important components of the underlying community aesthetic that has developed in response to: the (until recently) isolation of the settlements, the lack of certainty over tenure, and their location in a hostile marine environment. The creative and innovative responses to these constraints are important to the community's sense of place, noted above in sub-criteria 1.1 and below in 1.4 and 4.

The creative design and innovation is reflected in individual shacks and includes linking small shed components with covered areas and decks to form pavilion type shacks, and innovative reuse of materials such as vehicle windows, advertising signage, objects as furniture (eg cable rolls) and technology (eg revolving BBQs and garden sprinklers to cool roofs).

Meets this sub-criterion in association with other sub-criteria; 1.1, 1.4 and Criterion 4.

Tangible attributes:

- innovative use of materials and recycled objects;
- innovative use of technology; and
- creative design of building spaces and building forms (such as linked pavilions and covered areas) and landscaping.

Intangible attributes:

- personal pride in the innovative use or reuse of materials and technology that is valued by individuals and the community.

1.3 Importance for its contribution to the aesthetic values of the setting demonstrated by a landmark quality or having impact on important vistas or otherwise contributing to the identified aesthetic qualities of the cultural environs or the natural landscape within which it is located.

The natural coastal environment was the essential motivation for the establishment of these shack settlements. More specifically, both shack settlements were located where they are because of the protection afforded from prevailing winds by the natural features of Wedge Island and the limestone headlands at Grey. This continuing relationship and reliance on the natural landscape has continued, with dunes used to protect shacks and coastal heath propagated to stabilise the dunes and landscape generally. There is, therefore, a strong cultural landscape value arising from the

relationship between the settlements as cultural environs and the natural landscape in which they are located. The relationship between the natural setting and the place is a fundamental one in historical and functional terms.

The landscape qualities and boundaries of both shack settlements are strongly defined and limited by natural features, including the large coastal dune systems, the interdunal swamps, reefs and the Indian Ocean itself. These limits are actively protected by the community of each place.

Meets sub-criterion in association with other sub-criteria; 1.1, 1.4 and Criterion 4.

Tangible attributes:

- Wedge Island, the limestone headlands at Grey, the reefs at both places, Green Islets off Grey and the dunes at both places that provide protection for shacks and fishing boats; and
- enclosing nature of the coastal dune systems and the separating role of the interdunal swamp at Wedge.

Intangible attributes:

- a strong landscape sense of place that is both assisted and threatened by the dunes (the dunes provide wind protection but also inundate the shacks).

1.4 In the case of an historic precinct, importance for the aesthetic character created by the individual components which collectively form a significant streetscape, townscape or cultural environment

The shack settlements are characterised by small, low-scale and well-spaced shacks constructed of reused and affordable materials that as whole define them as vernacular Australian beach settlements. These types of buildings reflect the types of vernacular beach settlements that were more typical and accessible to Australians in the first three decades following the Second World War, but are now increasingly rare.

These shacks are not simply groups of similar buildings at the same place, but deliberate and evolved settlements that provide evidence in their phases of development (both individually and collectively) of an orderly community, reflected in the unwritten rules or ethos in relation to approvals, boundaries and behaviour, together with more overt collective action on waste management, health and fire safety, and environmental protection. These aspects of history and community action mean that the settlements are cultural environments in which the whole is more important than any individual parts. In turn, the whole owes its place to its specific natural setting (see 1.3).

These precinct qualities include individual responses within an overall shared aesthetic response noted above. As a group the shacks fit well into the natural landscape within which they have evolved, including the heath vegetation, dunes and headlands noted above and introduced plantings. The disposition of shacks, sheds, objects, 'local' cars, natural heath and cultural plantings, tracks, etc, form a complex landscape that at one level can seem anarchic, but equally expresses a collective spatial disposition that is orderly, democratic, sensible and polite—politeness being the currency of the place. As noted in responses to criterion 1.1, 1.2 and 4, these shared aspects are important to the community for their aesthetic characteristics.

Meets this sub-criterion

Tangible attributes:

- large groups of shacks that vary greatly as individual elements but which collectively form a coherent landscape of small, low-scale structures constructed of reused materials set low into the sheltering coastal heath landscape and landform, and all contained between the sea and the sand dunes.

Intangible attributes:

- unwritten cultural rules and practices that helped create the physical form of the precincts.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements meet Criterion 1 Aesthetic Value

Local Assessment Criteria: Aesthetic Value*Criterion 1: It is significant in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics*

The shack settlements are vernacular building groups that also provide important evidence of key Dandaragan Shire twentieth-century historic themes. The scale, form and massing of the shack settlements takes advantage of their relatively protected settings within dunes and headlands, and as groups that they sit well within the coastal heath landscape. These groups satisfy the Heritage Area criteria in being cohesive in form, in the public domain and are associated with historic and social themes very relevant to the Shire. They are the only remaining shack settlements in Dandaragan Shire and represent particular aesthetics not found elsewhere in the Shire.

7.5.2 Historic Value***Criterion 2 It is significant in the evolution or pattern of the history of Western Australia***

2.1 Importance for the density or diversity of cultural features illustrating the human occupation and evolution of the locality, region or the State.

2.2 Importance in relation to an event, phase or activity of historic importance in the locality, region or the State.

2.3 Importance for its close association with an individual or individuals whose life, works or activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State or region.

2.4 Importance as an example of technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement in a particular period.

Introduction

The first two sub-criteria reflect complementary aspects of historic evolution and historic events or phases. The third criterion relates to associations and the fourth criterion to achievements from particular periods. The shack settlements are associated with the evolution of coastal settlements at both a State and local level, particularly with regard to the postwar phase and in their role in providing an affordable holiday experience for people living in urban centres like Perth.

Response to Criterion

2.1 Importance for the density or diversity of cultural features illustrating the human occupation and evolution of the locality, region or the State.

The physical, historic and cultural factors that led to the establishment and development of the Wedge and Grey shack settlements reflect important historic phases in the evolution of Western Australia. In particular, the process of coastal settlement and development of the vast and remote coast of Western Australia in the twentieth century is a key theme in the State's history and for which Wedge and Grey provide important evidence.

The history of Wedge and Grey (both pre-cursor and development history) illustrates key state historic themes: the slow development of a vast coastline not generally suitable for farming and the minimal government engagement in the management of these landscapes, that is contrasted with the rapid growth in the local economy, migrant intake and available recreation time (and access to vehicles) following the Second World War. This report also suggests that there are additional cultural factors in Western Australia that supported the establishment of shack settlements and were reflected in the physical form and cultural practices at Wedge and Grey: self-reliance, a resistance to government interference and a coastal recreational lifestyle—all characteristics that are quintessentially West Australian.

In settlement terms, Wedge and Grey are also examples of the general process of coastal settlement in WA. On this coast shack settlements were often the outriders of what became town settlements for places like Lancelin and Jurien Bay, and with most of these subsumed or removed, this aspect of history is threatened.

The shack settlements provide evidence of a diversity of cultural features, including early pastoral use, visitation and occupation during the Second World War, and more directly with the establishment of the professional crayfishing industry and then recreational use associated with families from Perth and the surrounding rural areas. Many individual shacks show evidence of the historic evolution associated with changes in use and owners.

Wedge and Grey also strongly reflect the historic evolution of the Central Coast region and local Dandaragan district, in particular early pastoral use and the Second World War use of the area that established visitation and use patterns, together with establishment of the settlements primarily by professional fishers in the early 1950s. Wedge and Grey are the only remaining shack settlement places within Dandaragan Shire that elucidate key aspects of its early history relating to coastal development in the interwar, wartime and postwar years, and are therefore important artefacts and places.

Meets this sub-criterion

Tangible attributes:

- the evidence in shack for changes from fisher to recreational owners;
- other towns on the Central Coast that reflect a transition from shack settlements to towns;
- pastoral evidence and remains; and
- Second World War evidence and remains.

Intangible attributes:

- a combination of distinctive cultural practices over several decades and into the present.

2.2 Importance in relation to an event, phase or activity of historic importance in the locality, region or the State.

While the settlements have their background in pastoralism and their founding in the establishment of the crayfishing industry, as noted in 2.1 above, their historical importance is most strongly found in the evidence they provide of an inexpensive recreational escape for workers from Perth and other urban centres along the coast, at a period when recreation time and access to vehicles rapidly expanded in the 1960s. The Wedge and Grey shack settlements are the largest and only remaining example of the postwar history of shack settlements in Western Australia relating to recreation within proximity of the Perth urban area.

The importance of the shack settlements in this postwar phase in WA history is related to the coming together of two important themes of WA history: the slow processes in the late development and management of the State's vast coastal land resources in the early to mid-twentieth century (the periodic use by pastoral families and postwar fishers), and the rapid growth of recreational use from the 1960s and into the 1970s and 1980s. While the postwar recreational process is similar to the rapid growth in the rest of Australia, the late development and management of the coast north of Perth relates in particular to WA historical processes.

From the 1950s, around Australia, shack settlements were established for working families near major urban centres to be used as affordable holidays for workers (Bonnie Vale, Port Hacking, Sydney, and those on the Spencer Gulf near Port Augusta and Yagon north of Newcastle, NSW). This is now a lost postwar weekender phase relating to the historic theme of Australian recreation. Wedge and Grey were recreational places that were affordable and (relatively) accessible—other similar places have changed and/or become financially inaccessible. In this sense Wedge and Grey represent a phase in the first decade following the War that is like a 'frozen moment', where the past is alive in the present in terms of both lifestyle and physical form; whereas other places generally have been changed through the upgrades of buildings or integration into regular towns.

Meets this sub-criterion

Tangible attributes:

- remote communities on an isolated coast—response to place/environment;
- the sense of isolation on a windswept coastal plain but otherwise not far from Perth; and
- simple low technology.

Intangible attributes:

- practices and lifestyle—self-reliance; and
- modesty with regard to display of material culture.

2.3 Importance for its close association with an individual or individuals whose life, works or activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State or region.

Wedge and Grey shack settlements have local associations with pastoral families (eg the Wedge family) and other fishing families.

Ms Anne McGuinness AO has been recognised for her services in providing first aid and other health services at Wedge.

While no doubt important and prominent West Australian personalities and politicians have been associated with these shack settlements, their association is likely to be incidental rather than fundamental to the State value of these places.

However, these associations are significant at a local rather than State level.

Does not meet this sub-criterion at a State level (but does at a local level)

2.4 Importance as an example of technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement in a particular period.

The shacks show innovation in changes in the use of technology since the 1950s. Older shacks show evidence of changes in use from fishers to recreational family use. Linked to criterion 2.1 & 2.2 and 1.2.

The shacks reflect some aspects of their different periods but not at a State level on their own.

Does not meet this sub-criterion on its own but is met in association with other sub-criteria; 1.2 and 3.3

Tangible attributes:

- examples of 'old' technology such as kerosene and now chip heaters, etc and
- the evolution of technical responses—old tech to new tech.

Intangible attributes:

- the process of understanding and maintaining the shacks.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements meet Criterion 2 Historic Value

Local Assessment Criteria: Historic Value

Criterion 2: It is significant in the evolution or pattern of the history of the local district.

Wedge and Grey strongly reflect the historic themes in the history of Dandaragan Shire, including coastal pastoralism, defence during the Second World War and postwar professional crayfishing. The challenging coastal landscape not suited to intensive cropping and pastoralism, was a remote place until very recently, notwithstanding its relative proximity to Perth. The underlying nature and inaccessibility of this landscape, together with the inland pastoral focus of the Shire, created an environment within which the shack settlements were established.

The two shack settlements satisfy the Heritage Area criteria in being cohesive in form, in the public domain and are associated with the historic themes very relevant to this Shire.

7.5.3 Scientific Value

Criterion 3A It has demonstrable potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the natural or cultural history of Western Australia.

3.1 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality, reference or benchmark site.

3.2 Importance for its potential to yield information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of the locality, region or the state.

Criterion 3B It is significant in demonstrating a high degree of technical innovation or achievement.

3.3 Importance for its technical innovation or achievement.

Response to Criterion

3.1 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality, reference or benchmark site.

It is understood that the shack settlement sites are not currently used as teaching or reference sites for archaeology. While there would be archaeological potential at the sites from former shacks and places such as refuse dumps, former wells, etc, it is unlikely to yield information that is not already available from other sources (documentary and oral history and analysis of building fabric). Further, some such evidence will have been disturbed through being 'cleaned up'.

However, the shack settlements are currently used for the teaching of architecture and the built environment in relation to the vernacular characteristics of the buildings and settlements, and this includes cultural and philosophical aspects.³ This aspect of shack culture does have research potential as noted below in 3.2

Does not meet this sub-criterion

3.2 Importance for its potential to yield information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of the locality, region or state.

The shack settlements may have potential research value as a place in which anthropological investigation is likely to provide a greater understanding of historical and contemporary human behaviour in settlement environments that are remote, unplanned and unmanaged. These are two of the few sites in Western Australia that could do this at a large scale and over a substantial length of time. As part of this anthropological potential there would be an opportunity to study human interaction with the landscape over time. This value requires further consideration by specialists to confirm its significance at a State level.

May be found to meet this sub-criterion at State level, but does not currently meet it.

Potential Tangible attributes:

Evidence includes:

- landscape change; and
- building change.

Potential Intangible attributes:

- community formation processes;
- community response to environmental challenges; and
- community ethos and behaviour, including getting approval, setting boundaries and settling disputes.
-

3.3 Importance for its technical innovation or achievement.

The use of different forms of technology over different phases of the settlements' history is important as evidence of the need to provide environmentally appropriate services in a remote and harsh environment. These technical innovations have generally been in the areas of water supply and storage, power supply, waste management, and more recently communications. Sometimes these are traditional vernacular technologies (eg wood chip heaters for hot water) and sometimes they reflect contemporary approaches, such as photovoltaic cells and wind turbines for power. These technological features are an important part of each settlement and form part of the community aesthetic values (1.1) and also social values (4) associated with a make-do lifestyle. However, it is considered that in their own right these responses and innovations do not meet this sub-criterion.

Does not meet sub-criterion but does contribute to other sub-criteria: 1.2 2.4 and 3.2.

Tangible attributes:

- the range of different technologies; and
- the visual landscape of visible technologies.

Intangible attributes:

- collective knowledge and traditions around innovation.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements do not currently meet Criterion 3 Scientific Value

Local Assessment Criteria: Research Value

Criterion 3A It has demonstrable potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the natural or cultural history of the local district.

Criterion 3B It is significant in demonstrating a high degree of technical innovation or achievement.

At the local level this value is termed research value and does not refer to the teaching benchmark value noted in the State criteria. The settlements have research potential to contribute to an understanding of local cultural evolution, including the Second World War phase of defence coastwatcher occupation for which some evidence may remain. As the only similar settlements remaining in the district, they meet the technical innovation criteria for the reasons noted above.

7.5.4 Social Value

Criterion 4 It is significant through association with a community or cultural Complex in Western Australia for social, cultural, education or spiritual reasons.

4.1 Importance as a place highly valued by a community or cultural group for reasons of social, cultural, religious, spiritual, aesthetic or educational associations.

4.2 Importance in contributing to a community's sense of place.

Introduction

Criterion 4 is used for assessing social value at State and local levels in Western Australia. For State-level significance assessments the two sub-criterion noted above are defined.

The social values represented by these two sub-criterion overlap, and have therefore been assessed together rather than separately.

In accordance with generally applied principles and practice, this assessment of social value is based on defining the community or cultural group that holds each particular value. It also considers the length of attachment, the strength of the regard in which it is held by that community or cultural group, its contribution to local identity (including as a landmark or signature place), its meanings and symbolism, and its role in connecting the past and present for those communities and cultural groups.

It is noted that there is no requirement for a place to be valued by an 'entire community', but rather that such a place would be expected to be valued widely throughout the defined community or cultural group.

This assessment considers two communities: first, the communities of the shack settlements of Wedge and Grey, and second, the community of Western Australia. In considering the social significance of Wedge and Grey to Western Australians, material from the historical overview (Section 3.0) has been drawn on. We have also commented on its potential significance to Yued and Noongar people, although the extent of research undertaken in the present project is not adequate to fully determine its social value for this cultural group.

The WA Heritage Council guidelines *Criteria for the assessment of local heritage places and areas* have also been referred to and consideration given to the inclusion and exclusion requirements. The criterion for local significance differs slightly from that for State-level significance in that it refers to 'association with a community or cultural group in the local district' and does not include 'religious' reasons (although these may be considered to form part of spiritual reasons).

Response to Criteria

For the people of Wedge and Grey

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements are held in high esteem by the shack settlement communities as distinctive and iconic places, symbolising freedom, escape from structured city lives, creativity and ingenuity, and as a place to commune with nature.

The distinctiveness of these settlements derives from their history, remoteness and the attraction of such places for people with certain interests and values. The form of the settlement and the dwellings are a part of that distinctiveness, as are the communities themselves.

The shacks, each and every one, are seen as being imbued with something of the spirit of the maker; the objects and elements accumulated over the years are valued, as is the evidence of changes made by past family members and unrelated owners. Together what is kept and what is changed reveal the stories of the shack and its occupiers. While the fabric itself is not regarded as sacrosanct, change is only made for a functional reason; there is no ethos of building 'grandeur dwellings' in these communities.

The shack settlements as whole places tell the stories of many people. It is a landscape that is read and interpreted by present shackies, and is (in this sense) filled with stories of people, events, endeavours, successes and failures. These stories appear to be passed onto and welcomed with interest by newcomers, indicating a lively interest in this fine-grain of the settlements' history.

The longevity of each settlement, and its progressive development over 60 or more years, has resulted in strong and long-standing associations with both professional fishers and holiday makers. For those with family connections across several generations (around 50% of survey respondents) the shack settlement and their shacks are a significant repository of memory, the setting for family stories, a place of personal and shared experiences, and often a formative influence on their values. The shacks and the settlements as a whole are an important part of the expressed identity of these families and their values.

For 'wood ducks'⁴, their association are based on a short and more recent association, and although they appear to share many of the values of long-standing community members it seems less likely that the place is as fundamental in their sense of identity; the exception may be where people have come to Wedge or Grey from another shack settlement. Nevertheless these 'wood ducks' expressed a strong sense of connection and over time are likely to develop a similar strength of connection linked to personal identity.

While our research methods focused on those currently occupying a shack at Wedge or Grey, we did speak with some people who no longer had a shack there but who felt a continuing connection. Their expressions of social value were not markedly different from those of current shack owners, and this suggests that there are wider communities (in Perth and the region, and from fishing families) with significant associations with either Wedge or Grey. Further, we found that nearly one-third of those who responded to the survey had a connection to another shack community, and from their responses, it appears that their feelings of attachment to another shack settlement formed the foundation of, or reinforced, their feelings about Wedge or Grey.

The 'look' of these shack settlements—informal, hand-made and quirky—reflect the values of the people who create and sustain the place. There is little regulation and great opportunity for personal expression. Both settlements demonstrate this in different ways, particularly in the forms of the shacks, in shack naming and in the collection of interesting signs and objects. Some of these are highlighted in Section 5.0. In this sense the shack settlements are a physical and symbolic embodiment of the societal values of, and help define, these communities.

Connections between the past and the present is ever-present in these shack settlements. Traditions and stories bring the distant and the recent past to life, and sharing and swapping stories is a tradition in itself. In both shack settlements, but particularly in Wedge, there are long-standing traditions that help create an active community life: examples include meeting at the Point, Australia Day cricket and ANZAC Day. There are other traditions too, some continuing and others now lost. The challenges of the journey to each shack settlement, the landmarks and the stopping places along the way used to mark the transition from city to shack life: with the new road that transition is quicker. Other traditions include creating beach buggies from old cars; creating power, water and waste systems for your shack; putting up the flag to say 'we're here' and many others. These traditions are part of the experience of the place and reflect aspects of 'shack culture' that are valued and therefore passed on.

The landscapes of Wedge and Grey, meaning the wider landscape setting around each settlement, are of importance to the two shack communities as places that provide a deeply-felt connection to nature, natural cycles and other species. These landscapes, centred on the beach, are the foundation reason for the settlements and this link between settlement and landscape nurtures this ongoing experience of place. This is one of the enduring experiences of living at the shack settlements, and for many is the key to their sense of attachment.

For the shack communities, aesthetic and social values are closely entwined. For example the beach and coastal landscapes represent important meanings and these are connected to their aesthetic qualities; likewise the aesthetic and social attributes of the shacks. Both the social and aesthetic values reflect a relationship between the individual and the community—between personal expression, ingenuity and innovation and respecting the collective shack ethos or culture. The aesthetic values, discussed further in Section 7.5.1, are therefore important to social integrity and sense of place.

These surrounding landscapes are also places of experience and association, used and enjoyed by shack dwellers for a range of activities: fishing, surfing, walking, play. For many who grew up visiting or living in the shack settlement, these wider landscapes were places to be explored, with many localities having strong personal memories and meanings.

For the Western Australian community

Considered at State level, the shack settlements represent a bigger story of exploration, discovery and settlement by urban dwellers seeking respite and escape, evoking and making personal the experience of pioneering that is a significant part of Australian history and sense of identity, at least for pre-Second World War settler peoples.⁵

From the surveys and other evidence it seems that a large number of people from Perth and across the wheat belt region have some experience of the shack lifestyle through visits with friends and work colleagues, or through past associations with these or other shack communities. Further, there is evidence that an association with one shack community is likely to attribute similar values to other shack communities. This was revealed through stories of the loss of a shack elsewhere, leading to people moving to Wedge or Grey to re-establish themselves within a similar 'shack' culture and community. And it was reinforced by other stories where people, having experienced the shack culture in other places (often while growing up), later sought out a shack community to join.

Potentially, Wedge and Grey shack settlements are of significance to the broader Western Australian community as an important reference point in the historical and contemporary identity. Shacks are a strong part of Western Australian culture and the experience of shack life and culture is regarded as likely to be common across the Western Australian community (see Sections 3.0 and 6.0). In particular there has been a very strong historical association with Perth and it expected that for many in Perth these shack settlements are important to their identity.

Symbolically, Grey and Wedge represent the survival of a way of life that has been highly valued and that connects people to a recent past of pioneering and freedom that is rapidly disappearing. This appears to be a strong element in the identity of Western Australians.

The shack settlements are archetypal places, experienced vicariously through stories and imagery for those Western Australians who have not had direct experience of staying in a shack settlement. They represent a part of Western Australian history that is close to their hearts—the longing to escape, live a simpler life and to pioneer. These two settlements, the largest surviving examples, symbolise what was once common and what is much desired.

For Yued and Noongar peoples

For Yued people, and possibly other Noongar people, this whole landscape represents aspects of the lives of their ancestors, in its natural resources (which include totemic species), traditional

pathways, water sources, etc, as well as in the evidence of creation beings. In addition, some Yued (and possibly Noongar) people continue to live within this landscape and one extended family is part of the Wedge shack settlement community. In essence, this cultural group is expected to feel a deep, enduring and powerful attachment to this landscape as a whole.

Meets both sub-criterion, and the criterion as a whole

Tangible attributes:

- the lack of infrastructure services enabling invention and innovation of individual solutions;
- the casual and self-regulated form of the settlements—as evidenced in the informal track networks and the positioning of shacks and associated structures;
- the environmental and landscape setting which creates the opportunity for a closeness to nature;
- specific known places in the wider landscape setting associated with personal and shared experiences—this includes the track and features along it, springs on the beach, fishing spots on the coast and on the reefs, etc;
- the contained settlement area and the distinct boundary between settlement and the (relatively) untouched landscape setting beyond the settlement;
- access to the beach;
- particular places within each settlement that are the focus of community activities and events;
- trees and deliberate plantings; and
- memoirs, diaries, poems, paintings and murals, flotsam and shell collections, personal signs, and photographic collections.

Intangible attributes:

- being part of a community;
- the concept of shack culture and the sharing of particular values—personal responsibility, looking out for others;
- the ability to continue a relationship with the place;
- continuing and evolving community and family traditions;
- memories triggered by being there;
- special language, terminology and nicknames;
- social connections and friendships;
- appreciation within the broader community of cultural values; and

- knowledge and the processes of sharing and passing on knowledge (including knowledge of the stories of the settlement, the land/environment, buildings, people, events, emergencies and exploits).

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements meet Criterion 4 Social Value

Local Assessment Criteria: Social Value

Criterion 4: It is significant through association with a community or cultural group in the local district for social, cultural, educational, or spiritual reasons.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements are highly significant to the people of these settlements, and for people elsewhere who have experienced or observed/know shack culture and lifestyle. These places—the landscape itself, the shacks and the culture—hold deep significance for these communities as a result of long associations that extend across several generations. These places are fundamental to the sense of identity of people with these associations, and the loss of these places and cultures would be profoundly felt. Shack culture and the opportunity to experience and continue this culture is becoming increasingly rare.

Meets this criterion

7.5.5 Rarity

Criterion 5 It demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the cultural heritage of Western Australia.

5.1 Importance for rare, endangered or uncommon structures, landscapes or phenomena.

5.2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practised in, or in danger of being lost from, or of exceptional interest to, the locality, region or the State.

Response to Criterion

5.1 Importance for rare, endangered or uncommon structures, landscapes or phenomena.

The shack settlements of Wedge and Grey represent rare examples of these types of these structures, landscapes and phenomena in Western Australia. These settlements and phenomena are now endangered.

Coastal shacks and shack settlements are in themselves an increasingly rare habitation type that reflects most strongly a phase of Australian history in the first decades following the Second World War. This is a type of settlement which is now rare in an Australian context from changes in the nature of recreation, coastal development and changes in the management of public lands.

Shack settlements were a particularly popular phenomenon in Western Australia that reflected factors such as its vast coast, preference for a coastal recreational lifestyle and a distinctive cultural history based on individual expression and freedom. After a number of decades of State and local government policy to remove shacks and the actual removal of many settlements, particularly on the Central Coast, few other settlements remain; those that do are generally different in their history, physical characteristics, management and tenure and appear to be subject to rapid change and a process of 'normalisation' through planning controls or as a result of the expectations of owners.

There are no places like Wedge and Grey remaining in Western Australia. The scale of these two settlements—Wedge is probably larger than any shack settlement in Australia—their particular physical characteristics and the characteristics of the shack lifestyle are both distinctive and uncommon. Other uncommon aspects include the self-managing community organisation and ethos which has developed without formal controls, their historic relationship with Perth in providing an economic and relatively accessible alternative recreation experience, the frozen moment ('like it was') characteristics of the shack lifestyle, and the amazing diversity of the shacks themselves untrammelled by formal controls.

The shack settlements and their setting on this (formerly) remote, but still exposed, coast form rare cultural landscapes, reflecting a fundamental relationship with landscape place that provided the initial impetus for the settlements—the protection provided by the islands, reefs, dunes and headlands and the changes in this landscape that over time, have come to reflect a positive balance between landscape impact and conservation.

These settlements have been threatened for over 30 years and have been the subject to numerous reports and investigations to which the community has responded. As other shack settlements were removed on the Central Coast, people wishing to continue a shack lifestyle have moved to Wedge and Grey as the last 'refuge' shack places in this region. This threat remains, with the State Government Upper House Shack Inquiry recommending in 2011 that the Government move to remove the shacks at Wedge and Grey. The recent completion of the Indian Ocean Drive has removed the isolation of the settlements and the cultural impacts of this are yet unknown.

As a totality, the shack experience can be described as a rare phenomenon, characteristics of which include travelling to and maintaining the shacks, developing self-reliance and innovation, interacting with the community, and experiencing such a different lifestyle and physical landscape.

Meets this sub-criterion

Tangible attributes:

- the other similar shack settlement places in WA; and
- the cultural landscape of the shacks in their natural setting of dunes, headlands, reefs and islands.

Intangible attributes:

- the community response to the ongoing threat of removal.

5.2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practised in, or in danger of being lost from, or of exceptional interest to, the locality, region or the State.

The shack lifestyle is a distinctive way of life that is also a phenomenon, with both tangible and intangible aspects. The tangible aspects reflect the demonstratively different customs, functions and designs to that of normal residential occupation (as also noted above in 5.1). The intangible aspects relate to the strong social values for the communities. These include a distinctive lifestyle that is outside 'normal' urban life and conventions where there is a sense of the past retained in the present in the customs and ethos that are maintained. This distinctive way of life was once common in Western Australia but is now rare and in danger of being lost, with shack removals in most parts of Western Australia.

It is also likely that the shack settlements are valued by the broader Western Australian community—in particular the Perth community, who are most strongly associated with these settlements—as an example of a recreational lifestyle that was once more common but now rare. The shacks are of exceptional interest for a way of life that is now uncommon.

The shack settlements reflect a phase in the overall pattern of the coastal development of Western Australia in the immediate postwar period that is now in danger of being lost. In particular, this aspect was the use of the coast by urban dwellers in a fairly untrammelled manner—and as an affordable holiday. This was a period in Western Australia when urban dwellers had an expectation of being able to get away for an affordable holiday in a fairly untrammelled manner either ‘shacking it’ or camping. This aspect of history and lifestyle is now threatened by better roads, organised towns, and more controls on public places such as National Parks.

Rare, endangered and uncommon aspects of the shack phenomenon include: the lifestyle and culture, the structures and their maintenance; a distinctive way of life, culture and processes; and recreation patterns and practices.

Meets this criterion

Tangible attributes:

- the shacks and the shack settlements;
- lack of formal controls;
- the small number of remaining shack settlements; and
- the normalisation of the settlements that remain.

Intangible attributes:

- the lifestyle as an experience;
- the customs; and
- the processes.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements meet Criterion 5 Rarity

Local Assessment Criteria: Rarity Value

Criterion 5: It demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the cultural heritage of the local district.

Meets this criterion for the reasons noted above and elsewhere, with regard to the rarity of these shack settlements within the local district that nevertheless demonstrate important local heritage themes.

7.5.6 Representative

Criterion 6 It is significant in demonstrating the characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments in the State.

6.1 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of landscapes or environments, the attributes of which identify it as being characteristic of its class.

6.2 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of human activities (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique) in the environment of the locality, region or the State.

Response to Criterion

6.1 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of landscapes or environments, the attributes of which identify it as being characteristic of its class.

Wedge and Grey are important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of shack settlements as a type of human habitation that is distinctly different in physical form, fabric and use to usual forms of organised habitation. The characteristics of this type of settlement are groups of small-scale vernacular structures located in often remote landscape settings where the setting and its resources provide the reason for the settlement (and in some cases, like Wedge and Grey, the material for the construction of the shacks). The relationship between the landscape setting and the use of the place results generally in cultural landscape values. In some cases these settlements began without land owner approval and in some cases the settlements were established with the approval of the landowner or lessee.

The shacks themselves demonstrate the characteristics of a type through their form, materials, use and adaptation, and as a distinct building type now rare in an Australian context and threatened in a Western Australian context.

Meets this criterion

Tangible attributes:

- the shacks as a group in their landscape setting.

6.2 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of human activities (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique) in the environment of the locality, region or the State.

The shacks are important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a way of life, customs land uses and shack settlement architecture that in turn reflects distinct phases of Western Australian history.

The location, evolution and form of the settlements; the design, changes and the technology of the shack themselves; and the shack lifestyle based on self-reliance and innovation all strongly reflect and are reflected by the 'make-do' and cooperative philosophy, the community ethos and community action and events that all underpin the shack life and its customs and processes.

Wedge and Grey strongly reflect the historical themes in the history of the Central Coast region and Dandaragan Shire—particularly in relation to the development of its coast during the twentieth century. This history includes coastal pastoralism, defence during the Second World War and postwar crayfishing. The challenging coastal landscape was a remote place until very recently, notwithstanding its relative proximity to Perth. The underlying nature and inaccessibility of this landscape, together with the inland pastoral focus of the Shire, created an environment within which the shack settlements were established.

Meets this sub-criterion

Tangible attributes:

- the overall cultural landscape of settlements and their setting;
- evidence of previous historical phases; pastoral, defence, fishing; and
- design and changes to individual shacks reflecting changes in use and family.

Changes in the use of technology

Intangible attributes:

- customs and way of life; and
- community ethos

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements meet Criterion 6 Representative**Local Assessment Criteria: Representative Value**

Criterion 6: It is significant in demonstrating the characteristics of a class of cultural place or environments in the local district.

These places are representative of the history of settlement of the coastal area of the local Dandaragan district and reflect settlements that were in the district and those that evolved into towns. While the settlements meet this criterion, no similar places actually remain, as other shack settlements have been removed.

7.5.7 Condition, Integrity and Authenticity

The WA Assessment Criteria guidelines include the following definitions and notes:

Condition refers to the current state of the place in relation to each of the values for which that place has been assessed. Condition reflects the cumulative effects of management and environmental events.

Integrity is a measure of the likely long-term viability or sustainability of the values identified or the ability of the place to restore itself or be restored and the time frame for any restorative process.

Authenticity refers to the extent to which the fabric is in its original state.

Because it is important that the Register be credible it is desirable that places...have a least reasonable levels of condition and integrity. However, it is possible for a place of poor condition or integrity to be entered in the Register on the basis of a value where those things are relatively unimportant eg an historic ruin.

In relation to authenticity places entered in the Register should have a high degree of authenticity although it will be possible to include places which exhibit evolution of use and consequent change where this is harmonious with the original design and materials.

Condition

The shack settlements are generally well maintained. However, given the use of second-hand materials and exposed conditions, some are in poor condition. The lack of certainty over their future has probably led to a decrease in the extent of maintenance in some instances.

Integrity

The values of the settlements are strongly associated with the use of the shacks by owners, family and friends in a self-sustaining manner that is underpinned by community action. Provided these individual and community process are retained the settlements can retain and restore its values and therefore their integrity is high.

Authenticity

The shack settlements exhibit a high degree of authenticity. While there have been changes and additions over time to accommodate changes in use and ownership (such as fisher to family ownership), as well as family growth, these changes fit the guideline note regarding places which exhibit evolution of use and consequent change.

7.6 Summary Statement of Cultural Significance

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements are significant to Western Australia for their aesthetic, historical, social and scientific values. These shack settlements have both rarity and representative value for Western Australia.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements represent rare aspects of settlement and building types, cultural landscapes, cultural lifestyle and community processes—collectively a phenomenon that has both tangible and intangible attributes. The shack settlements are representative of a distinctive way of life that was once common in Western Australia, but is now rare and in danger of being lost, with shack removals in most parts of the State and with these settlements also currently threatened with removal.

The rarity of these shack settlements is founded on their historic values and the evidence they provide for the evolution in the settlement of the coastal areas of West Australia generally, and the Central Coast region and local Dandaragan districts in particular. This evolution includes association with the pastoral industry and defence activity during the Second World War, but more particularly professional crayfishers who established these and other settlements, some of which became formal townships.

The shack settlements are particularly important as examples of postwar Western Australian history where the late development and management of the State's vast coastal land resources was met by the rapid growth in recreational activity after the war, when families from Perth (many of them migrants) and regional wheat belt centres were searching for affordable recreational experiences within a reasonable distance from Perth. The settlements also reflect particular Western Australian cultural history themes of self-reliance and freedom of expression that are still reflected in its contemporary cultures and lifestyles.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements are significant in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics, notably the experience of the power and beauty of nature, and the hand-crafted aesthetic expressions demonstrated by the shacks that are important to the community; aesthetics are fundamental to community identity, integrity and sense of place. Aesthetic values are also demonstrated in the shack settlements as cultural landscape precincts, where the natural landscape of islands, reefs, headlands and dunes that motivated the establishment of the settlements also protects them. The settlements are a complex landscape with each shack expressing the individual, but collectively in their scale, siting and materials forming a precinct that sits low and comfortably within a heath landscape.

The Wedge and Grey shack settlements are held in high esteem by the shack settlement communities as distinctive and iconic places. The distinctiveness of these settlements derives from their history and remoteness with the form of the settlements and the dwellings part of that distinctiveness, as are the communities themselves.

For the shack communities, the beach and coastal landscapes represent important meanings and these are connected to their aesthetic qualities. Likewise the entwining of the aesthetic and social attributes of the shacks. Both the social and aesthetic values reflect a relationship between the individual and the community—between personal expression, ingenuity and innovation in shack design and the use of technology, while respecting the collective shack ethos or culture.

The shack settlements represent a liminal space/place outside everyday life; they are a place where the past is alive in the present and where the sharing and swapping stories is a tradition in itself.

The longevity of each settlement has resulted in strong and long-standing associations with both professional fishers and holidaymakers, many of whom have family connections across several generations. The shacks and the settlements as a whole are an important part of the expressed identity of both individuals and their families and their values.

Shacks are also a strong part of Western Australian culture and the experience of shack life and culture is common across the Western Australian community. Wedge and Grey shack settlements are considered likely to be of social significance to the broader Western Australian community as a reference point in historical and contemporary identity. Symbolically, Wedge and Grey represent the survival of a way of life that connects to a recent past of pioneering and freedom that is rapidly disappearing. This is a strong element in the identity of Western Australians.

The shack settlements have research potential with regard to anthropological aspects of human behaviour in settlement environments that are unplanned and unmanaged, as well as human interaction with the landscape over time. These would be two of the few sites in Western Australia that can do this at a large scale and over a substantial length of time.

The shack settlements of Wedge and Grey are generally in a good physical condition with some elements in a fair condition, given their location, environment and uncertainty of tenure. The shack settlements show a high level of integrity in relation to use and authenticity with regard to original fabric and consequent change.

The shack settlements of Wedge and Grey contain nearly half of the shacks remaining in Western Australia. Because of their size and their particular characteristics, there are no places like them remaining in Western Australia. The shack settlements are archetypal places, often experienced vicariously through stories and imagery for those Western Australians who have not had direct experience of staying in a shack settlement. Yet they nevertheless represent a part of Western Australian history that is close to their hearts—the longing to escape, live a simpler life and to pioneer. These two settlements symbolise what was once common and what is much desired.

7.7 Attributes of Cultural Significance

Criterion/Sub-Criterion	Tangible Attributes	Intangible Attributes
Nature of Significance		
1 Aesthetic Value		
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the changing nature of the wider coastal setting of each settlement: coast line, water, dunes, islands, etc; the deliberate choice of reused and found materials over new; the essential functionality of the shacks that is combined with innovation and wit in their design and decoration; and diversity of shack built forms, features and decorative strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experience of observing nature at close quarters, over the seasons and years; opportunity for (relatively) unfettered freedom of expression, linked to shack culture and expressed shack societal values; and personal sense of achievement in shack construction for untrained people that also is an essential requirement for being part of the shack community.
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> innovative use of materials and recycled objects; innovative use of technology; and creative design of building spaces and building forms (such as linked pavilions, and covered areas) and landscaping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal pride in the innovative use or reuse of materials and technology that is valued by individuals and the community.
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wedge Island, the limestone headlands at Grey, the reefs at both places, Green Islets off Grey and the dunes at both places that provide protection for shacks and fishing boats. Enclosing nature of the coastal dune systems and the separating role of the interdunal swamp at Wedge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strong landscape sense of place that is both assisted and threatened by the dunes (the dunes provide wind protection but also inundate the shacks).
1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> large groups of shacks that vary greatly as individual elements but which collectively form a coherent landscape of small, low-scale structures constructed of reused materials set low into the sheltering coastal heath landscape and landform, and all contained between the sea and the sand dunes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unwritten cultural rules and practices that helped create the physical form of the precincts.
2 Historic Value		
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the evidence in shacks for changes from fisher to recreation owners; other towns on the Central Coast that reflect a transition from shack settlements to towns; pastoral evidence and remains; and Second World War evidence and remains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a combination of distinctive cultural practices over several decades and into the present.

2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> remote communities on an isolated coast; the sense of isolation on a windswept coastal plain but otherwise not far from Perth; and simple low technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practices and lifestyle—self-reliance; and modesty in regard to display of material culture.
2.3		
2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> examples of 'old' technology such as kerosene and now chip heaters, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the process of understanding and maintaining the shacks.
3 Scientific Value		
3.1		
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> landscape change; and building change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community formation processes; community response to environmental challenges; and community ethos and behaviour, including getting approval, setting boundaries and settling disputes.
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the range of different technologies; and the visual landscape of visible technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> collective knowledge and traditions around innovation.
4 Social Value		
4.1 & 4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the lack of infrastructure services enabling invention and innovation of individual solutions; the casual and unregulated form of the settlements—as evidenced in the informal track networks and the positioning of shacks and associated structures; the environmental and landscape setting which creates the opportunity for a closeness to nature; specific known places in the wider landscape setting associated with personal and shared experiences—this includes the track and features along it; springs on the beach; fishing spots on the coast and on the reefs, etc; the contained settlement area and the distinct boundary between settlement and the (relatively) untouched landscape setting; access to the beach; particular places within each settlement that are the focus of community activities and events; trees and deliberate plantings; and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> being part of a community; the concept of shack culture and the sharing of particular values: personal responsibility, looking out for others; the ability to continue a relationship with the place; continuing and evolving community and family traditions; memories triggered by being there; special language, terminology and nicknames; social connections and friendships; and knowledge and the processes of sharing and passing on knowledge (including knowledge of the stories of the settlement, the land/environment, buildings, people, events, emergencies and exploits).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • memoirs, diaries, poems, paintings and murals, flotsam and shell collections, personal signs, photographic collections. 	
Degree of Significance		
5 Rarity		
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the other similar shack settlement places in WA; and • the cultural landscape of the shacks in their natural setting of dunes, headlands, reefs and islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the community response to the ongoing threat of removal.
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the shacks and the shack settlements; • lack of formal controls; • the small number of remaining shack settlements; and • the normalisation of the settlements that remain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the lifestyle as an experience; • the customs; and • the processes.
6 Representative		
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shacks as a group in their landscape setting 	
6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall cultural landscape of settlements and their setting; • evidence of previous historical phases; pastoral, defence, fishing; and • design and changes to individual shacks reflecting changes in use and family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customs and way of life; and • community ethos

7.8 Endnotes

- ¹ Western Australian Legislative Assembly Shack Inquiry 2010, Paragraphs 6.123 and 6.124.
- ² Macquarie Dictionary, 4th Edition, 2005.
- ³ Associate Professor Reena Tiwari's courses in the faculties of Urban and Regional Planning and Architecture at the Curtin University of Technology that have included site visits to Wedge.
- ⁴ A term used affectionately to denote newcomers.
- ⁵ It may be that the significance of some of these foundational stories have declined in importance since the end of the Second World War as a result of the massive post war migration into Australia.

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusions

This cultural heritage assessment finds that the shack settlements of Wedge and Grey, located to the north of Perth in Western Australia, meet the following 'nature of significance' criteria for entry onto the (Western Australian) Register of Heritage Places: aesthetic, historic, and social. The settlements also meet the two 'degree of significance' criteria; rarity and representative.

This assessment also finds that the shack settlements meet the criteria for the Assessment of Local Heritage Places and Areas.

The assessment supports the earlier findings of the National Trust of Australia (WA) assessments and Classified listings of Wedge and Grey.

This assessment was based on physical site investigation, review of relevant documents, social survey and analysis (web-based surveys, group meetings and interviews), interviews of academics familiar with these places, and government officers working in heritage management or associated with the management of these places. The assessment also included comparative assessment of similar places in Western Australia and elsewhere in Australia and New Zealand. The assessment also addressed relevant Australian and Western Australian historical themes.

The Western Australian Legislative Assembly Shack Inquiry of 2010 did acknowledge that there are cultural heritage values at Wedge and Grey—as assessed by the National Trust—and more specifically these places have 'social heritage'; however, it was not persuaded that there was 'building heritage'. The Shack Inquiry proposed that equity considerations should be given more weight than heritage.¹ Further, the Shack Inquiry found that 'the development of recreational nature-based, affordable accommodation available to all members of the public is likely to be very popular and will maintain and continue the social heritage of Wedge and Grey'.²

This assessment finds that the settlements have aesthetic, historical and social significance at State-level, and that both tangible and intangible attributes provide the evidence of these values. In other words, these values are evident in the form and layout of the settlements, in the built forms and infrastructure systems, in the community spaces and structures, in the landscape setting, in people's relationship with place, and in the traditions, cultures and social networks. Further, these settlements have a particular and distinctive aesthetic value; while the organic and idiosyncratic aspects of the shack aesthetic values may challenge a usual understanding of aesthetic, this aesthetic strongly reflects the history and location of the shacks and most importantly is a community aesthetic value closely entwined with its social values.

While it is to be regretted that the Western Australian Legislative Council committee inquiring into the shacks in 2010 did not have the benefit of a comprehensive cultural heritage assessment during its considerations, this report now provides an opportunity for the Heritage Council of Western Australia, the agency charged with advising Government on heritage matters, to action a nomination for Wedge and Grey. This will ensure that the full cultural heritage values of the settlements are able to be considered by the Government before reaching its final decision.

The view expressed by the Shack Inquiry that the social heritage could be maintained despite removal of the shacks and development of an alternative form of nature-based accommodation cannot be substantiated given our findings of the symbiotic relationship between social values and

the shack buildings and shack settlement landscapes. Further, this assessment identifies that these settlements have other values—historical and aesthetic—that would be adversely impacted by removal of the shacks.

The cultural heritage values of Wedge and Grey require that the conservation policy for these places should seek to protect and maintain these values into the future. This does not necessarily mean ‘no change’. Rather, given the nature of these places, communities and culture, careful consideration will be needed and options assessed.

In our opinion, management models developed on the basis of a robust conservation policy would be able to address the issues that have been raised to support shack removal, and thus provide for equitable public access to and appreciation of the settlements and surrounding areas as well as addressing all relevant environmental and regulatory issues. The Burra Charter provides the nationally accepted framework within which conservation policies, and associated management models can retain cultural heritage values and provide for a sustainable and equitable future.

The approach of developing a conservation policy and management model for a shack settlement has been applied in at least one other WA shack settlement—that of Peaceful Bay (see Section 6.6.2)—and to other shacks in other states, such as those in Royal National Park south of Sydney, NSW, where the issues of equity and environmental impact are being successfully addressed.

Development of a conservation policy would also enable consideration of the range of issues associated with retaining or changing the shacks themselves. For example, the aesthetic qualities and unique character of these places is partly a result of their ‘frontier’ history that has resulted in shack landscapes that have appealing qualities. On the other hand, granting longer term tenure without appropriate controls may, in addition to necessary compliance upgrades, result in a desire by some owners to upgrade their shacks for amenity and/or investment and this could threaten the very value and character of these vernacular places.

It is our experience in assessing the significance of and developing conservation policy for other shack places suggests that the recognition of heritage values is only the first step in conserving the character and values of these places. Agreement between the communities and government on policies covering use (including public access and use) and limits on change will also be also critical in retaining heritage values.

The shacks and their associated lifestyle express particular things about Western Australia’s history and culture. The loss of the most significant examples of this unique settlement type would also represent a missed opportunity to retain an important chapter of the State’s cultural history.

8.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the National Trust of Australia (WA):

- (a) Nominates the Wedge and Grey shack settlements for inclusion on the Western Australian Register of Heritage Places.
- (b) Requests the State Government Minister for the Environment develop a holistic management plan which conserves and interprets the cultural heritage values of these precincts.
- (c) Offers to assist the Minister for the Environment in the preparation of this plan.

8.3 Endnotes

- 1 Western Australian Legislative Assembly Shack Inquiry 2010, Paragraphs 6.123 and 6.124.
- 2 Western Australian Legislative Assembly Shack Inquiry 2010, Findings 19 and 37.

9.0 References/Bibliography

9.1 Books

Cline, Anne 1997, *A Hut of One's Own; Life Outside the Circle of Architecture*, MIT Press.

Davison, Graeme (Ed), John Hirst and Stuart MacIntyre, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*.

De Burgh, WJ 1986, *The Old North Road*, University of Western Australia Press.

Drew, Philip, *Coast Dwellers: a radical reappraisal of Australian Identity*

Griffiths, Simon, Shack: In Praise of an Australian Icon, Lantern, Penguin Group Australia, Vic 2010.

Johnson, Dianne, *Hut in the Wild*, 2011

Lawrence DH, *Kangaroo*, Penguin first published 1923

McConnell, M; McGuire J, Moore G, Pleateau, *Plain and Coast; A History of Dandaragan*, Shire of Dandaragan 1993.

Shields R *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity* 1991.

Thompson P, *The Bach*, Government Printer Wellington NZ 1985.

Wedge WR, *A Bruch with Nature: the WR Wedge Tale, 1909 to 1979*, Veritas Publishing Co, Bullsbrook WA, 1984.

White, Richard, 2005, *On Holidays: A history of getting away in Australia*, Pluto Press, 2005.

9.2 Published Articles

Churchill, L. and Tiwari, R. 'Shack' Architecture; a produced landscape' *Landscapes* 2:1-13.

Haynes, Karl, 'Shacking Up' in Trust News Australia, National Trust of Australia, Vol 4 No6 2011.

Priskin, Julianna, 'Assessment of Natural Resources for Nature-based tourism: the case of the Central Coast Region of Western Australia' in *Tourism Management* 22, 2001.

Morcatta G 'Environmental Upgrades for Tassie Shacks', in *Australian Geographic* Issue 73, 2004.

Selwood, John, and May, Alan, 'Holiday Squatters in Western Australia: Problems and Policies', in *Australian Journal of Leisure and Recreation* Vol2 No2 1992.

Selwood John, and May, Alan, 'Resolving Contested Notions of Tourism Sustainability on Western Australia's Turquoise Coast; the squatter settlements' in *Current Issues in Tourism*, Vol 4 nos1-2 2001.

Tiwari, Dr Reena, 'Embodied Poetics and Surrounding Politics of a Coastal Squatter Settlement' in *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, Spring 2009.

9.3 Newspaper Articles

West Australian Newspaper, *Paradise Lost*, West Weekend Magazine, 14 February 2009.

9.4 Heritage Assessments, Listings and Reports

Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1998, *Nambung National Park, Management Plan 1998-2008*, Perth.

EJE Heritage, 2010, *Little Pelican Cottages, Little Pelican, NSW, Conservation Management Plan* prepared for Land and Property Management Authority and Lake Macquarie Council.

GCCA, 'Round 10 Coastal and Marine Grant 64995 Final Report', 2009.

Godden Mackay Logan, 2005, KNP Huts Conservation Strategy prepared for the NSW NPWS.

Hanna, Bronwyn, Currawong Comparative Analysis & Currawong Readings and Extracts 2010.

Heaver, David and Associates, *Peaceful Bay Heritage Precinct Conservation Plan*, prepared by Architects for the Shire of Denmark, December 2003.

Heritage and Conservation Professionals, February 2000, *Huts in D'Entrecasteaux National Park: Heritage Assessment and Conservation Recommendations*, prepared for CALM.

National Trust of Australia (WA) Wedge Island Settlement, *Historic Places Assessment Form*.

National Trust of Australia (WA) Grey Settlement, *Historic Places Assessment Form*

MidWest Heritage Incorporated (Consultants Tanya Suba and Graham Grundy) 1995-96 *A Survey of the Squatter Shacks on the Central Coast of Western Australia, Shires of Coorow, Carnamah and Irwin*.

Moore, Brendan, *Tejh Wetj Boya (Wedge Island) Aboriginal Sites: An Action Plan* September 2007, report prepared for the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) from National Heritage Trust funding.

NSW NPWS, 1992, Huts Study: Part A—Statewide Overview.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, *Royal National Park Cabins Conservation Plan*, Draft September 1994 for public comment.

NSW Heritage Council, 2011, Royal National Parks Cabins State Heritage Register listing assessment.

Report of the Western Australia Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program (Non Indigenous) Part A, Project Documentation, December 1997.

Report of the Western Australian Comprehensive Regional Assessment Community Heritage Program (Non Indigenous).

Shire of Dandaragan, 2004, *Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places*,

Shire of Denmark Town Planning Policy Manual: Policy 35 – Peaceful Bay Conservation Plan Development Guidelines, no date.

WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), 2000, *Wedge and Grey Masterplan*.

WA Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs, April 2011, *Report 21 Shack Sites in WA*.

9.5 Unpublished Articles

Historical Report Wedge Island Information from Government file 201/1961.

Jobson, Soosie, The Palimpsest of Grey, University Research Project HIS285.

Jobson, Soosie, Generations of Grey Study 2010.

Jobson, Soosie, Shades of Grey Project EGL234 university project.

Jones, Professor Roy, and Selwood, H John, *From 'Shackies' to Silver Nomads; Coastal recreation and Coastal Heritage in Western Australia*, unpublished article 2011.

9.6 Submissions

WIPA, Submission in Inquiry into Shack Sites in WA by the Wedge Island Protection League, July 2010.

Grey Conservation and Community Association Inc (GCCA), 'Position Paper', presented to the 2008 Task Force on Grey and Wedge, 2008.

Grey Conservation and Community Association Inc (GCCA): Proposed Grey Heritage Village Settlement Model, April 2010.

WA Heritage Council submission to Legislative Council Shack Site Inquiry, 2 July 2010

Baskerville, B, Submission to Central Coast Regional Strategy 1994.

Simpson, Greg, Submission to the Inquiry into Shack Sites in WA

Tiwari, Dr Reena, Submission on Inquiry into shacks sites in WA to the Standing Committee on the Environment & Public Affairs 2010.

9.7 Personal and Family Histories and Recollections

Davidson, Joy, (G76) for John Davidson (deceased), Ian and Marion Davidson, Wendy and Tiara Richmond and Paul Davidson, hand written notes to the project team August 2011

Dawe, Steve, Collection of poems.

Egan Family's History at Wedge, researched and compiled by T F (Terry) Egan, September 2011.

McMullan, Ailsa, Wedge Island Community Photographs, 2011.

Laundon, Bill, Wedge photos.

Lockwood family photo album and photo catalogue – 39 photos.

Manchetti, Peter, a collection of family photographs from Wedge.

Scott, Tara (nee Knapp) Wedge Stories.

Sharp, Margaret, The Sharp family at Grey from the perspective of a 'blow-in' daughter in law, no date.

Sharp, Fred, Grey Heritage Stuff: A Short History notes, August 2011.

Robinson, Ross, My Recollections of Wedge Island, no date.

Robinson, Ross, Draft submission to Government, no date.

Teune, Rob, poems: The Beach Shack and Salt Water Widow.

Wedge, Colin, Recollections October 2011.

9.8 Interviews

Keith Hockey, DEC, Jurien Bay.

Steve, Myercourt, DEC, Joondalup.

Penny O'Connor, WA Heritage Council, Perth.

Prof Roy Jones and Dr Reena Tiwari, Curtin University.

Don Newman pers com. to Geoff Ashley, October 2011.

9.9 Web Resources

www.heritage.wa.gov.au Heritage Council of Western Australia: Information Paper—Register of Heritage Places.

www.heritage.wa.gov.au Heritage Council of Western Australia: Criteria for the Assessment of Local Heritage Places and Areas.

www.heritage.wa.gov.au Heritage Council of Western Australia: State Cultural Heritage Policy

www.heritage.wa.gov.au Heritage Council of Western Australia: Western Australian Historic Themes.

www.environment.gov.au: Australian Historic Themes

10.0 Appendices

Appendix A

National Trust of Australia (WA) Classified listings/heritage assessments for the Wedge and Grey shack settlements

Appendix B

Social Values Assessment: Questionnaire Survey Summary Analysis

Appendix C

Social Values Assessment: Focus Groups and Interviews

Appendix D

Shack Location Plans

Appendix E

Australian and Western Australian Historic Themes

Appendix A

National Trust of Australia (WA) Classified listings/heritage assessments for the Wedge and Grey shack settlements

NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (WA)

LIST OF CLASSIFIED PLACES: HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



1. IDENTIFICATION / LOCATION

Current Name of Place	Grey Shack Community
Other Names	Grey settlement; Grey
Street Address of Property	
Local Government Authority	Shire of Dundaragan
Title Details	Reserve No. 43284 Melbourne Location 4152
Original Owner	-
Architect/Designer	Various
Builder	Various
Construction Date	c. 1940 onwards
Alteration/Additions Date	Ongoing
Original Use	Recreational; Fishing
Current Use	Recreational; Fishing
Extent of Assessment	Reserve 43284, incorporating approximately 120 shacks and surrounding land

Conservation Recommendations

The number of shack communities in Western Australia has been significantly reduced as a result of government policy. However it has been acknowledged in other states in Australia, that the heritage significance of these places in terms of social and historic value is high. To conserve Grey, a management plan and agreements need to be put in place, similar to those in other states (e.g. Tasmania). Strict rules governing the condition and amenity of these shacks can be implemented; increased fees can contribute to the conservation of the natural environment including stabilising sand dune systems and greater public access can be provided by allowing some shacks or other accommodation to be rented by the general public. These measures have all been carried out successfully in other states with similar situations, therefore the basis for implementing these with the cooperation of the shack leaseholders would likely be a successful outcome. No services need be provided by the local government authorities, and this settlement could provide examples of how to utilise environmentally friendly ways of producing electricity, storing water and disposing sewerage and other waste.

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Grey Shack Community has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

- The settlement forms a unique cultural landscape due to its isolation and enclosure by Nambung National Park. It is a living remnant and fine example of a vernacular recreational environment.
- The Grey Shack Community is an excellent example of a coastal settlement originally established by farmers and fishermen in the 1930s to 1950s, and later becoming more permanent through holiday makers and recreation activities which contributed to the growth of other towns such as Lancelin and Jurien.
- The Grey Shack Community has high social value through the leaseholders and their friends and family. The popularity of shack settlements is evident through the formation of the shack Associations and the high level of interest that the government's removal policy has brought.

Assessor/s: Lisa Sturis

Date: March 2009

=====
Committee Recommendation: Date:
Classification Standing Committee Recommendation: Date:
Council Resolution: **Date:**
Owner Advised: Date:
Local Government Authority Advised: Date:
Heritage Council Advised: Registration Date:

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Grey Shack Community is located 160kms north of Perth on the Western Australian coast (Reserve No. 43284). This area is approximately 193 hectares. Around 120 shacks constructed of various materials, including corrugated galvanised iron, are located here and date from the 1940s onwards. Limestone cliffs, mobile sand dunes and coastal vegetation are natural features of this place.

4. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The settlement at Grey began in the 1930s and 40s when pastoralists and their families holidayed at the coast. These settlements were also utilised by cray fishers from the 1950s as they could base themselves closer to their fishing grounds.

Similar settlements such as Wedge Island which developed around the same time became popular with families who were seeking places to holiday which were safe and offered a laidback lifestyle, especially from the 1970s. 'Shacks' were constructed from materials which were easy to transport and innovative as people learned to adapt to the environment and conditions.

Grey was surveyed and gazetted as a town site in 1967/8 due to its popularity however the development of a serviced town did not eventuate. The place became an Unvested Reserve in 1995, when its townsite status was revoked.

5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

There are many examples of similar shack communities across the country. However in Western Australia, Grey and nearby Wedge Island are believed to be the last remaining 'shack settlements' north of Perth due to the State Government's Squatter Policy. There are other settlements south of Perth including Windy Harbour and Broke Inlet however it is understood that these have formalised leases and Shire support.

Wedge Island developed in much the same way as Grey. With approximately 320 shacks, it is one of the largest shack settlements in the State. A Progress Association was formed in Wedge Island in 1968 to improve the conditions of the place which is still active however it too is under the same threat as Grey and the two associations are currently working in partnership to save their respective settlements.

Other States

There are numerous shack settlements across Australia. Tasmania is estimated to have approximately 1335 shacks which are all subject to a lease arrangement with the state government. Other shack settlements include Innes National Park, South Australia; and within the Royal National Park (NSW) there are small settlements at Bonnie Vale, South Era, Little Garie, Burning Plains and Bulgo, among others.

6. OTHER LISTINGS

n/a

7. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Aesthetic Value

The settlement forms a unique cultural landscape due to its isolation and enclosure by Nambung National Park. It is a living remnant and fine example of a vernacular recreational environment.

Historic Value

The Grey Shack Community is an excellent example of a coastal settlement originally established by farmers and fishermen in the 1930s to 1950s, and later becoming more permanent through holiday makers and recreation activities.

Shack communities such as Grey contributed to the settlement of this area and the growth of towns such as Lancelin and Jurien.

Scientific Value

Due to the lack of services, shack owners have found innovative ways in which to construct the shacks and be self sufficient by the provision electricity and water services.

Social Value

The Grey Shack Community demonstrates a way of life which is no longer widely practiced due to stricter laws and governance. The holiday 'shack' has been an important family recreational destination across Australia for many years.

The Grey Shack Community has high social value through the leaseholders and their friends and family. The popularity and sense of community of shack settlements is evident through the formation of the shack Associations and the high level of interest that the government's removal policy has brought.

Rarity

Grey, along with Wedge Island are understood to be the last remaining shack settlements on the coast north of Perth due to the State Government's Squatter Policy which has led to the removal of other settlements by authorities.

Condition

Good

Integrity

High

Authenticity

High

8. DESCRIPTION

The Grey Shack Community is located in the Shire of Dandaragan, 160kms north of Perth on Reserve 43284.

This area is characterised by limestone headlands which form a bay in which the settlement is kept relatively sheltered, however the winds can be quite strong. In the middle of the settlement are large dune ridges, with smaller, gently sloping, mobile dunes near the northern beach. Off the coast is a reef formation which supports a handful of islands including Green, Whittle and Buller.

Native coastal vegetation such as grasses and low shrubland cover the area. As well, introduced species such as domestic grasses (e.g. buffalo) and other trees including Norfolk Pines have been planted by the shack leaseholders.¹

There are approximately 120 shacks which have been built in a 'first come first served' basis so the layout is irregular and ad hoc. 'The age-old metes and bounds system of survey based on a series of unplanned individual land claims, occupying preferred sites and linked by access ways and communal space, has intrinsic value'.²

The vernacular shacks are mainly constructed of corrugated iron, weatherboard, and some brick and concrete. Basic services such as water and electricity are not present in the settlement, therefore rainwater tanks, generators and other innovations are utilised to provide these basic services.

9. HISTORY

Pre-1900s

The Grey Shack Community is located in what is now known as Nambung National Park. This area was first recorded on Dutch maps in the 1600s, including the Islands off the coast near Grey³.

The Department of Indigenous Affairs have 15 identified sites with the National Park's boundary which includes camp sites, artefact scatters and ceremonial sites. In the past Aboriginal groups frequently visited this area, especially in summer for its food resources and fresh water wells. Caves which are found in the nearby area and the limestone ridge have both cultural and spiritual significance.⁴

After colonists started to settle in parts of Western Australia, in 1839, George Grey, who later became the Governor of South Australia, travelled through the area after his ship was wrecked off the coast. A few years later, it was explored by A.C. Gregory before being surveyed by J.S. Brooking in 1874-

¹ Grey and Wedge Masterplan pg 8

² May, A and Selwood J, Holiday Squatters in Western Australia: Problems and Policies, Australian Journal of Leisure and Recreation, Vol 2 No 2 (1992) p 21

³ Nambung National Park Management Plan, p20

⁴ Ibid. p20

75. Brooking gave the name 'Nambung' to the River which flowed through this land.⁵

In the 1880s, the Old North Road stock route opened up parts of this area for farmers and other travellers and was used by the army during World War II. Later, better roads and tracks were formed and the stock route fell out of use.⁶

Post-1900s

Other towns in the area such as Lancelin, Jurien and Cervantes (gazetted in 1954, 1956, 1962 respectfully) grew from the local fishing industry which began to be established in the 1920-30s⁷. It was also around this time that the coast was becoming popular as a recreation and holiday retreat. The Shack Settlement at Grey (which was originally known as 'Green Islets'⁸) was established c. 1940s and along with other settlements such as Wedge Island, it grew over the years as a result of the growing fishing industries as well as holiday makers.

Grey has approximately 120 squatter shacks⁹ which have been built on Crown land. After World War II, the popularity of this place grew, and as the usage of 4 wheel drives increased, more people were able to access the settlement which was otherwise difficult to reach.

The popularity of Grey was acknowledged when in 1967 the settlement was surveyed and later gazetted in 1968. It was at this time when it was officially given the name 'Grey' after Sir George Grey.¹⁰ The Squatter Policy which was introduced in 1989, has led to the phased removal of squatter settlements. This was implemented on the grounds of environmental conservation as well as issues regarding the legality of private citizens building on publicly owned (national park) land. Grey shack leaseholders currently have a lease with the Department of Environment and Conservation however, these are due to expire in 2011. Settlements such as Grey and Wedge Island, which was Classified by the National Trust in 2000 are believed to be the last remaining such sites north of Perth as other settlements have been removed by Local Government Authorities under powers from the State Squatter Policy. Shack settlements such as these have been acknowledged in various reports, articles and heritage assessments as having significant cultural heritage values¹¹, it hasn't prevented a policy of removal. Other states including Tasmania and South

⁵ Ibid. p20

⁶ Ibid. p20

⁷ Ibid. p21

⁸ Landgate: History of Country Town Names website. Retrieved 02/04/08

<http://www.landgate.wa.gov.au/corporate.nsf/web/History+of+country+town+names+-+g>

⁹ Wedge and Grey Master Plan, p46

¹⁰ Landgate: History of Country Town Names website

¹¹ Documents and reports which have acknowledge the heritage values of shack communities include, 'Holiday Squatters in Western Australia' Alan May and John Selwood in Australian Journal of Leisure and Recreation, Vol 2, No 2 (1992); National Trust Classification for Wedge Island (2000); Register of the National Estate entries for Burning Palms Settlement (NSW); Little Garie Cabin Community (NSW) as well as Management Plans for various other sites.

Australia have been able to secure good outcomes with shack leaseholders taking more responsibility for the condition of their shacks and the environment and the State governments allowing them to enter into legal agreements to stay on the publicly owned land.¹²

There are conflicting attitudes in government and the community towards the impact of squatters on the environment. While the State Government is taking the view that the only way to conserve and rehabilitate the natural environment is to remove the squatters and their shacks; the heritage value of these places need to also be recognised as, 'Their settlements reflect an adaptation to the environment rather than dominance over it and their shacks are genuine examples of vernacular architecture, and a reminder to us of an earlier era'.¹³

In March 2008, Stage 1 of the new extended Indian Ocean Drive (Lancelin to Cervantes Road) begun. This road provides an alternative route to Brand Highway, avoiding heavy traffic and reducing travel time. Stage 2 has also begun and it is due to be completed by 2011, ¹⁴ in which time the current leases will expire. This new road is significant as it provides a more convenient route for visitors to Grey, impacting on a community which has been quite isolated and difficult to access except with 4 wheel drive vehicles.

A Master Plan was written for the Wedge Island and Grey settlements in 2000, however it did not recommend retaining the shack settlements. This Mater Plan was done with community consultation. The feedback demonstrated strong support for the protection of the shacks with many leaseholders being prepared to pay extra and accept new management strategies in order to retain the communities. Prior to this Plan, a Management Plan for the Nambung National Park, which included surrounding reserves as well as the Grey community was written (1998 – 2008). This too did not consider retention of the shack settlements.

Retention of shack communities is a contentious issue. Policies for the removal of such settlements are based on environmental conservation; exclusivity; and occupational health and safety of the settlements. However, as other states have shown, many of these problems can be overcome through careful management and in partnership with the 'squatter' communities.

The Grey Community and Conservation Association along with a similar Association at Wedge Island, have been campaigning for the retention and protection of their community for some time and are willing to find

¹² Crown Lands (Shack Sites) Act 1997 (Tasmania); administered by the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (c.1990s)

¹³ May, A and Selwood J, Holiday Squatters in Western Australia: Problems and Policies, Australian Journal of Leisure and Recreation, Vol 2 No 2 (1992) p 20

¹⁴ Main Roads WA website. Retrieved 25 March 2009.

<http://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/BuildingRoads/Projects/RuralProjects/Pages/indian.aspx#current>

compromises and models based on interstate examples in which to create favourable outcomes for all.

10. REFERENCES

Department of Conservation and Land Management, *Nambung National Park Management Plan 1998 – 2008*, Perth (1998)

Department of Conservation and Land Management, *Wedge and Grey Master Plan*, Perth (2000)

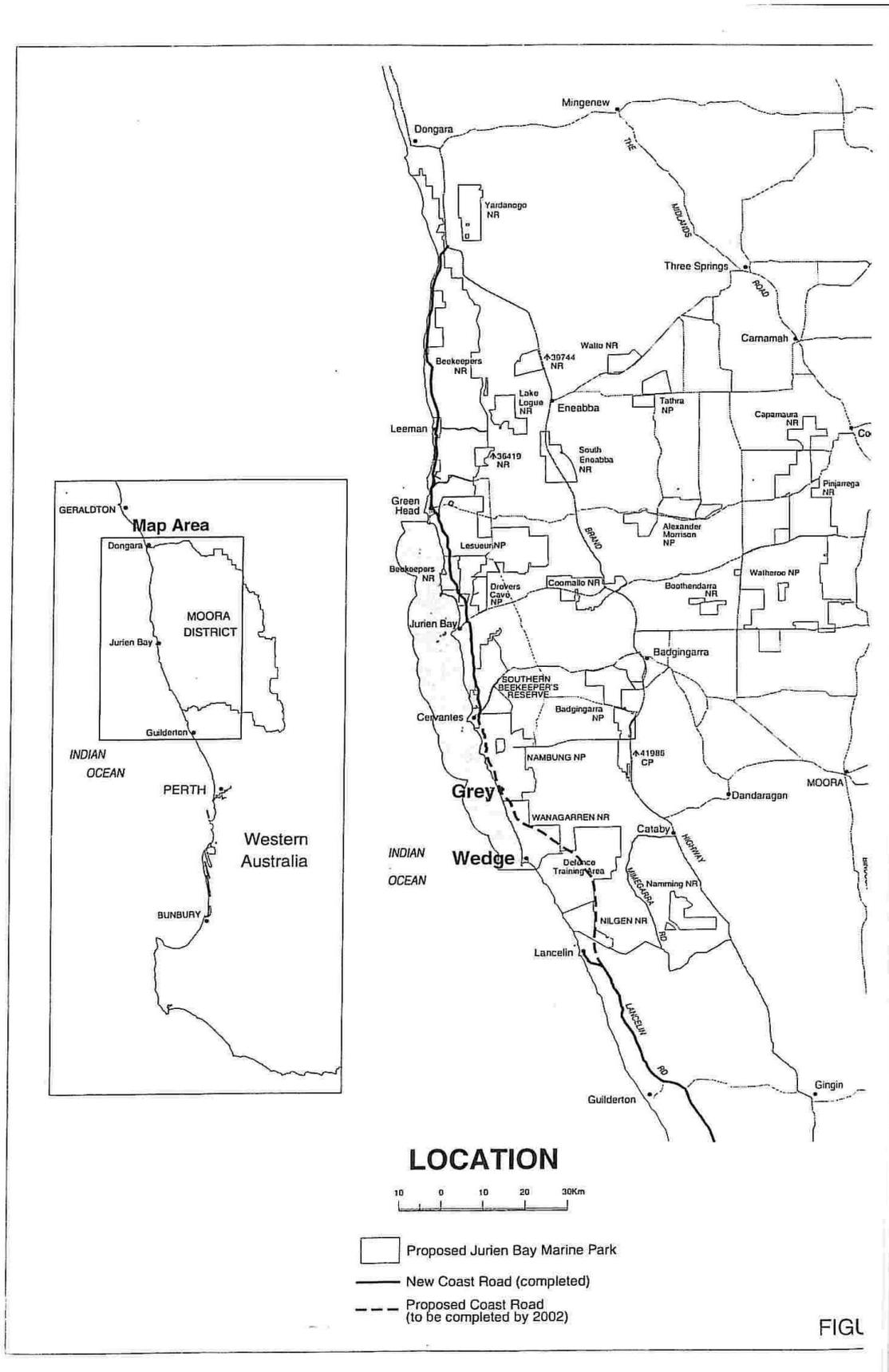
Landgate: History of Country Town Names website. Retrieved 02/04/08
<http://www.landgate.wa.gov.au/corporate.nsf/web/History+of+country+to+wn+names+-+g>

Main Roads WA website. Retrieved 25 March 2009.
<http://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/BuildingRoads/Projects/RuralProjects/Pages/indian.aspx#current>

May, A and Selwood J, 'Holiday Squatters in Western Australia: Problems and Policies', *Australian Journal of Leisure and Recreation*, Vol 2 No 2 (1992) p 20

National Trust of Australia (WA) Classification documentation: Wedge Island (2000)

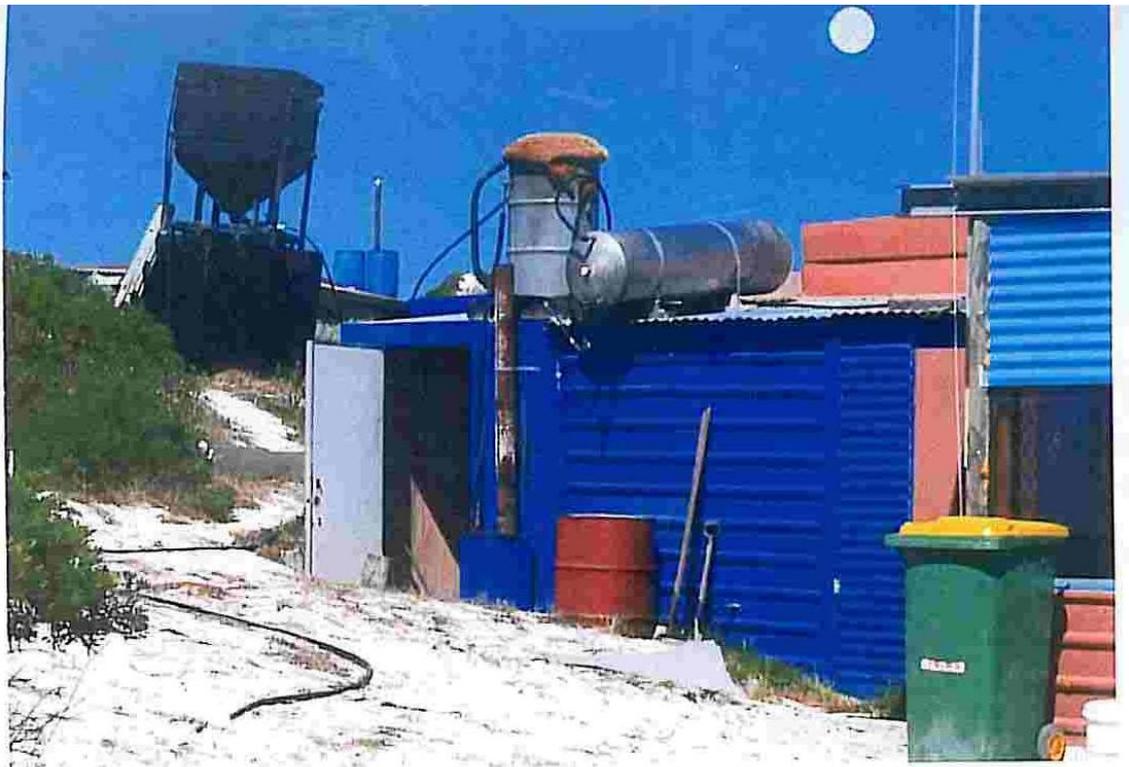
11. LOCATION MAP (Provided by Rhonda Hill, Grey Community and Conservation Association)

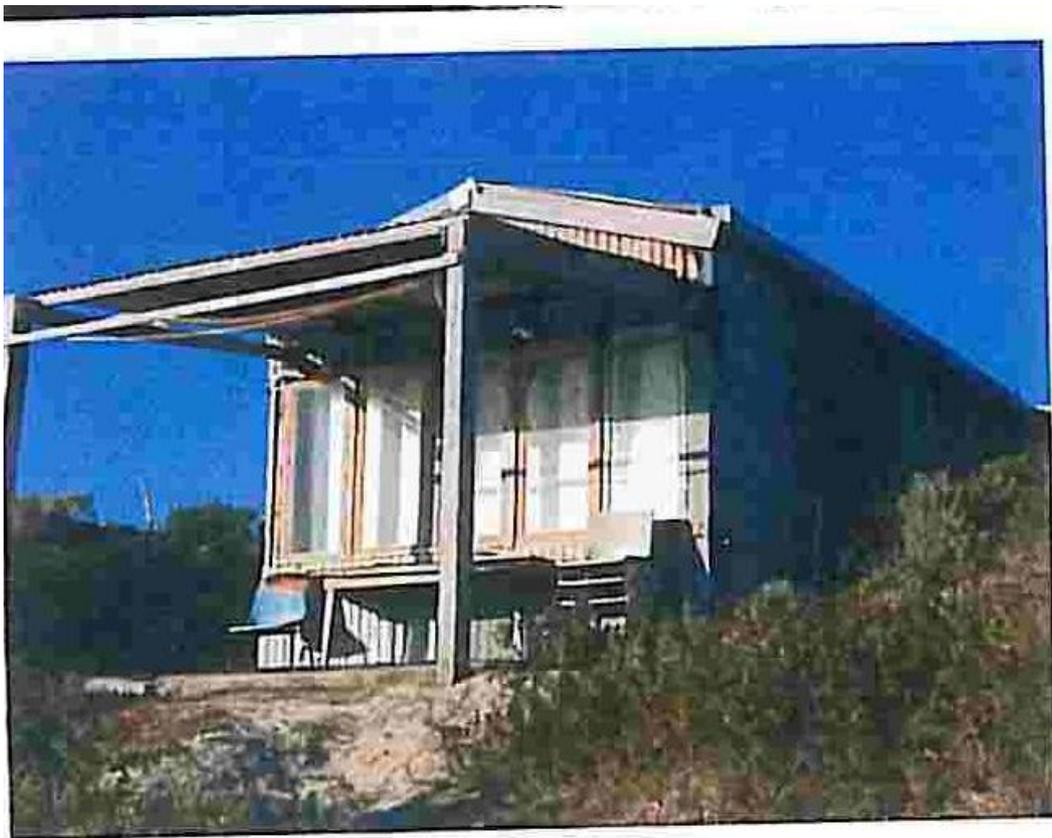


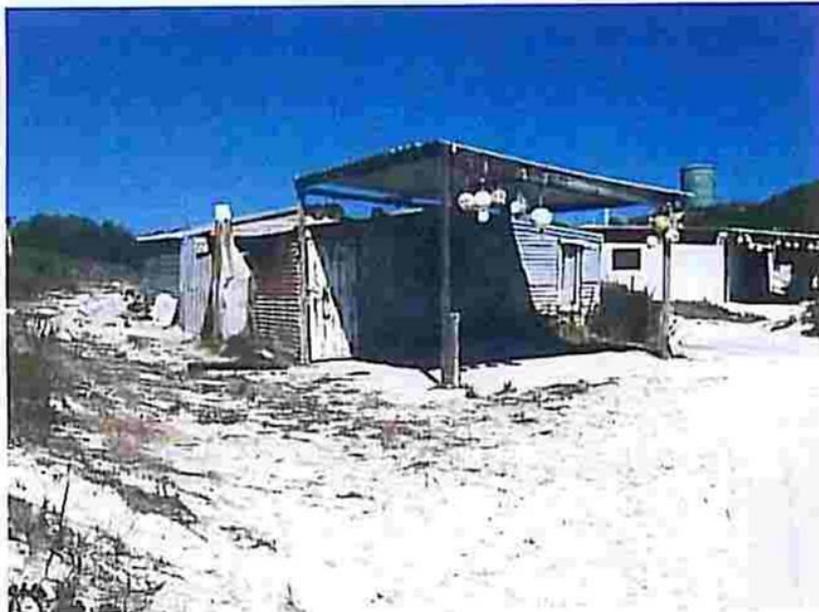
13. FLOOR PLANS

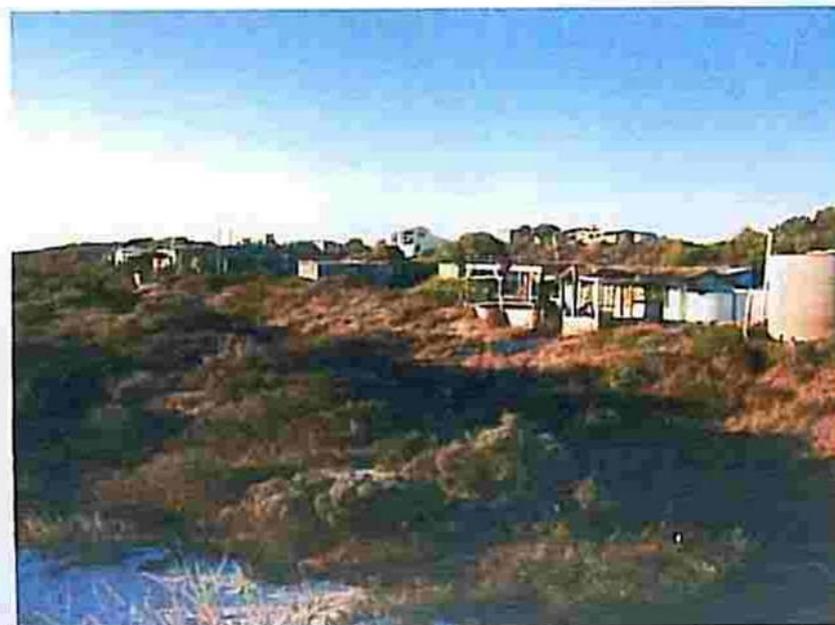
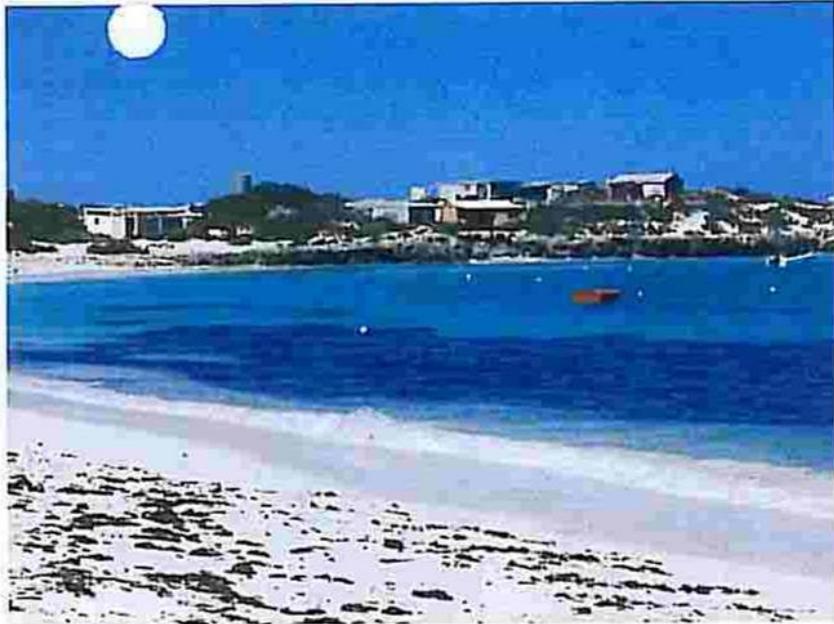
n/a

14. PHOTOGRAPHS (Provided by Rhonda Hill, Grey Community and Conservation Association)









NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (WA)
HISTORIC PLACES ASSESSMENT FORM
 BUILT ENVIRONMENT / HISTORIC SITES

1. IDENTIFICATION / LOCATION

Current Name of Place: Wedge Island Settlement
Other Names: Wedge Island Squatter shacks
Street Address of Property: Wedge Island, 25 kms north of Lancelin.
Local Government Authority: Shire of Dandaragan
Title Details: Lot No: Unvested Reserve 43283
Original Owner: Crown
Current Owner - Name: Management & control of CALM
Address: CALM Jarrah Road, Bentley 6102 WA.
Current Occupant: 320 private leases, 6 crayfishing operations.
Architect/Designer: **Builder:** owner built
Prominent Associated Person/s: JA Wedge, Egan family (typifies the place)
Construction Date: mid 1950s **Alteration/Additions Date:** continuous evolution
Original Use: pastoral grazing, recreational & fishing activities
Current Use: recreational & fishing activities

Conservation Recommendations (Summary only)

That a Conservation Plan be prepared for the place and an archival record be produced including a photographic and oral history. A representative group of shacks should be identified, conserved and interpreted.

Heritage Integrity (ie: any subsequent changes which may affect historic value)

The place has a high degree of integrity as it represents the evolution of an Australian settlement, clearly revealing the ingenuity and improvisation of the adhoc locations, building materials, designs and installation of services. Negotiate any further development taking place in close proximity.

Extent of Assessment (ie: specific elements included in assessment)

The settlement as defined by Reserve 43283

Type of Assessment (ie: a place, group, precinct, streetscape, conservation area etc.)

Conservation Group

2. Statement of Significance (refer to attachments for expanded statement of significance.)

Wedge Island Settlement, a group of approximately 320 shacks, mostly corrugated iron clad, situated in an ad-hoc layout in the sand-dunes at Wedge Island, is of considerable cultural heritage significance to the community of Wedge Island and the state of Western Australia for the following reasons;

the ad-hoc innovation of the evolution of each shack is typically Australian in the ethos of 'make-do' and is clearly recognisable, individually identifiable and highly valued;

associations with professional fisherman who have continued to operate commercial operations;

the ever present, casual, sharing, co-operation, and openly inclusive social interaction of the community;

the memories of holidays, special visitors and events that have taken place that contribute to the very special sense of place for generations of community that come from all walks of life;

is the last remaining, and largest example of a squatter shack settlement that demonstrates; a way of life for generations of Western Australian families and 'make-do' philosophy of the establishment and subsequent development of the shacks.

Assessment Team: Laura Gray Wheatbelt heritage adviser, PO Box 2 Two Rocks 6037 9561 6695 in association with WIPA (Wedge Island Protection Association (Inc)) **Date:** 27 August 2001

Committee Recommendation: Date: 03/09/2001.
 Classification Standing Committee Recommendation: Date: 15/10/2001.
 Council Resolution: Date: 10/12/2001.
 Owner Advised: Date:
 Local Government Authority Advised: Date:
 Heritage Council Advised: Date Registration Date: Date:
 Australian Heritage Commission Form Completed and Sent: Date:
 Interim Listing Date:
 Accepted on the National Estate Register: Date:

3. DESCRIPTION

The Wedge Island settlement is located on a promontory on the coast, approximately 25 kilometres north of Lancelin. It is only accessible via a four wheel drive track. On the point of the promontory is a wedge shaped island that gives its name to the settlement. The small uninhabited island is accessible by walking across at low tide.

The 320 squatter shacks comprising the settlement of Wedge Island present an ad hoc layout as they nestle into the sand-hills immediately adjacent to the beach. A line of shacks dot the skyline along the first row of sand-hills, but most shacks nestle almost unobtrusively into the natural environment of the sand-hills and are connected by a series of earth tracks.

Each place displays its own individuality in its location, setting, outbuildings, construction materials, and one of the most distinctive elements; the paraphernalia that is on the roof. There are no fences or specific delineation of property boundaries, although each shack has a setting, including gardens, grass, paving, or just the natural environment.

Most of the shacks are clad with corrugated iron on the walls and roof. There are few windows in evidence, most openings are shutters. The roofs are predominantly gable. The floor plans are mostly rectangular although many shacks have developed over time with extra rooms and outbuildings added. The provision of water and hot water services are the most obvious external service features of the shacks with many showing evidence of the development of several systems on the roofs.

The internal fitouts are generally rudimentary but functional.

Most places show evidence of considerable rust. The extremely hostile environment certainly expedites the ongoing evolution of the settlement and the places in it, as most metals rust or tarnish and need replacement. The places are generally in a functional condition. Some places are used and maintained more often than others. Overall the place is in fair to good condition.

4. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The post European history of the Wedge Island area of the Dandaragan region began in the early 1840s when the colony's fledging pastoral industry was establishing. Pastoralists from Toodyay increasingly moved their flocks north into the Victoria Plains under the care of shepherds in outposts—the colonial practice of squatting.

After Champion Bay was opened up for pastoralism in the 1850s, the coastal plain became a through way and for depasturing stock on way from northern pastoral lands to market in Perth. The stock route was gazetted in 1862. By the late 1860s, pastoralists from Moora moved livestock to the coastal plain for summer grazing.

In 1903, J.A. Wedge acquired the large coastal run of Woolca Woolca and in 1909, he took Minimgarra, 15 miles east south east of Wedge Island, allowing him to co-ordinate the constant movement of cattle across the coastal plain in search of suitable pastures.

Wedge Island and the coast in that vicinity remained isolated.

After 1931, Bob Wedge established a shack at Wedge Island and initiated what was to become a ritual for thousands of people every year.

In 1938, the problem of lack of development of the coastal plain was addressed in a Royal Commission that identified the main problem as lack of funds for infrastructure to the coastal plain from Dandaragan Road Board.

With the advent of World War Two, the Australian Military Forces kept a close coast watch. Entry into the area was by permit only. At the end of the occupation, the AMF destroyed (blew up) any remaining evidence of habitation on the coast.

Although fishing boats have operated off the coast since 1900, the cray fishing industry was considerably developed after World War Two when fishermen established their bases in close proximity to the fishing grounds.

In the immediate post war period, people used the various military tracks to discover secluded fishing and recreational spots along the coastal plain, establishing shacks in informal settings.

By the mid 1950s, many families from the farming areas east of the coast traveled to the coast for a holiday after harvest. Other people escaped from suburbia and a routine working life for the freedom of the great outdoors.

Alan Egan's association is somewhat typical of how the place evolved. In the mid 1950s he set out to find a good fishing spot. At that time, there was only one building at Wedge Island, and only one cray fisherman was operating from there. The fishing was so good that A. Egan decided to build a shack, primarily to house the boat. The shack necessarily developed over time.

In 1968, Alan Egan and Vic Davis built separate shacks on the beach front for their families. The Egan shack was constructed of tractor casing timbers with a corrugated iron roof, utilising driftwood for roof timbers. The construction is typical of a shack in that it is of inexpensive easily transported materials capable of being constructed by the owner on site. Egan's shack still exists.

In 1968, the Wedge Island community formed a Progress Association with the object of improving conditions as the shacks were under threat of demolition by the local authority.

Families returned to the settlement year after year for the Christmas holidays and Easter and any others they could get. Generations of families have experienced the place.

In 1980, legislation was introduced to provide the necessary means to remove squatters from public lands. In 1983, State Cabinet endorsed a position paper on coastal planning and management in Western Australia. The report set out broad policies for coastal areas including squatter settlements, that were not considered acceptable. In 1989, a policy for the administration of the squatter shack eradication was adopted.

In 1994, CALM negotiated with the Shire of Dandaragan to take over the Wedge Island and Grey squatter settlements. Unvested reserves were created and each settlement was placed under the management and control of CALM.

In 2000, a Master Plan was prepared. It does not consider the retention of the Wedge Island shacks. The Wedge Island Protection Association (WIPA) have sought legal advice on the interpretation of the squatter policy.

In 2001, there are 5 full season and one intermittent cray fishing boats operating from Wedge Island. The fishermen are recognised as a special case.

Wedge Island settlement has negotiated a reprieve in the short term.

It is estimated that 2500 people holiday at Wedge Island every Christmas holiday period. Those users are predominantly family groups. The 320 existing leases do not adequately indicate the extensive associations with the place, estimated to be up to 10,000 direct users of the squatters shacks at Wedge Island. Wedge Island is believed to be the largest settlement of squatter shacks in Australia. Wedge Island is recognised as place of international tourism interest in recent years as the inbound tour operators include Wedge Island in itinerary of the 4 wheel drive tours to the 'Pinnacles' further north up the coast.

5. CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

That a Conservation Plan be prepared for the place and an archival record be produced including a photographic and oral history. A representative group of shacks should be identified, conserved and interpreted.

Attach the following:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|
| 2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE in full | | Appendix 1. |
| 6. HISTORY | General history | Appendix 2. |
| | Egan family history | Appendix 3. |
| 7. REFERENCES/SOURCES | | |
| Egan family history | | |
| McConnell, M., McGuire, J., Moore, G., <i>Plateau, Plain & Coast: A History of Dandaragan</i> Shire of Dandaragan 1993. | | |
| Erickson, R., <i>The Victoria Plains</i> Lamb Paterson Pty Ltd, Perth. 1971. | | |
| De Burgh, WJ., <i>Neergabby: A history of the Moore River and Lower Gin Gin Brook. 1830-1960.</i> Shire of Gin Gin 1976. | | |
| Wedge and Grey Masterplan 2000. CALM & Conservation Commission WA. | | |
| 'Proposal for a Coastal Heritage Village at Wedge Island.' Wedge Island Protection Association Inc. 1999. | | |
| 'Contested notions of Tourism Sustainability on Western Australia's Central Coast. Selwood, J., May, A., Rivett, M. c.1999 | | |
| 8. LOCATION MAP | | Appendix 4. |
| 9. SITE PLAN | | Appendix 5. |
| 10. SLIDES | | |

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE continued.

The evidence in this section is considered in terms of the Heritage Council of Western Australia's Criteria for Entry in the Register of Heritage Places (1996); it considers the documentary and physical evidence prior to the formulation of Statement of Significance.

This assessment was prepared from the documentary, oral and physical evidence, and is based on objective judgments relating to authenticity and development of the place.

1.1 Aesthetic Value

Criterion 1 It is significant in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristic.

- 1.1.1. Importance to a community for aesthetic characteristics.
- 1.1.2 Importance for its creative design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.
- 1.1.3 Importance for its contribution to the aesthetic values of the setting demonstrated by a landmark quality or having impact on important vistas or otherwise contributing to the identified aesthetic qualities of the cultural environs or the natural landscape within which it is located.
- 1.1.4 In the case of an historic precinct, importance for the aesthetic character created by the individual components which collectively form a significant streetscape, townscape or cultural environment.

The ad-hoc innovation of the evolution of each shack that contributes to the entire settlement at Wedge Island, is typically Australian in the ethos of 'make-do' and is clearly recognisable, individually identifiable and highly valued by the Wedge Island community and visitors for that aesthetic. (Criterion 1.1)

The shacks represent an important record of the typical ingenuity and innovation of Australians creating their 'home', in this case holiday homes. The isolation of the settlement serves to further demonstrate the innovation and achievement of the type and use of materials in the location, design, construction and installation of services to the shacks. (Criterion 1.2)

The Wedge Island Settlement demonstrates a landmark quality on the coast within an expanse that is otherwise undeveloped natural environment. The settlement forms a very distinctive and identifiable cultural environment of fishermen's and holiday shacks in a sand dune location. (Criterion 1.3)

Each shack has an individual character created by the innovation of the owner builder and is clearly identifiable from other shacks. Collectively, the 320 shacks form a very distinctive cultural environment that demonstrates an aesthetic of adhoc ingenuity in the coastal sandhills setting of Wedge Island. (Criterion 1.4)

2.0 Historic Value

Criterion 2 It is significant in the evolution or pattern of the history of Western Australia.

- 2.1. Importance for the density or diversity of cultural features illustrating the human occupation and evolution of the locality, region or the State.
- 2.2. Importance in relation to an event, phase or activity of historic importance in the locality, region or the State.
- 2.3. Importance for its close association with an individual or individuals whose life, works or activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State or region.
- 2.4 Importance as an example of technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement in a particular period.

Wedge Island Settlement is important in illustrating the diversity and sameness of design, materials and construction methods, and location of the shacks in the Wedge Island sand dunes. The shacks clearly show the diversity of human occupation in the development of the squatter shacks settlement of the mid west coast through the 1950s when families created a distinct lifestyle in their own home away from home. (Criterion 2.1)

The land on which the Wedge Island Settlement is located was part of the coastal plain used for summer depasturing by the pioneer pastoralists who continued the 'Australian Squatter tradition' from the eastern colonies. (Criterion 2.2)

Wedge Island Settlement is one many squatter settlements that were established along the central west coast between Yanchep and Geraldton around the mid twentieth century. The squatter shack settlements are being systematically demolished under the provisions of the Squatter Shack Policy, and few remain to demonstrate that significant period in the mid 20th century when families ventured to the coast to forge a recreational lifestyle away from home. The shacks individually and as a settlement clearly demonstrate the innovation and achievements of many people of a like minded people in the mid century decades, in the locations, designs, materials and workmanship of the shacks as they created a lifestyle on the coast. (Criterion 2.2)

Wedge island settlement demonstrates a clear link between the original pastoral squatter and the modern day squatters of the mid 20 century a hundred years later. (Criterion 2.2)

Wedge Island Settlement has significant associations with a number of professional fisherman who originally established at the site and have continued to operate commercial operations from their shacks at Wedge Island. (Criterion 2.3)

The association with JE Wedge and later Bob Wedge are significant for the association with the name (although common belief is that the island was named by early explorers) and place with their early association with the coastal plain, the track through their pastoral leases to the coast, and the establishment of the first known 'holiday' shack at Wedge Island in the mid 1930s. (Criterion 2.3)

The lifestyle attracts people from all walks of life to the Wedge Island Settlement and over the years there have been many associations with prominent people and identities as well as many 'average' families, all with the same desire for the lifestyle and community of Wedge Island. (Criterion 2.3)

The remaining shacks at Wedge Island Settlement clearly demonstrate a phenomena of the mid 1950s and the subsequent evolution of the shacks through the development of external entertainment areas, replacement claddings, and improved fitouts and services since that time. Individually and as a settlement, the shacks clearly demonstrate the innovation and achievements of many people as they created a lifestyle on the coast. (Criterion 2.4)

3.0 Scientific Value

Criterion 3A It has demonstrable potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the natural or cultural history of Western Australia.

3.1 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality, reference or benchmark site.

3.2 Importance for its potential to yield information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of the locality, region or the state.

Wedge Island Settlement clearly contributes to an understanding of the history of human occupation of the locality and the state, as generations of families have spent months of every year away from their 'normal' lives to experience the unique lifestyle afforded by the shacks, their isolation, and the close proximity to the ocean. (Criteria 3.2)

Squatter settlements were evident along much of the mid west coast until recent years, and Wedge Island Settlement remains as a testimony to the unique way of life that can never be replicated in the future due to government regulations that have since been put in place to prevent such settlement taking place. (Criteria 3.2)

Criterion 3B It is significant in demonstrating a high degree of technical innovation or achievement

3.3 Importance for its technical innovation or achievement.

Wedge Island Settlement clearly demonstrates technical innovation and achievement in the development of the shacks, but more importantly in the development of services. Most shacks evidence the development of water catchment and services, hot water systems, lighting systems, ablution systems and radio and television reception. (Criteria 3.3)

4.0 Social Value

Criterion 4 It is significant through association with a community or cultural Complex in Western Australia for social, cultural, education or spiritual reasons.

- 4.1 Importance as a place highly valued by a community or cultural Complex for reasons of social, cultural, religious, spiritual, aesthetic or educational associations.
- 4.2 Importance in contributing to a community's sense of place.

Wedge Island Settlement is highly valued by the community of Wedge Island shack owners, their families and friends and generations of the same, for the unique lifestyle that is experienced at the place. Social interaction is ever present, casual, sharing and openly inclusive. (Criterion 4.1)

The culture of the place is highly valued for that casual social interaction, but also for the lifestyle of 'the great outdoors', fishing, swimming, diving, boating, beach walks, relaxing, four wheel driving, etc. The ad-hoc development of the shack settlement demonstrates community co-operation and sharing what they recognise as a 'special' way of life. (Criterion 4.1)

The community of Wedge Island shack owners, their families and friends and generations of the same, value the unique lifestyle that is experienced at the place and the memories of holidays, special visitors and events that have taken place. The sense of place is profound and highly valued. (Criterion 4.2)

The importance of the place to the local community is demonstrated by formation of the Wedge Island Progress Association in 1968, and the more recent formation of the Wedge Island Protection Association, and their development of the 'Proposal for a Coastal Heritage Village at Wedge Island' in 1999, and their continuing dialogue with CALM, including the compilation of 'Wedge and Grey Master Plan 2000' in order to retain the essential sense of the Wedge Island Settlement. (Criterion 4.2)

5.0 Degree of Significance - Rarity

Criterion 5 It demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the cultural heritage of Western Australia.

- 5.1 Importance for rare, endangered or uncommon structures, landscapes or phenomena.
- 5.2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practised in, or in danger of being lost from, or of exceptional interest to, the locality, region or the State.

Wedge Island Settlement is an uncommon phenomenon, of which there were several along the mid west coast. It is now a rare as it is the largest remaining squatter shack settlement in Western Australia and is very important in representing the evolution of the unique way of life associated with the development of, and the people and lifestyle associated with, the settlement and its location in the sand hills at Wedge Island (Criterion 5.1)

Wedge Island settlement demonstrates a distinctive way of life, custom, and land-use, that is in danger of being lost from the Western Australian experience. It is of exceptional interest to the locality of Wedge Island, the mid west coastal region and the State, as the largest remaining example of a squatter shack settlement that demonstrates; a unique way of life for generations of Western Australian families, innovation and 'make-do' philosophy in the transport of materials, locations, design, use of materials, installation of services and construction of shacks. The ad-hoc development of the shacks demonstrates community co-operation and sharing. The manner of squatter settlement, the ad-hoc development of the settlement and the construction of the shacks, is no longer practised and therefore Wedge Island Settlement is an important representation of a 'culture' in danger of being lost. (Criterion 5.2)

6.0 Degree of Significance - Representativeness

Criterion 6 It is significant in demonstrating the characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments in the State.

- 6.1 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of landscapes or environments, the attributes of which identify it as being characteristic of its class.
- 6.2 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of human activities (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique) in the environment of the locality, region or the State.

Wedge Island Settlement very clearly demonstrates the principal characteristics of the cultural environment of a squatter shack settlement. The identifying attributes include; remote location, coastal dunes location, ad-hoc development of the settlement, innovative use of materials, design, construction methods, ingenuity of service installation and operations, family associations, generational inheritance of the shacks, unique outdoors lifestyle, and community co-operation. (Criterion 6.1)

Wedge Island Settlement very clearly demonstrates a range of human activities associated with 'recreational pursuit', including the lifestyle, recreational and social activities that take place. Similarly the land use is specific to squatter settlements in the adhoc evolution of the community as each shack nestles into sandhills and sites are selected by means of community negotiation. (Criterion 6.2)

7.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wedge Island Settlement, a group of approximately 320 shacks, mostly corrugated iron clad, situated in an ad-hoc layout in the sand-dunes at Wedge Island, is of considerable cultural heritage significance to the community of Wedge Island and the state of Western Australia for the following reasons;

the ad-hoc innovation of the evolution of each shack is typically Australian in the ethos of 'make-do' and is clearly recognizable, individually identifiable and highly valued for that aesthetic;

the shacks represent an important record of the typical ingenuity and innovation of Australians creating their 'home', in this case holiday homes;

the isolation of the settlement serves to further demonstrate the innovation and achievement of the type and use of materials in the location, design, construction and installation of services to the shacks;

Wedge Island Settlement is a landmark on the coast within an expanse that is otherwise undeveloped natural coastal environment and forms a very distinctive and identifiable cultural environment of fishermen's and holiday shacks;

The development of the squatter shacks settlement of the mid west coast in the late 1930s and through the 1950s when families created a distinct lifestyle in their own home away from home;

The largest remaining of many squatter settlements that were established along the central west coast between Yanchep and Geraldton around the mid twentieth century, that are now being systematically eradicated;

significant associations with professional fisherman who originally established at the site and have continued to operate commercial operations;

significant associations with the Wedge family who were associated with pastoral squatting in the region, and established what was arguably the first squatters 'holiday' shack at Wedge Island in the mid 1930s;

the lifestyle that has attracted people from all walks of life;

the remaining shacks at Wedge Island Settlement clearly demonstrate a phenomena of the mid 1950s and the subsequent evolution of the shacks;

the unique way of life that can never be replicated in the future due to government regulations;

the technical innovation and achievement in the development of the shacks' services;

the ever present, casual, sharing, co-operation, and openly inclusive social interaction of the community;

the lifestyle of 'the great outdoors';

the memories of holidays, special visitors and events that have taken place that contribute to the very special sense of place for generations of the community from all walks of life;

the formation of the Wedge Island Protection Association, and their proactive approach to the future retention and development of the place;

Wedge Island Settlement represents the evolution of the unique lifestyle in the sandhills at Wedge Island; and,

is the largest remaining example of a squatter shack settlement that demonstrates; a way of life for generations of Western Australian families, innovation and 'make-do' philosophy in the establishment and development of the shacks.

WEDGE ISLAND SQUATTER SHACK SETTLEMENT**History**

The post European history of the Wedge Island area of the Dandaragan region to the early 1840s when the colony's fledgling pastoral industry was establishing. Pastoralists who had established pastoral in Toodyay namely James Drummond, researched botanical features of the region, extending into the Victoria Plains and discovering good grazing land in the process. Despite opposition from the Governor (Hutt), the Toodyay pastoralists increasingly moved their flocks north into the Victoria Plains under the care of shepherds in outposts.

The pastoral development dispossessed the Aboriginals of the land, broke the law by squatting on Crown land and subsequently facilitated the development of the land. Most notable shepherds were the MacPherson brothers who worked for Drummond. Also as early as 1841, Jas Drummond jnr applied to purchase land on the Moore River (to Gov Hutt) who declined – the colonial practice of squatting was adopted. In 1846, the Benedictines settled on the banks of the Moore River at New Norcia. By the late 1840s, William Brockman of the Swan Valley and Edward Conlin ('Yatheroo') pastoral. In the mid 1850s, Champion Bay was opened up for pastoralism and the Dandaragan area was a through way with pastoralists depasture stock at Dandaragan on way to market in Perth.

In 1853, Samuel Walcott took up 20,000 acre pastoral lease of Mimigarra. Due to dingo problems, he ran cattle & pigs. In 1855, Robert Brockman, brother of William Locke Brockman took over the lease. From 1861, W (William) Robert Williams (married Ellen Whitfield of Cowalla) took over the Mimigarra lease.

The main north south stock route along coastal plain was gazetted in 1862 – one of the freshwater swamps along the track was at Mimigarra, approximately 15 miles east south east of Wedge Island.

By the late 1860s, James Clinch (Berkshire Valley) had purchased a small freehold property to augment his pastoral leases and moved livestock to the coastal plain for summer grazing.

By 1875, a number of prominent pastoralists had established pastoral properties in the vicinity of Wedge Island, on the coastal plain, primarily for depasturing the stock on way to Perth markets. Many Aboriginal employees on the larger pastoral stations, shepherding the remote flocks of sheep.

The Mimigarra lease was abandoned when the Midland Railway land grant acquisition in 1887 selected the land which was part of an 87,000 acre parcel of coastal plain in the Wedge Island vicinity.

In 1891, a number of well established pastoral properties came under the ownership of the New Zealand and Australian Land Company, including coastal plain properties for summer grazing. Sand plains grazing limited due to poison plants that gave rickets (coast disease).

In 1903, J.A. Wedge acquired the large coastal run of Woolca Woolca pastoral station. John Edward Wedge (1857-1922) married Isabella Elizabeth Williams (daughter of W.J. Williams) in 1896. He served on the Dandaragan Road Board in 1908. After W.J. Williams died in 1909, the entire 14,560 acres of Mimigarra was purchased from the family estate by John E Wedge and he re-occupied the property. The location allowed him to co-ordinate the constant movement of cattle across the coastal plain in search of suitable pastures.

Although the coastal plains remained isolated there were attempt in the 1920s to open up the coast as a holiday destination. A number of families from Dandaragan and Moora traveled to Sandy Cape for their holidays, and such was the popularity that the Dandaragan Road Board declared the area a reserve and began charging a fee to those who constructed shacks.

Wedge Island and the coast in that vicinity remained isolated during inter-war years.

In 1931, J.E. Wedge's son Bob (WR) Wedge had a new home built, after his marriage to Dorothy Stevens of Bindoon. He also purchased Caro (another important indigenous swamp area on the coastal plain) from Sarah Bashford in 1933, and together with his brother Fred (FA) Wedge, developed one of the most outstanding beef cattle enterprises in the state. It is during that time, that Bob Wedge established a shack at Wedge Island and initiated what was to become a ritual for thousands of people every year.

In 1938, the problem of the coastal plain was addressed 1938 Honorary Royal Commission on Light Lands and Poison Infected Lands, at which time the main problem that was identified was the lack of funds for infrastructure to the coastal plain from Dandaragan Road Board.

With the advent of World War Two, the Australian Military Forces established large camps at Gin Gin and Dandaragan and kept a close watch on the sparsely populated area towards the coast. Coast watchers were based in army lookouts. Entry into the area was by permit only. After the AMF evacuated the area at the end of the war, they destroyed all remaining evidence of any built form by blowing it up, including Wedge's shack.

Although fishing boats have operated off the coast since 1900, the cray fishing industry was further developed after World War Two when the enormous potential of the industry was further indicated by US servicemen. More fishermen established their bases in close proximity to the fishing grounds.

In the immediate post war period, people used the various military tracks to discover secluded fishing and recreational spots along the coastal plain, establishing shacks in informal settings.

By the mid 1950s, the Wedge family were one of only three permanent settlements on the coastal plain in the Dandaragan region. Although their Wedge Island shack had been removed by the AMF after the war, the Wedge family re-established. John Duggan from Yerecoin continued to use the coastal plain for summer grazing, although there was a decline in leaseholds after the NZ & Australian Land Company left. There were restrictions during war and the government determined that the soils were too poor for land settlement.

Many families from the farming areas east of the coast traveled to the coast for a holiday after harvest. Other people escaped from suburbia and a routine working life for the freedom of the great outdoors.

Alan Egan's association is somewhat typical of how the place evolved. In the mid 1950s he set out with a find a good fishing spot. At that time, there was only one building at Wedge Island, and only one cray fisherman was operating from there. Soon after the initial visit, Alan Egan took along a few fishing mates. The fishing was so good at Wedge Island, that they decided to build a shack, primarily to house the boat. It was a case of the boat or the people in the shack. It was very rudimentary with an earthen floor and candles for lighting. The shack necessarily developed over time.

Access to Wedge Island was from Gin Gin, Cowalla and Sappers Road, and it usually took two hours. There were no private 4 wheel drive vehicles then. On a particularly rough section of the track, it was common to see a snake and it is named 'Snake Gully' There is also a well along the track, claimed to have been a Benedictine well.

In 1968, Alan Egan and Vic Davis built separate shacks on the beach front for their families. The Egan shack was constructed of tractor casing timbers with a corrugated iron roof, utilising driftwood for roof timbers. The construction is typical of a shack in that it is of inexpensive easily transported materials capable of being constructed by the owner on site. Egan's shack still exists.

In 1968, the Wedge Island community formed a Progress Association with the object of improving conditions, at which time Grey was under consideration as a town site, and other settlements including Wedge Island, were under threat of eradication.

Families returned to the settlement year after year for the Christmas holidays and Easter and any others they could get. Generations of families have experienced the freedom of the place with a community watch.

In 1980, legislation was introduced to provide the necessary means to remove squatters from public lands. Subsequently the coast of the Shire of Gin Gin was cleared in the early 1980s.

In 1983, State Cabinet endorsed a position paper on coastal planning and management in Western Australia. The report set out broad policies for coastal areas including squatter settlements, that were not considered acceptable. In 1988, work commenced on developing a policy for the administration of the policy pertaining to squatter shacks. It was adopted in 1989. The Shire of Coorow demolished all the shacks on their coast in 1994, although a number have been relocated within the Shire of Irwin. Leases in Shires of Carnamah, Irwin and Dandaragan have expired.

In 1994, CALM negotiated with the Shire of Dandaragan to take over the Wedge Island and Grey squatter settlements. Unvested reserves were created and each settlement was placed under the management and control of CALM.

In 2000, a Master Plan was prepared in consultation with stakeholders. The Master Plan does not consider the retention of the Wedge Island shacks. The Wedge Island Protection Association (WIPA- the incorporated version of the Wedge Island Progress Association formed in 1968) have sought legal advice on the interpretation of the squatter policy on the basis of tourism, land planning and environmental

actions, heritage, synergy, and exclusivity. WIPA propose a scenario that accommodates the retention of shacks in association with new development.

In 2001, there are 5 full season and one intermittent cray fishing boats operating from Wedge Island, providing accommodation for skippers and two crew for each boat. The government recognizes they are a special case and has allowed them to continue to operate, although long term they will be relocated to an appropriate 'fishing development node'.

Wedge Island settlement has negotiated a reprieve in the short term.

It is estimated that 2500 people holiday at Wedge Island every Christmas holiday period. Those users are predominantly family groups. The 320 existing leases do not adequately indicate the extensive associations with the place, estimated to be up to 10,000 direct users of the squatters shacks at Wedge Island. Wedge Island is believed to be the largest settlement of squatter shacks in Australia.

WEDGE ISLAND SETTLEMENT and the EGAN FAMILY

OUR HISTORY SPANNING NEARLY FIFTY YEARS

The earliest history of the settlement at Wedge, as known to us goes back to the early to mid 1950's.

My Father, Alan EGAN, first went to Wedge with an acquaintance, a Beekeeper from the Gingin area, Bert DAWE.

They originally travelled there in my Father's near new 1954 Holden FJ Panel van to explore the area, as it was believed to be a 'good fishing' spot.

At this time there was only one building of sorts constructed there. It can only be described as a 'hut'. There was a back wall, part of a roof and an old wood stove inside.

It was situated near the main access track through the sand dunes, not far from back from the beach in the settlement area.

Only one cray fisherman was known to operate back then. His name is believed to be similar to "BRAGG".

Soon after this initial visit, my Father brought along and two of his best fishing mates, Vic DAVIS and Johnny GRAHAM.

They considered the area to be an excellent fishing spot, so decided to build a shack there, particularly to house their boat.

This shack was constructed at a site near the "Pie shop", or First Aid Post, where it stands today.

The shack was dual purpose as it housed their 16ft wooden boat.

When the boat was removed from the shack, the shack was then used for shelter.

There were double bunks constructed against the walls and cupboards, along with an old wood stove were installed in the shack.

Candles were used for lighting, until a generator was obtained, and there was no flooring, so the sandy floor didn't help much to keep the fine sand from filling up the eyes by the morning.

This shack was later added onto for comfort and to cater for all our families.

I remember enjoying many a holiday at Wedge in those days, along with members of our families.

Wedge style of "living" is well entrenched in all our lives.

Some of the early occupiers of Wedge in those early days were:

Ron LOCKWOOD, Al BACON, Jimmy BARWICK, Maurie HERDSMAN, Alan EGAN (My Father), John GRAHAM & Vic DAVIS.

In these days the only access to Wedge was by way of what is now known as the “turkey track”. This track still is a long and winding one which ventures well in land before turning towards the coast.

We usually travelled in Dad’s EJ Holden work Ute, or the family car, a Holden FE sedan, no one had a 4 WD then.

Original access to the settlement from was from Gingin, Cowalla and Sappers Roads.

Travelling along the track usually took us two hours to complete. I remember when the Island was in sight we had to negotiate a very rough section known as “Snake-gully”. In this area it was common to see many a snake, hence our name for the area.

The track then meandered north past the drifting sand dunes, south of the settlement, coming across new detours every trip to enable us go circumnavigate the drifting and fast moving sand dunes.

Of interest, an old water well situated inland along the track, was constructed by the missionaries from the New Norcia Mission. This was used when they transported cattle to Perth. This well was often incorrectly named “Bullfrog well”, as this well is situated some kilometres further south.

In 1968 my Father, and his mate, Vic (whom has now retired a few years ago, and living at Jurien Bay) built their separate shacks situated on the beach front to enable both of our families to have suitable accommodation for holidays, etc. Both of these shacks exist today. Vic sold his some years ago, where ours has remained in our family.

“Our” new shack was constructed of *Massey Ferguson* tractor casing with an iron roof. Driftwood, found a plentiful along the beaches then. This timber assisted in the construction, as it was used for beams etc. At the time of its construction, the shack was the most northerly construction in the settlement.

The following image was taken of the shack not long after construction in 1968.



The following image was taken in about 1964 of the original shack.



This shack no longer exists as it was dismantled after the construction of the 'new' shacks in 1968. This shack was situated just behind where the "pie shop", stands today. It was the first shack or most easterly in the settlement.

The western end of the shack, or to the right of the image, was the original section.

The 'beach buggy' was a converted 1948 Standard 'Flying 8', (Our family's original motor car). My cousins, my brothers and myself all learnt to drive in this vehicle.

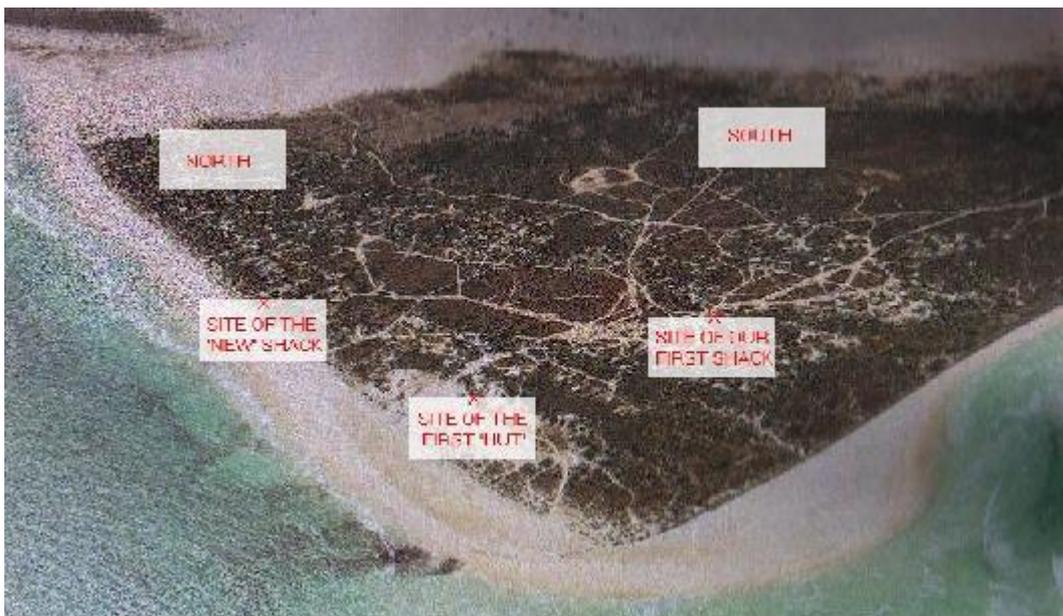


The above photo was taken from the "original shack" facing north. (There are many shacks in this area today).



The above photo was taken from the original shack site and facing west. In the background was our neighbours shack, that of the Lockwood's.
(That's me with the bucket in my hands and a smile on my face, yes that's right, it was cold water in the bucket and that's how we washed ourselves then).

The below aerial photo was taken in recent years of the Wedge Island settlement.
(Compliments of D.O.L.A.)



Of interest, the first “shack” built at the *Grey settlement* was that of my Father, Alan, and his mate Vic DAVIS, sometime in the latter half in the 1950's.

This “shack” or “hut” was built against a limestone cliff and was constructed from floor boards and lino for weather proofing.

It was only used as a shelter for when they fished in the area.

It is hoped that with further consultation with a number of our Family members and friends, that this short history will be expanded on in the future.

This short family history is commemorated to my Father, Alan Joseph EGAN, born 19th October 1926, presently residing at Bassendean.

Terence Frederick EGAN (born 20th July 1950)

Special thanks to my Uncle and Aunty, Ken & Beryl TAYLOR, whom kindly provided some of the photographs used in this document.

=====

Appendix B

Social Values Assessment: Questionnaire Survey Summary Analysis

Appendix B: Questionnaire Survey Summary Analysis

This Appendix provides a summary of the questionnaire survey responses across both shack settlements. The purpose of this project was to assess the significance of the two shack settlements as a serial place. This Appendix presents the results from each place, and some differences are noted.

1 Which shack settlement are you (or have you been) part of?

	No.	% of total responses	No. of shacks	Representation
Grey	92	28.5%	132 (Jobson 2010 b)	69.7%
Wedge Island	227	70.3%	320	70.9%
Neither	4	1.2%		

The percentage figure showing possible representation should be considered indicative only, and is expected to be on the high side. Some shack owners are extended families and more than one family member could have responded via the survey.

Those who answered 'neither' would have been logged out of the survey at that point. Because of the survey protocols, they would have not been prevented from logging back in and choosing a different answer and continuing with the survey.

2 Response from an individual or on behalf of a family

	Individual	On behalf of family	Skipped question
Grey	29 (37.7%)	48 (62.3%)	15
Wedge Island	71 (36.4%)	124 (63.6%)	32
Both settlements	100 (36.8%)	172 (63.2%)	51

% represents the % of those who answered question

3 Family name

Not reported. For checking purposes only.

4 Age profile

Age group	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge	W.A.
	%	No.	%	%	
5-14	1.8	5	1.3%	2.1%	20.3%
15-24	6.6	18	1.3%	8.7%	14.1%
25-34	14%	38	18.2%	12.3%	42.8%
35-44	23.5	64	20.8%	24.6%	
45-54	22.1	60	16.9%	24.1%	
55-64	22.8	62	27.3%	21%	10.9%
65-74	7	19	11.7%	5.1	12.0%
75+	2.2	6	2.6%	2.1%	

<i>answered question</i>		272	77	195	
<i>skipped question</i>		51	15	32	

5 Shack number

Not reported. For checking purposes only.

6 Any other shacks stayed in

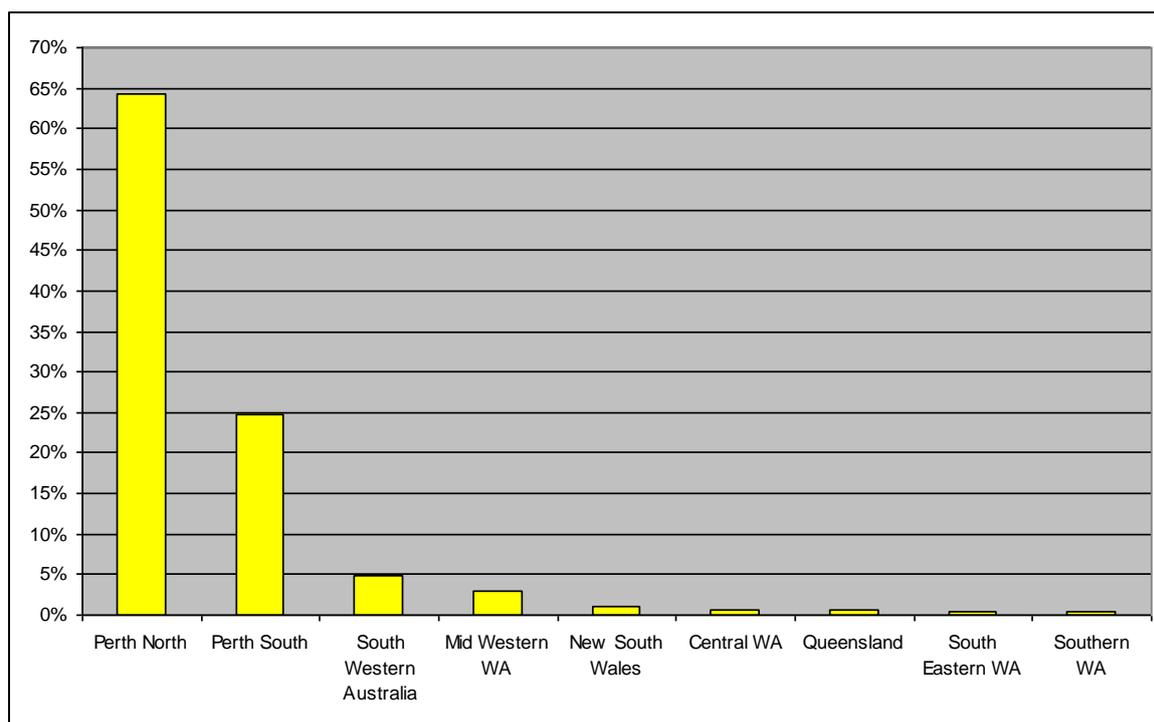
A total of 31 people said that they stayed in other shacks (13 from Grey, 18 from Wedge).

7 Home location

Based on the Australia Post districts, the vast majority of respondents who provided their postcode are from the Perth region (88.9%), with a majority from the northern area of Perth (64.2%). Around 9.2% are from other parts of WA.

Australia Post Districts	No.	%	Further breakdown
Perth North	174	64.2%	73% of Perth North = coastal 27% of Perth North = inland/hills
Perth South	67	24.7%	36% of Perth South = inland 64% of Perth South = coastal
South WA	13	4.8%	
Mid Western WA	8	2.9%	
Central WA	2	0.7%	
South Eastern WA	1	0.4%	
Southern WA	1	0.4%	
New South Wales	3	1.1%	
Queensland	2	0.7%	
<i>answered question</i>	271	100%	
<i>skipped question</i>	52		

Chart showing both settlements



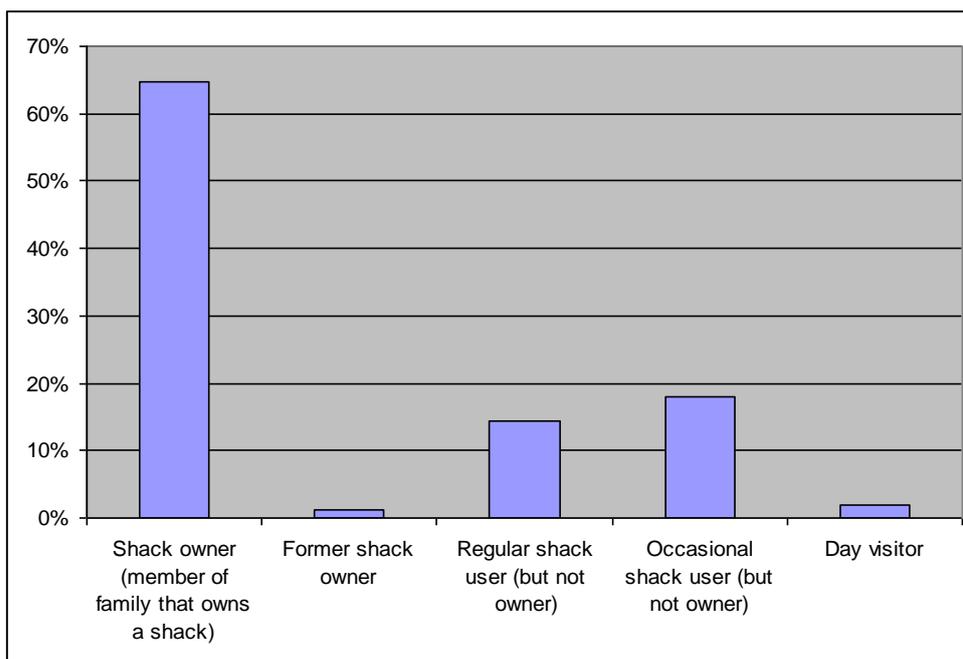
8 Permission to quote from your response and use your name?

A majority of respondents 91.5% agreed that their response could be quoted. A filter on the survey enabled us identify any who did not want to be quoted by name.

9 What is your primary connection with this shack settlement?

Answer Options	%	No.	Grey	Wedge
			%	%
Shack owner (member of family that owns a shack)	64.7%	172	73%	61.5%
Former shack owner	1.1%	3	2.7%	0.5%
Regular shack user (but not owner)	14.3%	38	9.5%	16.1%
Occasional shack user (but not owner)	18%	48	12.2%	20.3%
Day visitor	1.9%	5	2.7%	1.6%
<i>answered question</i>		266	74	192
<i>skipped question</i>		57	18	35

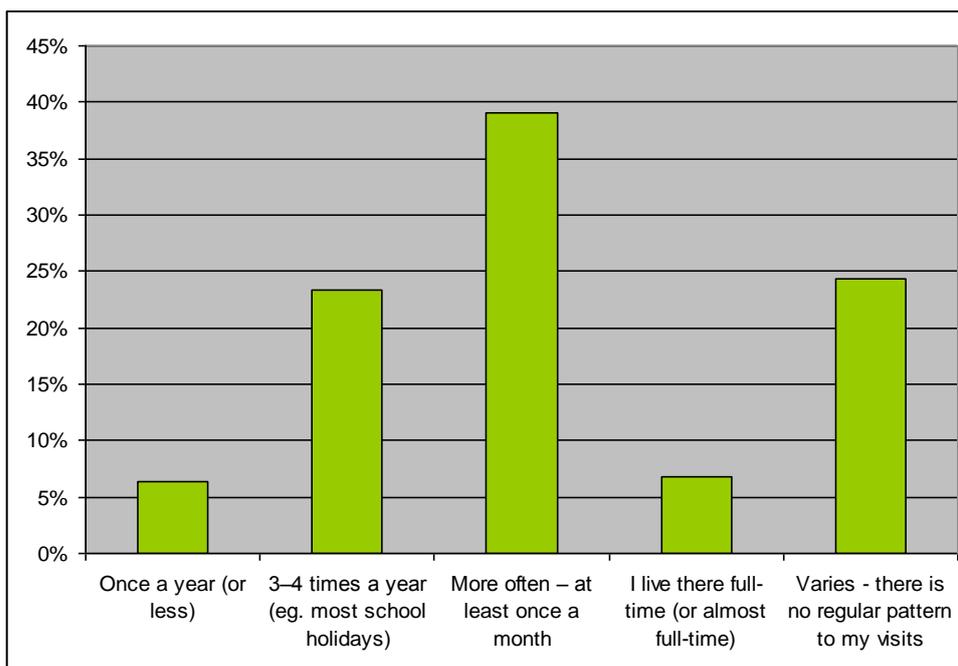
Chart showing both settlements



10 How often do you go to this shack settlement?

Answer Options	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No.	%	%
Once a year (or less)	6.4%	17	9.5%	5.2%
3-4 times a year (e.g. most school holidays)	23.3%	62	21.6%	24%
More often – at least once a month	39.1%	104	40.5%	38.5%
Live there full-time (or almost full-time)	6.8%	18	6.8%	6.8%
Varies - there is no regular pattern to my visits	24.4%	65	21.6%	25.5%
<i>answered question</i>		266	74	192
<i>skipped question</i>		57	18	35

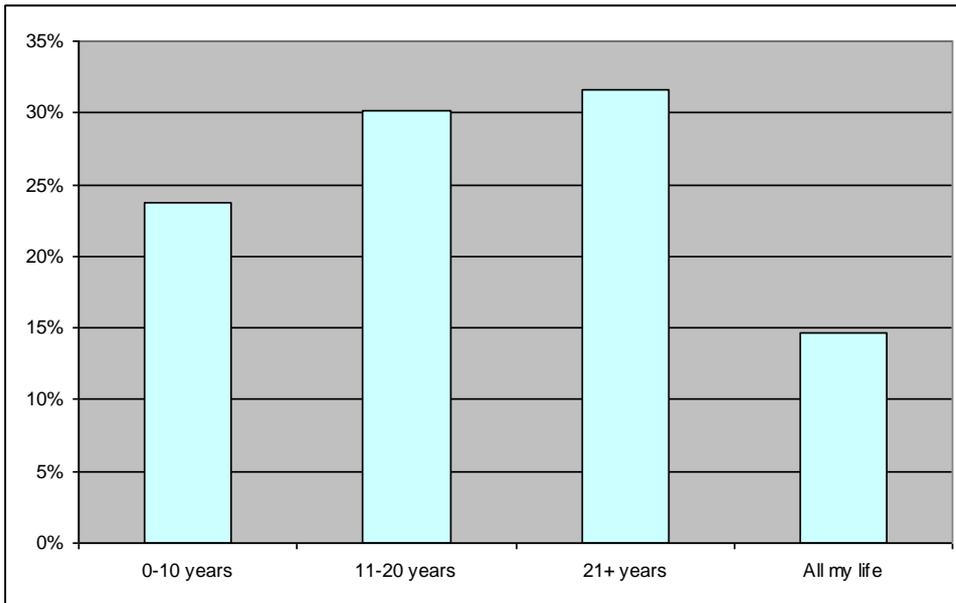
Chart showing both settlements



11 How long have you been going to this shack settlement?

Answer Options	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No.	%	%
1 – 10 years	23.7%	63	25.7%	22.9%
11 – 20 years	30.1%	80	28.4	30.7%
21+ years	31.6%	84	28.4	32.8%
All my life	14.7%	39	17.6	13.5%
<i>answered question</i>		266	74	192
<i>skipped question</i>		57	18	35

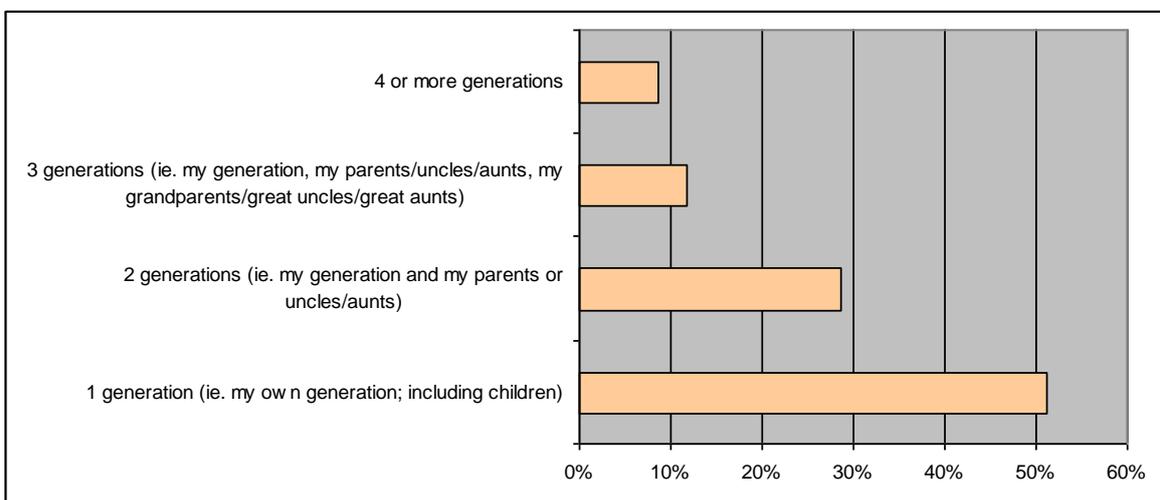
Chart showing both settlements



12- How far back does your family connection to this shack settlement go?

Answer Options	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No.	%	%
1 generation (ie. my own generation; including children)	51.1%	136	43.2%	54.2%
2 generations (ie. my generation and my parents or uncles/aunts)	28.6%	76	31.1%	27.6%
3 generations (ie. my generation, my parents/uncles/aunts, my grandparents/great uncles/great aunts)	11.7%	31	12.2%	11.5%
4 or more generations	8.6%	23	13.5%	6.8%
<i>answered question</i>		266	74	192
<i>skipped question</i>		57	18	35

Chart showing both settlements



13 - Short comment on Q 12 offered.

167 answered this question, 45 for Grey and 122 for Wedge. A content analysis was undertaken of the responses and the results are presented below.

Key points	Both settlements	
	No.	%
Many generations of shack ownership & attendance, including other settlements.	47	28%
Love the place, it's invaluable. I couldn't do without it.	41	25%
Its a great shack community/friends. It's a supporting place, with strong bonds between shack owners.	38	23%
It's a peaceful, relaxed environment/ simple life. It is an escape.	35	21%
Started going as a child and spent my childhood there.	33	20%
It is a good place for children. The places teaches them good values and life skills. The lack of technology is a positive point.	27	16%
Introduced by a friend, family member and now own a shack.	27	16%
Enjoy beach and beach activities.	25	15%
Enjoy the fishing.	23	14%
It is a holiday destination.	22	13%
The place nurtures a family connection.	22	13%
It is clean, beautiful and unspoilt.	15	9%
It's an historic place or is a part of family heritage.	14	8%
It is home or my second home.	11	7%
The place provides for a safe, moral lifestyle.	8	5%
A family member was a crayfisherman.	7	4%
It's my livelihood and I make a living from the area.	3	2%
<i>answered question</i>	167	
<i>skipped question</i>	156	

14 – Do you have a close connection to any other shack settlements?

Answer Options	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No.	%	%
Yes	27%	69	27%	25.5%
No	73%	197	73%	74.5%
<i>answered question</i>		266	74	192
<i>skipped question</i>		57	18	35

15 – If Yes, please list each and briefly describe the nature of your connection

65 people commented on their connections

Of those who indicated they had a connection to another shack settlement, 65 people offered a comment – 20 from Grey and 45 from Wedge.

Analysis of these comments indicates that the most common connection with another shack is through friends (31) or family (12). Two had associations as part of their professional fishing activities.

Five responses mentioned that they had been associated with a shack in another location that was now gone: these shacks were in Gum Tree Bay (1), north of Jurien Bay (1), Dick Bay (1) and Sandy Cape (1).

The other locations mentioned were:

- Grey (13) or Wedge (9) for those in the other settlement
- Betty's Beach (near Albany) (1)
- Billygoat Bay – Green Head (1) – now demolished
- Dampier Archipelago – Malas Island (1)
- Desperate Bay – Leeman (1)
- Dick Bay (1)
- Didie Bay (2) – now demolished
- Donnelly River (2)
- Doubtful Bay (2)
- Gun Tree Bay (1)
- Jurien Bay (1) - now demolished
- Lipfert Island (btwn Green Head and Leeman) (1) – now demolished
- Little Anchorage (1) – now demolished
- Point Peron (1)
- Quobba Coast (3)
- Sandy Cape (1) – now demolished
- Windy Harbour (3)

Two respondents had connections with shack settlements in other states: one with two shack settlements in South Australia (near Port August and Port Broughton), and another with a shack in Tasmania.

16 – Why is this shack settlement important to you?

Respondents were asked to read each of a series of statements and rate how well each represents what is important to them about this shack settlement?

The table has been sorted to present the values statements with the strongest positive response first, with colour-coding indicating broad grouping of responses.

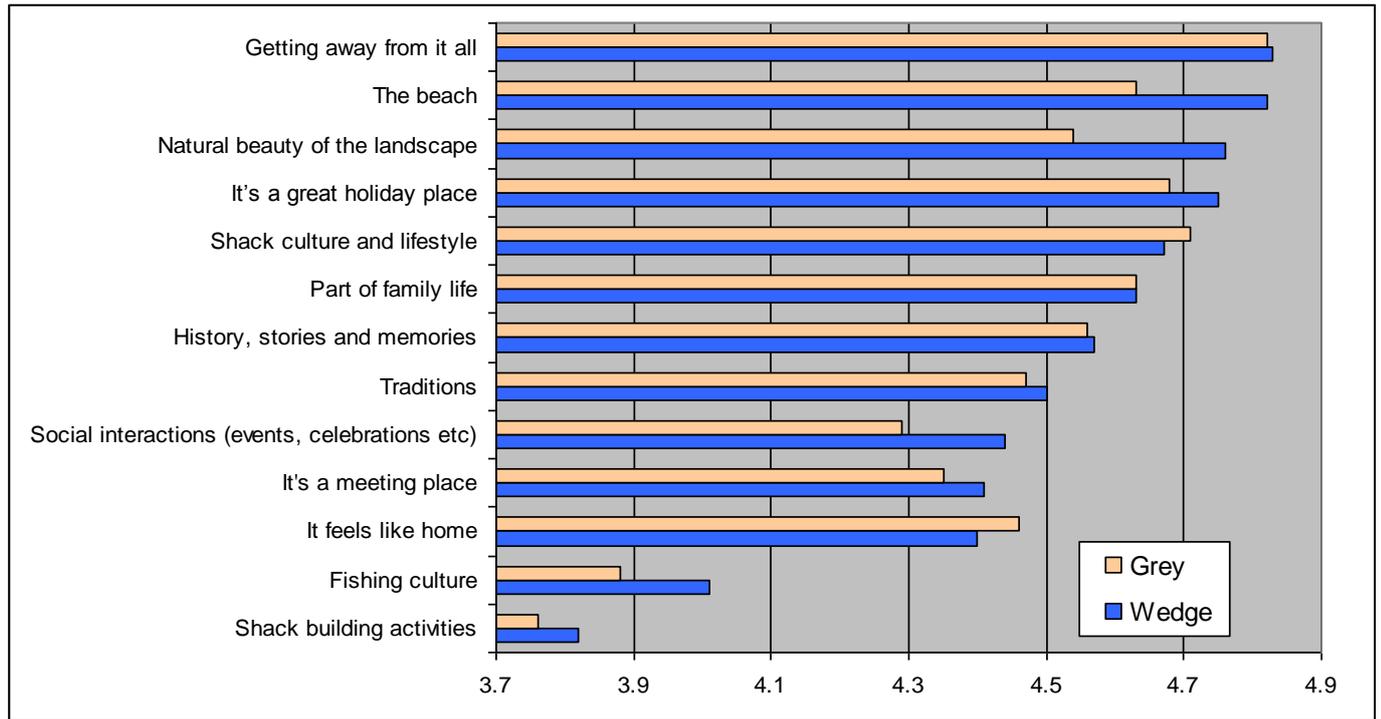
Table showing both settlements

	Extremely strong 'very important/important' response – almost unanimous
	Strong very important/important, but more neutral, suggesting a greater diversity of views across these values
	Still strong very important/important but a quite strong neutral and not important, suggesting an even greater diversity of views.

Answer Options	Very Important	Important	Average	Slightly Important	Not Important	Rating Average
Getting away from it all	225	24	2	0	4	4.83
The beach	211	33	9	0	2	4.77
It's a great holiday place	206	42	1	0	6	4.73
Natural beauty of the landscape	196	49	6	2	2	4.71
Shack culture and lifestyle	192	51	9	0	3	4.68
Part of family life	184	57	8	3	3	4.63
History, stories and memories	172	67	8	5	3	4.57
Traditions	171	55	19	4	6	4.49
Social interactions (events, celebrations etc)	151	69	27	3	5	4.40
It's a meeting place	141	83	25	2	4	4.39
It feels like home	171	47	17	11	9	4.41
Fishing culture	102	79	50	14	10	3.98
Shack building activities	85	83	59	9	19	3.81
answered question						255
skipped question						68

Looking at each settlement separately (below), there are some differences, with the beach, the natural beauty of the landscape and fishing gaining stronger support at Wedge than at Grey, and conversely a stronger sense of 'it feels like home' at Grey. Both strongly value 'shack culture and lifestyle', 'traditions' and 'history, stories and memories', key indicators of social significance. 'Social interactions (events, celebrations etc)' were more strongly identified at Wedge than at Grey and similarly the idea that 'it's a meeting place'; this appears to reflect the more active community and social life that is apparent at Wedge.

Average rating for each values statement: each settlements



The two tables below provide the results for each settlement.

Grey

Why is this shack settlement important to you? How well does each represent what is important to you about this shack settlement?							
Answer Options	Very Important	Important	Average	Slightly Important	Not Important	Rating Average	Response Count
It's a meeting place	36	22	9	0	1	4.35	68
Fishing culture	24	20	18	4	2	3.88	68
Getting away from it all	59	8	0	0	1	4.82	68
History, stories and memories	46	17	3	1	1	4.56	68
It's a great holiday place	53	12	1	0	2	4.68	68
It feels like home	45	15	4	2	2	4.46	68
Natural beauty of the landscape	43	21	3	0	1	4.54	68
Part of family life	49	16	0	3	0	4.63	68
Shack building activities	20	26	14	2	6	3.75	68
Shack culture and lifestyle	54	10	3	0	1	4.71	68
Social interactions (events, celebrations etc)	32	23	9	1	1	4.29	68

The beach	50	13	4	0	1	4.63	68
Traditions	44	17	4	1	2	4.47	68
answered question							68
skipped question							24

Wedge

Why is this shack settlement important to you? How well does each represent what is important to you about this shack settlement?							
Answer Options	Very Important	Important	Average	Slightly Important	Not Important	Rating Average	Response Count
It's a meeting place	105	61	16	2	3	4.41	187
Fishing culture	78	59	32	10	8	4.01	187
Getting away from it all	166	16	2	0	3	4.83	187
History, stories and memories	126	50	5	4	2	4.57	187
It's a great holiday place	153	30	0	0	4	4.75	187
It feels like home	126	32	13	9	7	4.40	187
Natural beauty of the landscape	153	28	3	2	1	4.76	187
Part of family life	135	41	8	0	3	4.63	187
Shack building activities	65	57	45	7	13	3.82	187
Shack culture and lifestyle	138	41	6	0	2	4.67	187
Social interactions (events, celebrations etc)	117	46	18	2	4	4.44	187
The beach	161	20	5	0	1	4.82	187
Traditions	127	38	15	3	4	4.50	187
answered question							187
skipped question							40

The same question was asked at each of the **on-site focus groups** (see Appendix C for a list), and the results have been tallied below. In the focus groups each person was given one green dot and asked to choose one option. The total dots and the total number in each group suggests some people took more than one dot.

Why is this shack settlement important to you? How well does each represent what is important to you about this shack settlement?								
Answer Options	Wedge Gp 1	Wedge Gp 2	Wedge Gp 3	Grey Gp 1	Grey Gp 2	Grey Gp 3	Total	%
Shack culture and lifestyle	7	3	11	8	6	14	49	43.4
Getting away from it all	2	3	4	1		5	15	13.3
History, stories and memories	2	1	4	4	2	1	14	12.4
Part of family life		4	4	1	2	1	12	10.6
It feels like home		1	5	2		1	9	7.9
The beach	1	6					7	6.2
Natural beauty of the landscape		2		1			3	2.6
It's a great holiday place		1			1		2	1.8
Fishing culture			1				1	0.9
Social interactions (events, celebrations etc)		1					1	0.9
It's a meeting place							0	0.0
Shack building activities							0	0.0
Traditions							0	0.0
Total dots	12	22	29	17	11	22	113	100%
Total group participants	12	20	22	16	10	21	101	

17 What do you like most about this shack settlement? What would you miss most if it was gone?

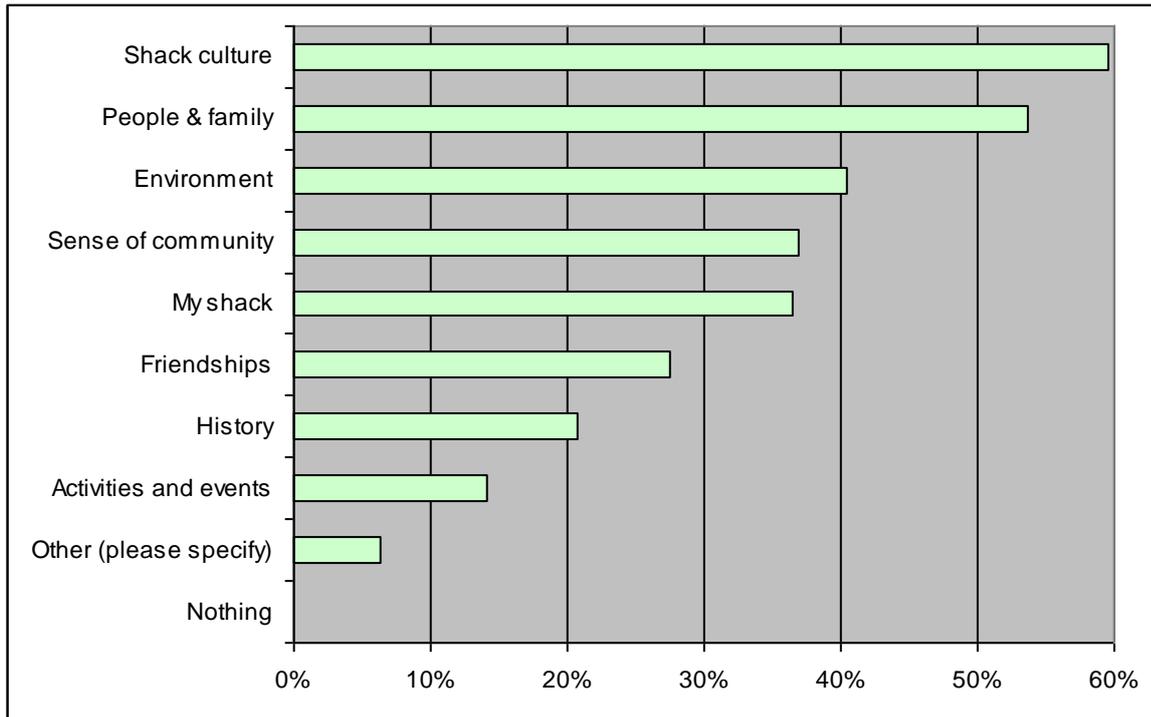
Respondents were asked to 'Please choose no more than 3 options'.

The results have been sorted into rank order, with the most popular responses across both settlements first.

Answer Options	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No	%	%
Shack culture	59.6%	152	70.6%	55.6%
People & family	53.7%	137	48.5%	55.6%
Environment	40.4%	103	44.1%	39%
Sense of community	36.9%	94	26.5%	40.6%
My shack	36.5%	93	44.1%	33.7%

Friendships	27.5%	70	25%	28.3%
History	20.8%	53	20.6%	20.9%
Activities and events	14.1%	36	8.8%	16%
Other	6.3%	16	8.8%	5.3%
Nothing	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
<i>answered question</i>		255	68	187
<i>skipped question</i>		68	24	40

Chart showing both settlements



Offered the option of adding any other valued attributes, 16 people responded, offering a variety of responses including the experience offered to their children (4), self-sufficiency (3), to keep family and community connections (2), isolation and separation from the rat race (2), a sense of belonging(1).

For one respondent it was the only place they had to live and for another it offered an unusual and precious freedom for them and their severely disabled child.

18 Social significance is often described as being a feeling of attachment or connection to a particular place. In your own words, what connects you to this place?

255 people responded and 68 skipped this question.

For Grey 68 people answered the question, 24 skipped

For Wedge, 187 answered and 40 skipped the question

19 What parts of the area have special memories or meanings for you? Why?

This question allowed for an open-ended response: 255 people responded and 68 skipped this question. For Grey 68 people answered the question, 24 skipped, and for Wedge, 187 answered and 40 skipped the question.

A content analysis of open ended to identify which attributes of each settlement were important, considering specific features or types of features (eg. the Gun Club, beach, dunes), activities (e.g. fishing), connections (family, community, commemorations) and feelings.

The table below indicates the concepts used for the analysis and the frequency of mentions. The percentages are based on the number of times a particular idea was mentioned compared to the sample size (255); the percentages therefore do not total 100%. Percentages have been rounded.

	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No	%	%
Specific places or types of places				
The place as a whole	10%	28	3%	7%
Our shack	30%	79	9%	-
Shacks (generally or other specific shacks or the settlement)	12%	31	3%	8%
Beach (generally or specific features)	49%	127	11%	38%
Environment/bush	8%	22	3%	5%
Sand dunes	20%	52	5%	15%
Revegetated dune (Grey)	1%	4	5%	15%
Helicopter site/Village Green	<1%	2	0	<1%
Gun Club	4%	12	-	4%
Island (Wedge) or Islands (Grey)	7%	20	4%	3%
Ocean (including surfing spots, fishing places)	8%	22	3%	4%
The Point (Wedge)	12%	31	<1%	11%
PIE shop (Wedge)	2%	7	-	2%
The Log (Wedge)	<1%	2	-	<1%
The Stone Hut (Grey)	<1%	1	<1%	-
The tip (including car dump at Wedge)	1%	5	-	1%
The ice shack (Wedge)	<1%	2	-	<1%
The track (including the journey in generally)	5%	14	1%	3%
Activities				
Activities (a wide range cited)	18%	48	4%	14%
Fishing	17%	44	4%	12%
Sunset (watching sunset)	12%	33	1%	10%
Wildlife (watching, appreciating)	5%	14	1%	3%
Connections				

	Both settlements		Grey	Wedge
	%	No	%	%
Commemorations (personal)	4%	11	1%	2%
Family (celebrations, special moments, being together)	9%	25	3%	5%
Community (events, traditions, sense of community)	16%	41	3%	12%
Feelings				
Feelings (isolation, contemplation etc)	11%	30	5%	6%
Not categorised	3%	8	-	2%
<i>answered question</i>		255	68	187
<i>skipped question</i>		88	24	40

Appendix C

Social Values Assessment: Focus Groups and Interviews

Appendix C: Focus groups and interviews

Small group discussions

Small group discussions were held in both Wedge and Grey, and elsewhere. The table below lists each group, the number attending and location. Each was around 2 hours long.

Date	Time	Location	Shack	Number attending	Reference Code
6/8/2011	10.00am	Wedge	W220 (Knowles)	12	WG-1
6/8/2011	1.30pm	Wedge	W222 (Timewell)	20	WG-2
6/8/2011	3.00pm	Wedge	W45 (Laundon)	22	WG-3
7/8/2011	10am	Grey	G106 (Loomes)	16	GG-1
7/8/2011	1.00pm	Grey	G25 (Foley)	10	GG-2
7/8/2011	3pm	Grey	G22 (Sheppard)	21	GG-3
10/8/2011	10am	Perth (Trigg)	Ross Robinson – home (focus was on Wedge)	9	PWG-1
10/8/2011	12.15pm	Perth (Osborne Park)	Lime Industries (focus was on Wedge)	6	PWG-2
Total				116	

Note: Reference codes are used in the text of the report. The letters used refer to the settlement (W or G), that it was a group discussion (G) and the location in the case of the meetings held in Perth (P).

Each of the focus groups was run to a similar agenda, with some small variations depending on the size of the group. The essential elements of the agenda were:

- Project overview – Geoff Ashley
- Introductions – each person to introduce themselves, name, shack number, why they come and their associations
- What is it about this place that is special? Participants asked to close their eyes and reflect on what they love most and to hold an image in mind, and speak about it.
- Group review of a list of possible values used in the questionnaire survey, leading to discussion as to whether these values are shared across the community (and which values are not shared).
- The relationship between personal identity and this place
- Knowing you are here – what do you need to check in with when you arrive to really feel you are here?
- What is it about the physical place – the shacks and other features that make this place important to you?

Interviews

Date	Time	Location	Shack	Number attending	Reference Code
5/8/2011	10.15am	Wedge	W287 (Cream/Otway shack)	3 Gary Cream, Wayne Otway and friend Herman)	WI-1
5/8/2011	12.00 (lunch)	Wedge	W262 (Rosco's shack)	3 Annie McGuinness, Ross Knipe (Rosco), Colin (Noddy) White	WI-2
5/8/2011	2.00pm	Wedge	W268	2 Brad Glew & Tanya Stanton	WI-3
5/8/2011	2.45	Wedge	W56 McGinnis shack	2 Grant McGinnis (W56), John Reeley (W5)	WI-4
5/8/2011		Wedge		2 Marj & Charlie Shaw	WI-5
8/8/2011	Morning	Grey	G123 Hill Shack	1 Colin Hill	GI-1
8/8/2011	Afternoon	Cervantes	Max Gazeley's house	2 Norm & Max Gazeley (with Fred & Margaret Sharp)	GI-2
Total				15	

Note: Reference codes are used in the text of the report. The letters used refer to the settlement (W or G), that it was an interview (I) and the location in the case of the meetings held in Perth (P).

The interviews often followed a similar sequence of questions as for the focus groups, but with a little more flexibility to pursue particular topics that arose in the discussion.

Other meetings

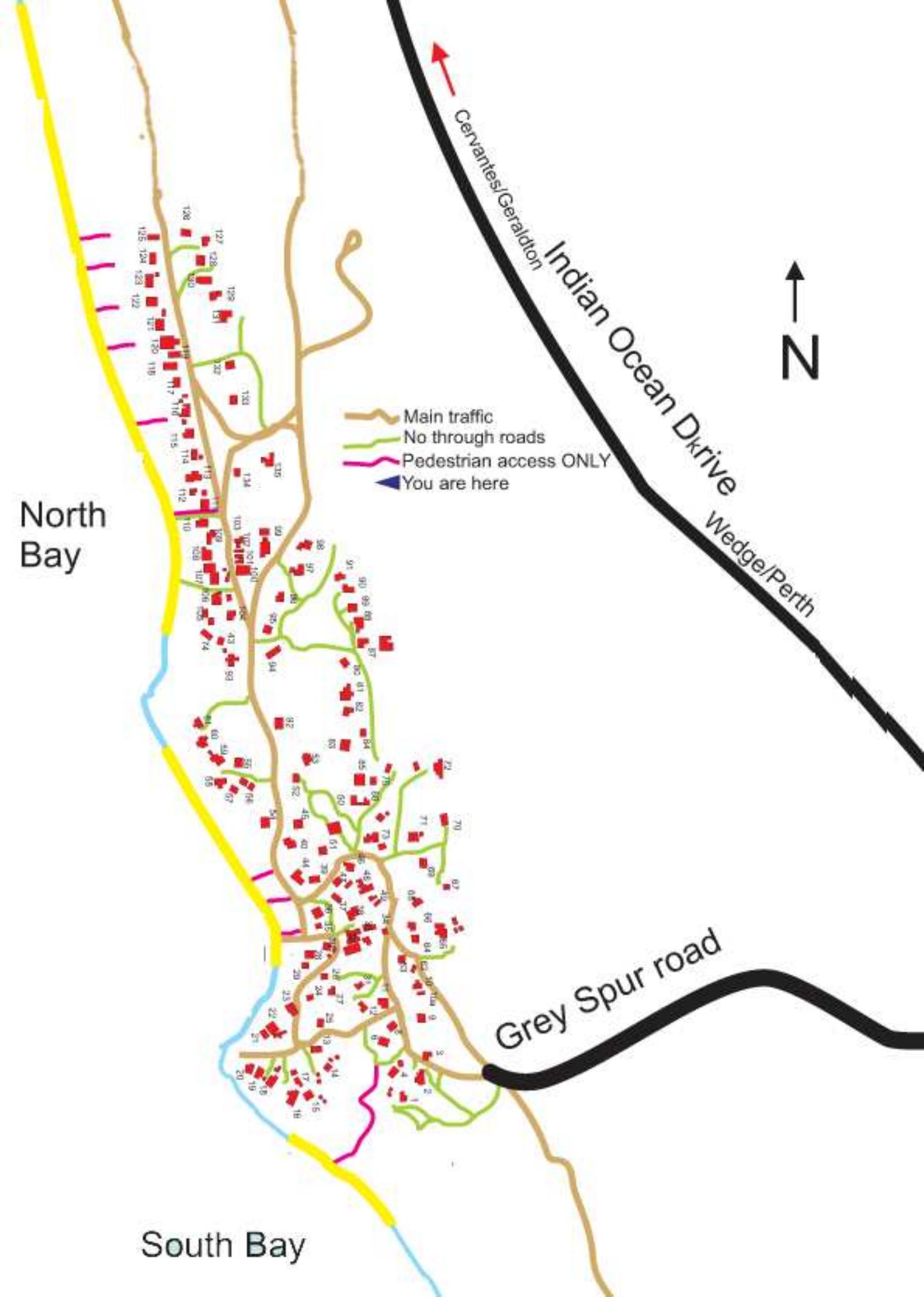
Several other meetings were held during the course of the visit. In each the questions of significance was discussed. These meetings do not form part of the community data set.

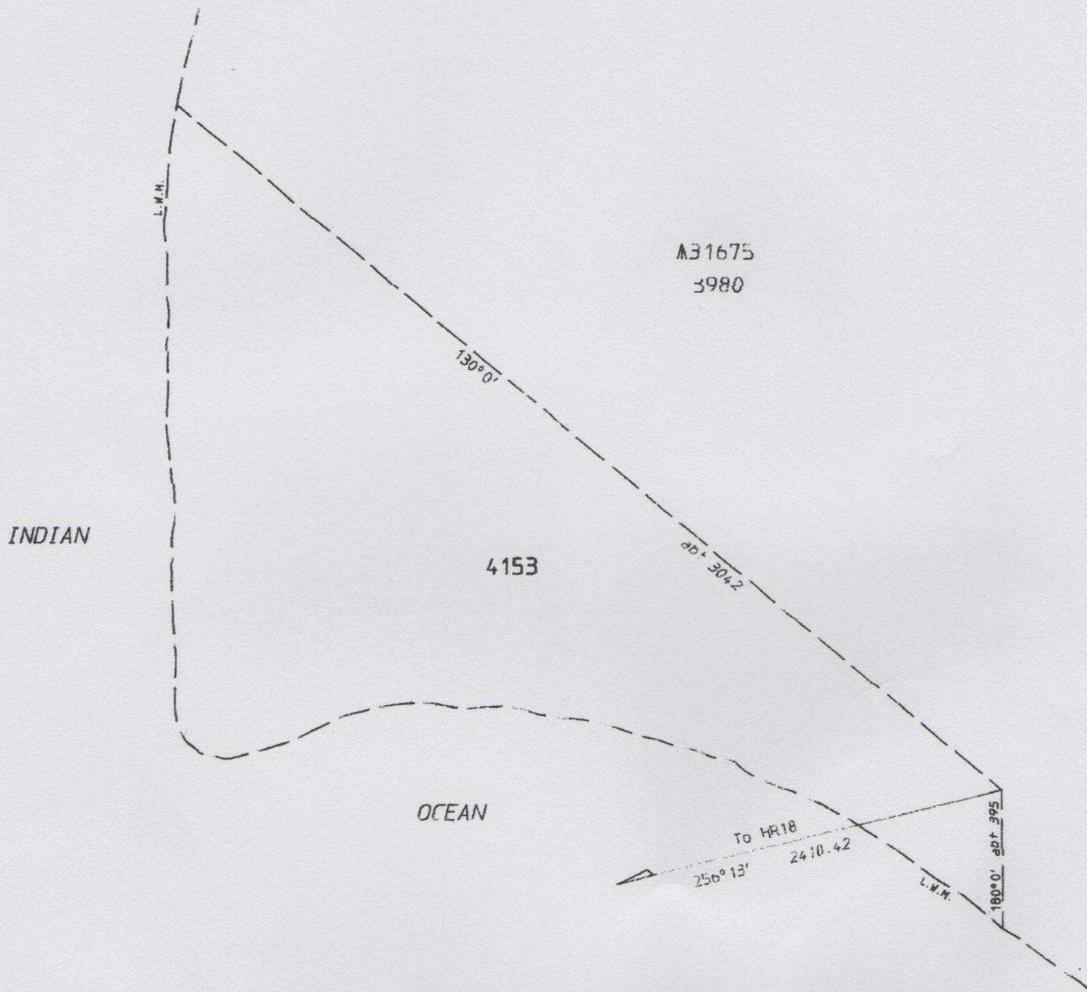
Date	Meeting with	Organisation	Location
9/8/2011	Keith Hockey	Department of Environment and Conservation	Jurien Bay

Date	Meeting with	Organisation	Location
11/8/2011	Prof Roy Jones Dr Reena Tawari	Curtin University	Perth
11/8/2011	Steve Meyercourt Tanya Henkel	Department of Environment and Conservation	Perth
	Penny O'Connor	Heritage Council	Perth

Appendix D

Shack Location Plans





DP 92263



RD 1283



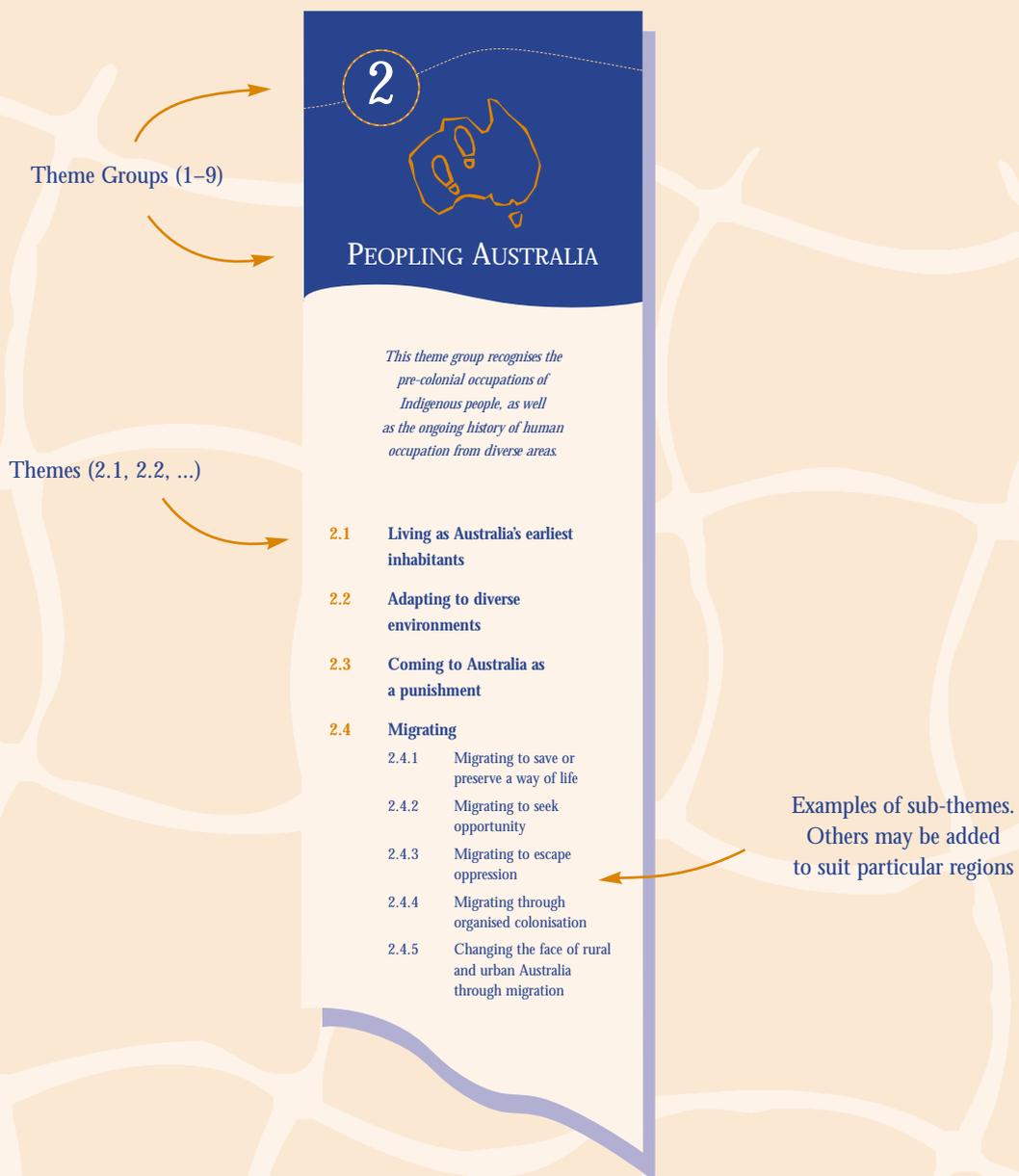
RESERVE No. <u>43283</u> Area <u>abt 21ha</u>		FILE No. <u>201/961 Vol.2</u>
Purpose <u>Parkland, Recreation and the Letting of Cottages</u>		SCALE <u>1:12500</u> All measurements in metres
DISTRICT. <u>MELBOURNE</u>	SUBJECT TO SURVEY	
Public Plan <u>WEDGE ISLAND (50)</u>	AMENDMENTS	
Reference <u>201/961 Vol.2 Page 4215</u>	Gazette	Page
Prepared by <u>S. MARSHALL</u> Date <u>26/9/1994</u>		Initials
Checked <u>[Signature]</u> Date <u>26.9.1994</u>		
Approved <u>[Signature]</u> Date <u>26.9.94</u>		
Manager Statutory Drafting and Amendments		Gazetted <u>24-2-95</u> Page <u>648</u> Recorded on Public Plan <u>R.G.J. 17-3-95</u> Registered <u>[Signature]</u> for Manager Statutory Drafting and Amendments On Key Plan <u>WEDGE ISLAND (50)</u> DEPT. OF LAND ADMINISTRATION RESERVE DIAGRAM No. <u>1283</u>

Appendix E

Australian and Western Australian Historic Themes

AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEMES FRAMEWORK

KEY



1



TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT

The environment exists apart from being a construct of human consciousness. However, a thematic approach recognises the human factor in the natural environment, and how our understanding and appreciation of the environment has changed over time.

- 1.1 Tracing climatic and topographical change
- 1.2 Tracing the emergence of Australian plants and animals
- 1.3 Assessing scientifically diverse environments
- 1.4 Appreciating the natural wonders of Australia

2



PEOPLING AUSTRALIA

This theme group recognises the pre-colonial occupations of Indigenous people, as well as the ongoing history of human occupation from diverse areas.

- 2.1 Living as Australia's earliest inhabitants
- 2.2 Adapting to diverse environments
- 2.3 Coming to Australia as a punishment
- 2.4 Migrating
 - 2.4.1 Migrating to save or preserve a way of life
 - 2.4.2 Migrating to seek opportunity
 - 2.4.3 Migrating to escape oppression
 - 2.4.4 Migrating through organised colonisation
 - 2.4.5 Changing the face of rural and urban Australia through migration
- 2.5 Promoting settlement
- 2.6 Fighting for land
 - 2.6.1 Resisting the advent of Europeans and their animals
 - 2.6.2 Displacing Indigenous people

3



DEVELOPING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES

While Geoffrey Blainey conceived of Australian history as dominated by the 'tyranny of distance' this concept is alien to Indigenous Australians. Eighteenth and nineteenth century developments in technology made it possible to link the continent to distant marketplaces, and the incentive for almost every expedition by the first European 'explorers' was the search for valuable resources. Much subsequent Australian history has revolved around the search for a staple on which to base regional economic development.

- 3.1 Exploring the coastline
 - 3.1.1 Looking for inland seas and waterways
 - 3.1.2 Looking for overland stock routes
 - 3.1.3 Prospecting for precious metals
 - 3.1.4 Looking for land with agricultural potential
 - 3.1.5 Laying out boundaries
- 3.2 Constructing capital city economies
- 3.3 Surveying the continent
 - 3.3.1 Looking for inland seas and waterways
 - 3.3.2 Looking for overland stock routes
 - 3.3.3 Prospecting for precious metals
 - 3.3.4 Looking for land with agricultural potential
 - 3.3.5 Laying out boundaries
- 3.4 Utilising natural resources
 - 3.4.1 Hunting
 - 3.4.2 Fishing and whaling
 - 3.4.3 Mining
 - 3.4.4 Making forests into a saleable resource
 - 3.4.5 Tapping natural energy sources
- 3.5 Developing primary production
 - 3.5.1 Grazing stock
 - 3.5.2 Breeding animals
 - 3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries
- 3.6 Recruiting labour
- 3.7 Establishing communications
 - 3.7.1 Establishing postal services
 - 3.7.2 Developing electric means of communication
- 3.8 Moving goods and people
 - 3.8.1 Shipping to and from Australian ports
 - 3.8.2 Safeguarding Australian products for long journeys
 - 3.8.3 Developing harbour facilities
 - 3.8.4 Making economic use of inland waterways
 - 3.8.5 Moving goods and people on land
 - 3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways
 - 3.8.7 Building and maintaining roads
 - 3.8.8 Getting fuel to engines
 - 3.8.9 Moving goods and people by air
- 3.9 Farming for commercial profit
- 3.10 Integrating people into the cash economy
 - 3.10.1 Assisting Indigenous people into the cash economy
 - 3.10.2 Encouraging women into employment
 - 3.10.3 Encouraging fringe and alternative businesses
- 3.11 Altering the environment
 - 3.11.1 Regulating waterways
 - 3.11.2 Reclaiming land
 - 3.11.3 Irrigating land
 - 3.11.4 Clearing vegetation
 - 3.11.5 Establishing water supplies
- 3.12 Feeding people
 - 3.12.1 Using indigenous foodstuffs
 - 3.12.2 Developing sources of fresh local produce
 - 3.12.3 Importing foodstuffs
 - 3.12.4 Preserving food and beverages
 - 3.12.5 Retailing foods and beverages
- 3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity
- 3.14 Developing an Australian engineering and construction industry
 - 3.14.1 Building to suit Australian conditions
 - 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 3.15 Developing economic links outside Australia
- 3.16 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
 - 3.16.1 Dealing with hazards and disasters
- 3.17 Inventing devices
- 3.18 Financing Australia
 - 3.18.1 Raising capital
 - 3.18.2 Banking and lending
 - 3.18.3 Insuring against risk
 - 3.18.4 Cooperating to raise capital (co-ops, building societies, etc.)
- 3.19 Marketing and retailing
- 3.20 Informing Australians
 - 3.20.1 Making, printing and distributing newspapers
 - 3.20.2 Broadcasting
- 3.21 Entertaining for profit
- 3.22 Lodging people
- 3.23 Catering for tourists
- 3.24 Selling companionship and sexual services
- 3.25 Adorning Australians
 - 3.25.1 Dressing up Australians
- 3.26 Providing health services
 - 3.26.1 Providing medical and dental services
 - 3.26.2 Providing hospital services
 - 3.26.3 Developing alternative approaches to good health
 - 3.26.4 Providing care for people with disabilities

4



BUILDING SETTLEMENTS, TOWNS AND CITIES

Although many people came to Australia in search of personal gain, they realised the need to co-operate in the building of safe, pleasant urban environments. Australian urbanisation and suburbanisation have special characteristics which set them apart from similar phenomena elsewhere in the world.

- 4.1 Planning urban settlements
 - 4.1.1 Selecting township sites
 - 4.1.2 Making suburbs
 - 4.1.3 Learning to live with property booms and busts
 - 4.1.4 Creating capital cities
 - 4.1.5 Developing city centres
- 4.2 Supplying urban services (power, transport, fire prevention, roads, water, light and sewerage)
- 4.3 Developing institutions
- 4.4 Living with slums, outcasts and homelessness
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities

5



WORKING

Although a lot of what we call work is related to the economy, most of it is not undertaken for profit. A great deal of the work done in the home is neither paid nor counted as part of the national economy. Some of the most interesting recent social history written about Australia concerns work and workplaces.

- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions**
 - 5.1.1 Coping with unemployment
 - 5.1.2 Coping with dangerous jobs and workplaces
- 5.2 Organising workers and work places**
- 5.3 Caring for workers' dependent children**
- 5.4 Working in offices**
- 5.5 Trying to make crime pay**
- 5.6 Working in the home**
- 5.7 Surviving as Indigenous people in a white-dominated economy**
- 5.8 Working on the land**

6



EDUCATING

Every society educates its young. While European education places a great emphasis on the formal schooling system, education encompasses much more.

- 6.1 Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education**
- 6.2 Establishing schools**
- 6.3 Training people for the workplace**
- 6.4 Building a system of higher education**
- 6.5 Educating people in remote places**
- 6.6 Educating Indigenous people in two cultures**

7

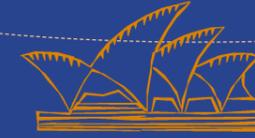


GOVERNING

This theme group is as much about self-government as it is about being governed. It includes all the business of politics, including hostility to acts of government.

- 7.1 Governing Australia as a province of the British Empire**
- 7.2 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy**
 - 7.2.1 Protesting
 - 7.2.2 Struggling for inclusion in the political process
 - 7.2.3 Working to promote civil liberties
 - 7.2.4 Forming political associations
- 7.3 Making City-States**
- 7.4 Federating Australia**
- 7.5 Governing Australia's colonial possessions**
- 7.6 Administering Australia**
 - 7.6.1 Developing local government authorities
 - 7.6.2 Controlling entry of persons and disease
 - 7.6.3 Policing Australia
 - 7.6.4 Dispensing justice
 - 7.6.5 Incarcerating people
 - 7.6.6 Providing services and welfare
 - 7.6.7 Enforcing discriminatory legislation
 - 7.6.8 Administering Indigenous Affairs
 - 7.6.9 Conserving Australian resources
 - 7.6.10 Conserving fragile environments
 - 7.6.11 Conserving economically valuable resources
 - 7.6.12 Conserving Australia's heritage
- 7.7 Defending Australia**
 - 7.7.1 Providing for the common defence
 - 7.7.2 Preparing to face invasion
 - 7.7.3 Going to war
- 7.8 Establishing regional and local identity**

8



DEVELOPING AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL LIFE

Australians are more likely to express their sense of identity in terms of a way of life rather than allegiance to an abstract patriotic ideal. One of the achievements of this society has been the creation of a rich existence away from the workplace. While some of the activities encompassed in this theme are pursued for profit - horse racing and cinema, for instance - their reason for being is the sheer enjoyment of spectators. While many people could not pursue careers in art, literature, science, entertainment or the church without being paid, those activities do not fit easily into the categories of economy or workplace.

- 8.1 Organising recreation**
 - 8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sports
 - 8.1.2 Betting
 - 8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens
 - 8.1.4 Enjoying the natural environment
- 8.2 Going to the beach**
- 8.3 Going on holiday**
- 8.4 Eating and drinking**
- 8.5 Forming associations**
 - 8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories
 - 8.5.2 Helping other people
 - 8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid
 - 8.5.4 Pursuing common leisure interests
- 8.6 Worshipping**
 - 8.6.1 Worshipping together
 - 8.6.2 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies
 - 8.6.3 Founding Australian religious institutions
 - 8.6.4 Making places for worship
 - 8.6.5 Evangelising
 - 8.6.6 Running city missions
 - 8.6.7 Running missions to Australia's indigenous people
- 8.7 Honouring achievement**
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen**
- 8.9 Commemorating significant events**
 - 8.9.1 Remembering disasters
 - 8.9.2 Remembering public spectacles
- 8.10 Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences**
 - 8.10.1 Making music
 - 8.10.2 Creating visual arts
 - 8.10.3 Creating literature
 - 8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings
 - 8.10.5 Advancing knowledge in science and technology
- 8.11 Making Australian folklore**
 - 8.11.1 Celebrating folk heroes
 - 8.11.2 Myth making and story-telling
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes**
- 8.13 Living in cities and suburbs**
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements**
- 8.15 Being homeless**

9



MARKING THE PHASES OF LIFE

Although much of the experience of growing up and growing old does not readily relate to particular heritage sites, there are places that can illustrate this important theme. Most of the phases of life set out below are universal experiences.

- 9.1 Bringing babies into the world**
 - 9.1.1 Providing maternity clinics and hospitals
 - 9.1.2 Promoting mothers' and babies' health
- 9.2 Growing up**
 - 9.2.1 Being children
 - 9.2.2 Joining youth organisations
 - 9.2.3 Being teenagers
 - 9.2.4 Courting
- 9.3 Forming families and partnerships**
 - 9.3.1 Establishing partnerships
 - 9.3.2 Bringing up children
- 9.4 Being an adult**
- 9.5 Living outside a family/partnership**
- 9.6 Growing old**
 - 9.6.1 Retiring
 - 9.6.2 Looking after the infirm and the aged
- 9.7 Dying**
 - 9.7.1 Dealing with human remains
 - 9.7.2 Mourning the dead
 - 9.7.3 Remembering the dead



Heritage Council of Western Australia Themes

1. Demographic settlement and mobility

- 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees
- 102 Aboriginal occupation
- 103 Racial contact and interaction
- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 105 Exploration and surveying
- 106 Workers (including Aboriginal, convict)
- 107 Settlements
- 108 Government Policy
- 109 Environmental change
- 110 Resource exploitation and depletion
- 111 Depression and boom
- 112 Technology and technological change
- 113 Natural disasters

2. Transport and communications

- 201 River and sea transport
- 202 Rail and light rail transport
- 203 Road transport
- 204 Droving
- 205 Air transport
- 206 Mail services
- 207 Space exploration
- 208 Newspapers
- 209 Technology and technological change
- 210 Telecommunications

3. Occupations

- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 302 Rural industry and market gardening
- 303 Mining (including mineral processing)
- 304 Timber industry
- 305 Fishing and other maritime industry
- 306 Domestic activities

- 307 Intellectual activities, arts and crafts
- 308 Commercial services and industries
- 309 Technology and technological change
- 310 Manufacturing and processing
- 311 Hospitality industry and tourism

4. Social and civic activities

- 401 Government and politics
- 402 Education and science
- 403 Law and order
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment
- 406 Religion
- 407 Cultural activities
- 408 Institutions
- 409 Environmental awareness

5. Outside influences

- 501 World wars and other wars
- 502 Refugees
- 503 Natural disasters
- 504 Depression and boom
- 505 Markets
- 506 Tourism
- 507 Water, power, major transport routes

6. People

- 601 Aboriginal people
- 602 Early settlers
- 603 Local heroes and battlers
- 604 Innovators
- 605 Famous and infamous people

7. Other

- 701 Other sub-theme