



DISTRICT COUNCIL of TUMBY BAY

Our Ref: R23/2320
Your Ref: N/A
Contact: Rebecca Hayes

6 February 2023

Hon Tom Koutsantonis MP
Minister for Infrastructure & Transport
GPO Box 1533
ADELAIDE SA 5001

BY EMAIL: minister.koutsantonis@sa.gov.au

Dear Minister

Tumby Bay Jetty – refurbishment and renewal of structure

Thank you for meeting with myself and representatives of the District Council of Tumby Bay on 20 December 2022 to discuss the Tumby Bay Jetty (**Jetty**) refurbishment and the State Government's Business Case.

I write with respect to the opportunity for State and Local government to work together to jointly fund a significant refurbishment of the existing structure for the benefit of the community and tourism to the Eyre Peninsula.

As discussed, the Jetty is owned by the State Government, with the District Council of Tumby Bay (**Council**) entering a lease over the Jetty with the then Minister for Transport and Urban Planning commencing 22 December 1999 for a period of twenty-five (25) years. Since that time, the Council and the State have jointly shared responsibility for the ongoing repair and maintenance of the Jetty at various stages of its life, with Council spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on its upkeep.

However, notwithstanding measures to arrest its deterioration, the Jetty's decline has accelerated in recent years due to age and was closed to the public due to damage suffered following significant wave activity and loading experienced in October 2022.

Background Information

Condition inspection reporting of the Jetty was completed in May 2020 by Wallbridge Gilbert Aztec (**WGA**). This report identified a number of short, medium and long term repair actions required to the structure to maintain serviceability, with significant investment required over the next 10 years.

In 2020, the preferred long-term approach to rehabilitation or replacement was assessed on the basis of a multi-criteria 50-year life cycle assessment. In reflection of this comprehensive analysis and data, the Council considered it critical that significant funds be invested into the Jetty to mitigate further immediate decline in the structure and the risks which may develop.

Council's approach to achieve this was put to Premier Marshall in a letter dated 7 October 2021. In recognition of the joint responsibility for the long-term life of the Jetty, the Council proposed that it allocate up to \$1 million towards this important outcome, through different funding sources including its Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP) funding.

Council acknowledged that this contribution fell significantly short of the amount required to undertake the necessary repairs for a significant refurbishment. As such, Council sought a co-contribution from the State Government of \$2.5 million. It was anticipated at the time that the total spend would enable Council and DIT to make immediate repairs that would see the Jetty stabilised and operative for the short to medium term.

The Premier elected to implement a different strategy to that proposed by Council, requesting the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (**DIT**) develop a detailed business case for the refurbishment or replacement of the Jetty. This business case is now in its final stages of preparation and as I understand it, will be presented to you in the near future.

Consequently, discussions between Council staff and DIT, as the asset owner, led to a proposal to continue these earlier investigations to develop a monitoring and response plan to retain the structure in a serviceable condition pending greater investment in major rehabilitation or replacement. DIT and Council jointly appointed WGA to undertake this further report which has been provided to both parties.

Storm Damage – October 2022

In October 2022 wave loading caused by unusual storm activity resulted in significant damage to a concrete encased pile and cross bearer. As a result, the Council determined that the Jetty was no longer safe for unrestricted public access and closed the Jetty.

Subsequently, WGA provided Council with a Technical Memorandum that assessed the storm damage along with a general update on the Jetty's structure. The Technical Memorandum notes that from the high-level inspection the general condition of the Jetty substructure and superstructure were similar to the previous inspection completed in 2020. However, there has been significant deterioration in the condition of a few concrete encased piles and connecting members which have adversely affected the safety of the Jetty. In total there are 29 concrete encased piles and the significant deterioration and concern about the integrity of the concrete encased piles, has resulted in the Jetty remaining closed to the public.

Tourism in Tumby Bay

There are significant regional tourism opportunities positioned around the Jetty at Tumby Bay, and the Council considers it is essential that a significant refurbishment of the structure takes place to ensure the ongoing enjoyment and use of the Jetty into the future.

Tumby Bay has built a reputation as the Eyre Peninsula's leading festival destination. In the past three years the township has hosted the 'Colour Tumby Festival' encompassing international street artists, Adelaide Fringe, Markets, and more, along with The Adelaide Guitar Festival and Illuminate - all with great success and outstanding feedback.

Tourism is a key sector for the Eyre Peninsula, contributing \$446 million to South Australia's visitor economy. The Eyre Peninsula exceeded its 2025 target of \$397 million, achieving the 2030 target of \$499 million.

In 2022, Eyre Peninsula had the third highest expenditure of all the regions in South Australia and was the fourth most visited, indicating a propensity to attract a higher-than average contribution to the visitor economy per visitor. The region's tourism industry supports over 600 tourism businesses employing 2,700 people through direct and indirect jobs.

As stated in the South Australian Regional Visitor Strategy (SARVS) (SATC, 2021) *"the opportunity for the Eyre Peninsula is to capitalise on its strengths, including pristine nature, immersive wildlife experiences and coastal lifestyle – to drive increased overnight stays from domestic and future international visitors"*. The region has approximately 100 state, national and conservation parks, ten state marine parks, and three commonwealth marine reserves, with its network of jetties critical to the region's overall tourist offering and experience.

The Tumby Bay Jetty is largely considered to be the jewel in the crown, and a vital piece of regional infrastructure. The State Government's Regional Development Strategy and Regional Tourism Strategy rely on the regions having appropriate infrastructure in place to facilitate industry growth, and to attract and retain the workforce need to support business. The refurbishment of the Jetty is vital to achieving both outcomes on the Eyre Peninsula.

Funding opportunity

Following our meeting, and in recognition of the joint responsibility for the long-term life of the Jetty, the Council has indicated that it is financial capable of allocating up to \$1 million towards the cost of the refurbishment/replacement of the Jetty.

This would be achieved through several different funding sources including Council's future LRCIP funding, the balance of Council's existing Jetty Reserve Fund and community fund raising. This is a significant financial contribution, especially for a small regional council, but demonstrates the value which the Council and our community puts on the long-term future of our Jetty.

Unfortunately, this contribution falls significantly short of the amount required to undertake the necessary repairs for a significant refurbishment. As such, the Council is seeking a co-contribution from the State Government.

Council is mindful that the remaining funds are substantial and that there needs to be a mechanism in place to protect the State Government's investment and ultimately facilitate a potential return to the State through increased tourism revenue. As such Council is proposing to provide an ongoing contribution towards future maintenance. Council proposes (subject to community consultation and

acceptance) that the District Council of Tumby Bay and the State Government enter into an agreement that requires Council to raise a special rate each year from its ratepayers (**Jetty Rate**). The Jetty Rate could cover ongoing maintenance costs for both the Tumby Bay Jetty and Port Neill Jetty and will be retained by Council in a dedicated Reserve Fund.

Notably, and notwithstanding the value placed on the jetty by Council and our community, the *Local Government Act 1999* provides Council with narrow scope in which Council can raise 'rates' against property. In all situations, the Council will need to consult with, and the proposal ratified by, its ratepayers before formally entering an ongoing agreement with the State and committing to this process.

As such, Council is desirous of formally opening dialogue with you to understand the State's position more clearly around funding the Jetty refurbishment (subject to the outcome of the Business Case) along with all future leasing and maintenance arrangements.

This is an important opportunity which I believe we cannot afford to miss and hope the State Government also recognise this. We look forward to the prospect of working towards what will be an exciting outcome, not just for our community but also for the opportunities which it will deliver for regional and state tourism.

We recognise there are many different interests in getting these arrangements right, and thus we will also send a copy of this letter to the Treasurer – Hon Stephen Mulligan MP and our local member Sam Telfer MP.

Should you have any queries regarding the enclosed please do not hesitate to contact myself, or the Chief Executive Officer, Rebecca Hayes, on 8688 2101.

Yours sincerely



Mayor Geoff Churchett

CC:

Hon Stephen Mulligan MP, Treasurer

Sam Telfer MP – Member for Flinders