

ATTACHMENT TO AGENDA ITEM

Ordinary Meeting

21 April 2020

Agenda Item 10.2 Tatura - RV Friendly Township Proposal

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Attachment 1 – Map and satellite image of Tatura noting location of proposed site and images of surrounds.



Satellite image of space




Map outlining location.

Images of the proposed location.





An abstract graphic consisting of several thin, curved orange lines that sweep across the page from the left side towards the center. The lines vary in length and curvature, creating a sense of movement and flow.

Recreational Vehicle (RV) Friendly City – Implications & Considerations

Independent Report for
Geelong Otway Tourism

April 2013

BILL FOX & ASSOCIATES PTY LTD

Tourism Planning & Management Services

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Purpose of report

This independent report has been commissioned by Geelong Otway Tourism, April 2013.

The Recreational Vehicle (RV) touring segment (motor home, campervan or caravan) is experiencing significant growth, with local governments and communities experiencing both positive and negative impacts as a result. There is a renewed need for clear and consistent policy to guide decision making in order to effectively manage the arising issues.

This report will provide an independent assessment of the issues associated with the rapidly growing RV market and its requirements, along with the impact on local communities, existing businesses and Council infrastructure. It will also outline the legal obligations by Councils and the private sector in providing public facilities when catering for overnight stays.

Executive summary

The growth in the self contained Recreational Vehicle (RV) market has been substantial over the past 5-10 years due primarily to the number of part and fulltime retirees travelling beyond their home base. The international market travelling to primary tourist destinations in RVs has also increased significantly as have the variables in vehicle type and pricing.

There has been a growing trend for domestic RV travellers to seek free camping due primarily to the length of time away from their home base (many months) and the increased costs of staying in established commercial holiday parks. International backpackers are also on limited budgets, away for up to 12 months and predominantly free camp, often illegally.

The self contained RV market is represented by the Caravan & Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) with some 64,000 members. The CMCA actively lobbies both state and local governments for the development of RV camping parks with facilities, and members, whilst willing to pay a small fee for such, would prefer them to be free. They also lobby towns and cities to become RV friendly. The self contained RV segment (individually) generates relatively little economic yield other than spend on fuel and basic supermarket supplies.

The commercial holiday park owners have invested significant sums in developing and maintaining their parks to meet increasing consumer expectations as well as compliance with numerous local and state regulations and legislations. The cost of compliance with the Country Fire Authority Act is in excess of \$100,000 per park which is just one of many Acts they must comply with. A recent study found that on average each park contributed \$1.26m/pa to their local economy, not accounting for the flow on effect of tourists spending with other businesses in the region.

It is apparent that in the more remote townships around Australia the concept of RV Friendly Towns has merit and provides an economic model that is sustainable for the budget traveller while providing a modest economic generator for the local area. This is on the proviso that they are not competing in any way with an established holiday park. The solutions for the more remote towns and non-tourist destinations will differ greatly from the highly populated areas and regions where tourism is a primary economic generator such as the Geelong – Bellarine – Great Ocean Road Region.

Executive summary cont.

In agreeing to the development of RV parks, Councils need to be diligent in regards to their compliance with the national competition policy and the competitive neutrality principles. Where there are established commercial holiday parks, it is questionable that a Council could establish an RV park and meet their obligations under the competitive neutrality principles.

As the self contained RV segment is highly mobile, it is important that a region-wide approach is taken or the problem is merely shifted to the neighbouring municipality. Council by-laws, whilst a minor deterrent, are ineffective if patrols are conducted within normal office hours given the planned late arrivals into towns and early departures by the informed free campers.

It is important that in any decision-making around RV parks, Councils consult with their commercial holiday park owners given their significant investments and also the fact that they may offer viable solutions to the growing need to reach a compromise with those seeking an affordable stay.

Background

Many Australians have traditionally experienced camping holidays to the numerous coastal villages and generally relatively close to home, while few ventured to the outback. Those short but memorable camping and caravanning holidays were also relatively inexpensive as supply generally exceeded demand and legislative imposts on park owners were minimal.

However, as our population increased and land prices in the popular beachside villages soared, many of the popular beachside caravan parks were sold for significant sums and replaced with resorts, houses and units.

State and local government through necessity also placed quite stringent regulations on park owners in order to provide greater patron safety. The cost of compliance by park owners was significant thereby changing the business model to one of a much greater sophistication than ever before.

The past 10-15 years has also witnessed much greater freedom by the over 55 market segment with many purchasing a four wheel drive vehicle and caravan to travel Australia in their free time. This significant increase in travel to regional and outback Australia has generally had a very positive impact on tourism particularly along coastal villages, National Parks and the inland tourist destinations.

Not surprisingly, caravanning and camping have remained a popular pastime with the peak summer periods seeing many coastal areas and inland waterways near or at capacity for the month of January.

There has also been a substantial increase in the number of RVs traveling Australia and to our local tourism region. These vehicles range in size, but many are self contained with water, toilet and cooking facilities enabling them to be less reliant on the fully serviced and well managed holiday parks.

This self-reliance of many RV owners and hirers is also resulting in the growth of so called 'free camping' and the re-enforcement of the great Australian tradition of camping where we want to regardless of the season, the popularity of the destination or the local by-laws. Dedicated free camping internet forums and Smartphone apps have also contributed to the popularity of free camping areas.

Background cont.

Many RV owners are members of the strong and well coordinated national organisation, the Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA), who lobby governments on behalf of their members.

This report will focus on the self contained RV segment and provide a narrative that fully explores the issues associated with a growing market and the various demands being placed on Council (community) resources and infrastructure.

RV segments

It is important to differentiate between the main types of RVs that are circulating Australia and to describe their preferences.

International market

Budget RV segment (e.g. 'Wicked Campers') – These are the hire vehicle of choice of European backpackers who have a good appreciation of what Australia has to offer and are generally travelling on a limited budget. They have a strong preference for free camping, enabling them to spend more on adventure type experiences.

Up-market RV segment – These are usually widely travelled internationals aged 35-50, with a high disposable income, well informed of what Australia has to offer and enjoying reasonably long stays. They prefer to stay in holiday parks (well run, secure and at good locations), eat out and experience a range of activities and can be repeat visitors. This is a particularly high yielding market segment and one that most tourism destinations wish to attract.

Domestic market

Caravan/campers – There is a wide range of Australians who travel extensively throughout the country staying at holiday parks as well as free camping. They prefer the comfort and security a holiday park provides but to reduce costs they will also free-camp where appropriate. (The high cost of some holiday parks in Northern and Western Australia is also prohibitive for not so well off travellers who are away from home for several months. However, given the isolation and remoteness of much of Australia, free camping is perhaps appropriate as there is no disturbance to residents and many townships do not have commercial holiday parks.)

Self contained RV segment – owned by retired or semi retired people with a desire to see Australia at their leisure and have a strong preference for free camping. Many belong to the Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) and enjoy the member benefits of a strong, well managed organisation who actively lobby both state and local government for the provision of facilities. The 64,000 members are kept fully informed by the CMCA via various digital platforms and have very active online forums. The CMCA has lobbied many Councils on behalf of their membership for the creation of RV Friendly Towns and the establishment of free camping areas. A quote from one of their publications:

'Currently the experience demanded by self contained RV tourists is not being matched by the existing network of infrastructure, services and information provided'.

Some members of this segment see free camping as a right; irrespective of population density, peak summer periods and the fact that they maybe in an iconic tourist precinct where everyone else expects to pay market price for the privilege. As stated in a number of their reports, another reason for avoiding holiday parks is that they also object to the possible noise and disruption caused by camping alongside active family groups.

Background cont.

CMCA definitions¹

RV Friendly Town – An ‘RV Friendly Town’ is one that provides amenities and services to the mobile traveller, and adheres to a number of criteria as determined by the CMCA. Among these, the CMCA advocates for the provision of free or low-cost camping services within proximity of a town centre. This no/low cost camping on Council land will require access to toilets, water, preferably power, blackwater dump pits and dog friendly.

Self-contained RVs – Self-contained RVs are motorhomes or campervans that have in-built eating, sleeping, food storage and preparation facilities, and also contain a toilet, shower and holding tanks for both grey water and black water, clean water storage, deep cycle batteries and a hot water service.

National perspective

Throughout Australia there are some 187 RV Friendly Towns with the majority being rural service centres and not primary tourist destinations. There are exceptions with Townsville being one of those. However the Townsville City Council is currently dealing with a number of issues in relation to free camping primarily related to large groups of vehicles parked within the city precincts creating unacceptable noise and community disturbance. (The noise is generated by groups gathering together at the end of the day along with that created by generators.)

Tasmania has recently completed a major review of RV camping and for further reading refer to the case study in *Appendix 1*.

The Queensland Government is shortly to commence a similar statewide study to assist Councils to manage non-commercial camping.

The basis for many regional centres enticing RVs to their area is on the assumption they, one day, may also become a tourist destination. A statement from the CMCA regarding the economic benefit RVs bring to regional Australia:

‘This may well be the last chance at injecting life back into small and struggling communities’.

It is understandable that in these more remote towns throughout regional Australia, RVs are made very welcome as they do contribute to the local economy i.e., fuel purchases. It is also likely that few of these towns would have a commercial holiday park so there would be no local objections to catering for this segment and no breach of the national competitive neutrality principles.

However in the popular tourist destinations where seasonality and supply and demand may dictate accessibility and pricing, Council by-laws will generally prohibit sleeping in vehicles in public areas.

¹ CMCA paper ‘The Self Contained Recreational Vehicle Market: 2010 and beyond’

Background cont.

Number of RV Friendly Towns per state:

New South Wales	41	(no tourist destinations, mainly inland towns)
Queensland	47	(with only two tourist destinations Townsville, Kuranda)
South Australia	27	(three minor tourist destinations)
Tasmania	27	(a third tourist destinations)
Victoria	23	(three tourist destinations mainly smaller more remote townships)
Western Australia	22	(mostly non-tourist towns).

State perspective

Victoria has 23 RV Friendly Towns with three of those being tourist towns: Beechworth, Yarrawonga and Heathcote.

However, as in most other states, the majority of these towns have a limited economic base, relatively small populations and little or no tourism appeal. Therefore the invitation to acquire RV Friendly status and an opportunity to enter the business of tourism sounds highly appealing.

Where there are no commercial holiday parks within and around these towns, some have taken the initiative and allowed camping in their local show grounds or recreational areas and have local arrangements with local sporting or service clubs to service these low key facilities.

The Melbourne City Council recently had an issue with backpackers sleeping in their vans in the long term out-of-hours parking areas along the Yarra River that were set aside to cater specifically for rowers. Whilst they have been effectively moved from that particular precinct, it is been suggested that the problem has simply relocated elsewhere.

Local perspective

The Geelong – Great Ocean Road region is one of Australia’s primary tourist destinations experiencing some 7.5 million visitors each year and growing. While holiday parks are under considerable pressure during January, access for the remaining summer and shoulder periods is less restrictive. Most holiday parks have also created overnight areas for those campers who arrive late without a booking and expect to be accommodated in mid January.

Over the past 3-5 years Geelong and the surrounding coastal areas has experienced an influx of RV travellers wishing to free camp. A drive around the more popular areas on dusk will see numerous vans circulating looking for a quiet location to spend the night before moving on to the next location early the next day to avoid detection. The coastal roadside stops between Torquay and Apollo Bay are the more popular sites well frequented by the illegal free campers.

Most holiday parks have very few campers between April to November with off peak non-power fees averaging \$25 per night and \$35 for shoulder periods.

Background cont.

CMCA Request for RV Park – City of Greater Geelong²

In order to accommodate the growing RV market visiting Geelong, the CMCA has been lobbying Council for a number of years to establish an RV park in the Seagull Paddock precinct and require the following services:

- Safe area to park
- Links with public transport into city centre
- Blackwater dump point
- Public toilet
- Access to water supply.

Note: All of these requirements are available in current commercial parks at a cost of entry.

Economic impact

Holiday parks

Commercial holiday parks account for approximately 12% of accommodation industry revenue and 9% of industry employment.

The Caravan, RV & Accommodation Industry of Australia Ltd (CRVA) commissioned a report in 2012 to evaluate the economic impact that commercial caravan holiday parks have on their region from the spending undertaken by the park and the park operators. The study found that on average, each park contributed \$1.26m to their local economy per year. The \$1.26m did not account for the flow on effect of tourists spending with other businesses in the region.

Other relevant data³ to the end of March 2012 includes:

- The number of cabins in holiday parks has doubled in the past 15 years
- Total industry turnover is approximately \$1.2bn
- 10,500 persons employed in the industry
- 1,614 tourist parks establishments with more than 40 powered sites
- 39,040 cabins
- 54% annual occupancy.

Self contained RVs

The economic contribution by individual Self Contained RVs⁴ is minimal with their major cost being the purchase of fuel and supermarket supplies. They may eat out once a week and prefer budget meals at RSLs and sporting clubs. CMCA membership advises that the economic value is enhanced by the total number of RVs travelling Australia. The CMCA data relevant to Self Contained RVs has not been used in this report as it also includes other recreational camping vehicles and caravans.

² This information has been provided by Mr. John Holliday representing the CMCA.

³ BDO 2012 Australian Tourist Park Industry Distinctively Different Insights: March 2012 based on ABS data.

⁴ Personal comment by CMCA spokesperson John Holliday

Background cont.

Social/community impact

The impact of non-conforming camping on communities varies considerably.

The situation in Townsville has reached the stage where the community has demanded urgent action by Council to address the noise and disruption caused by RVs congregating in the city centre.

Locally, residents are finding RVs camped on their nature strip or main streets with the number of incidents increasing to the point that action needs to be taken. Enforcement is difficult, as the campers know that if they arrive late and depart early they will escape the local by-laws officers.

The litter and human waste (a health hazard) being left in the car parks is also increasing significantly and becoming noticeable to local residents, particularly where there are no toilet facilities.

State legislation

The Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE) is responsible for the Crown Land Reserves Act 1972 and Parks Victoria is responsible for National and State Parks prescribed under the National Parks Act 1975. DSE has delegated the responsibility to manage the coastal reserve areas on behalf of the state government to Committees of Management (CoM).

In the broader Geelong region there are a number of large caravan and camping parks managed by these committees of management including:

- Barwon Heads
- Breamlea
- Indented Head
- Lorne
- Ocean Grove
- Portarlington (900 sites)
- St Leonards
- Torquay (650 sites).

The primary Acts that Committees of Management must comply with include:

- Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978
- Coastal Management Act
- The Land Act 1958
- The Local Government Act 1989
- The Country Fire Authority Act 1958
- The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- The Environment Protection Act 19
- Residential Tenancies Act.

(See *Appendix 2* for complete list)

Background cont.

CFA requirements – There are very stringent requirements for commercial caravan park operators to comply with CFA regulations, with the cost of establishment and compliance in excess of \$100,000 for an average sized park.

Legal implications – competitive neutrality

There are both state and federal legislatures providing guidelines on competitive neutrality. The Victorian Competitive and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) is the body responsible to investigate complaints and report on competitive neutrality within Victoria.

The objective of competitive neutrality is to ensure that government business should not enjoy a net competitive advantage as a result of their public sector ownership. The aim is to obtain a fair market environment.

The competitive advantages of public ownership arise from additional costs which would be faced by a government business if it were a private firm. Using as an example a private caravan park operation, the additional costs would include:

- Compliance with relevant Acts and Regulations such as Health Act
- Town planning
- Payment of rates and taxes
- CFA requirements
- Occupational health and safety
- The cost of borrowings and;
- The requirement to earn a rate of return on an asset.

It is also required of the government body that its business costs are based on full service costing. Complaints brought before the VCEC Complaints Unit relate to the pricing of goods and services not being fully cost reflective.

Financial implications

Should any Council consider establishing an RV parking area they must first consider the cost implications of compliance with the competitive neutrality principles.

Establishment and maintenance costs will also be considerable and would need to cover:

- Provision of public toilets
- Provision of water supply
- Provision of black-water dump pits
- Compliance with fire regulations
- Provision and collection of rubbish bins
- Regular patrolling and maintenance.

Background cont.

The suggestion of fee collection using meters would require an honesty system which would most likely be unviable and would also require compliance and fee collection to be managed.

Risk analysis

Community – Given the past growth and anticipated growth in the RV market, it is highly probable that growth will continue at around 6% so doing nothing is not an option for any Council. The community backlash, environmental impact and safety considerations will require all Councils to address these issues. Furthermore, with the effective marketing of the Geelong- Great Ocean Road region, visitor numbers will continue to increase along with the numbers of those wishing to avoid camping in established holiday parks.

Business – In not addressing the issue of uncontrolled free camping, Councils also are disadvantaging established holiday parks who contribute significantly to the local and regional economies via employment and the purchases of local goods and services. All holiday parks have significant infrastructure investment which has taken many years to assemble and ensure compliance with state and local government regulations.

Fire – This region is also regarded as one of the countries' highest fire risk areas and where camping is not contained, that risk escalates considerably as numbers grow.

Competitive neutrality – Should any Council consider setting aside an RV area, they will need to fully comply with the same legislation as commercially run holiday parks as well as introducing full service costing. Any designated RV area would become a public asset, requiring day to day management and a set fee structure to provide some cost recovery.

Current issues

As a result of this burgeoning RV segment, many local Councils throughout Victoria and Australia are now faced with a number of issues including:

- Illegal overnight stays in heavily populated residential areas causing noise and disruption to residents
- The difficulty in enforcing local by-laws (sleeping in vehicles) due to the early departure and late arrivals of well informed free campers
- Litter and waste in roadside pullovers particularly where there are no public toilet facilities
- Refusal by many RV owners to use commercially run caravan and camping holiday parks where fees are charged and services provided
- The creation of 'RV Friendly Towns' and facilities with many Councils unaware of their responsibilities in complying with the National Competition Policy competitive neutrality principles of 'full cost attribution'

Current issues cont.

- Formal complaints to the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) by the Victorian Caravan Parks Association Ltd regarding some Councils providing free camping services where the viability of fully established and fully compliant parks is being compromised
- Lack of a coordinated approach at state government level to provide clear and consistent direction to local government (with the exception of Tasmania and Queensland).

Recommendations

1. Any decisions by local and state government regarding the setting aside of an exclusive RV area need to take into account the **competitive neutrality principles** and the need to fully comply with all legislature that applies to commercially run holiday parks.
2. Regional Councils must be consistent in the management of RVs otherwise the 'problem' may only be shifted. The G21 Regional Alliance is the appropriate forum in which consistency may be applied in the management of this issue. DSE and their Committees of Management would need to be consulted.
3. Considering that this segment of travellers (Self Contained RV Segment) will continue to expand, local commercial holiday parks could investigate the viability of setting specific areas aside and determining an appropriate fee for RVs during off peak periods (current average off-peak fee starts at \$24 per night). This arrangement could be promoted to RV owners thereby alleviating any excuses re affordability or access. It would also assist local by-law officers and police to offer a solution when moving potential offenders on. The sites could occupy the less attractive areas of the park and would need to provide sufficient space to accommodate the larger RVs. They would however, still require the use of services such as washing facilities, etc., after being self contained for several days.
(Note: The Great Ocean Road Coordinating Committee (GORCC) is currently considering a number of initiatives to address the situation of illegal camping on their numerous coastal reserves between Torquay and Lorne.)
4. Councils promote via their websites to RV owners/hirers that only stays in holiday parks are catered for in this region. This advice should also include the fact that demand will exceed supply during the month of January and that travellers should plan for stays outside the peak summer and school holiday periods.
5. That GOT, on behalf of member Councils, raise this matter VTIC (Victoria's peak tourism organisation) to discuss the matter with state government to consider a review similar to that undertaken by Tasmania. This would ensure statewide consistency and compliance by all Councils with competitive neutrality legislation but may also allow some towns to proceed with RV friendly status where competition is non-existent.
6. That GOT raise with Greater Geelong City Council the need for short term parking in the Central Activity Area to cater for visiting RVs.
7. That GOT develop an information package for RV owners and hirers and distribute via GOT digital platforms and through their visitor information centre network.
8. Non-payment of Council issued infringement notices for illegal camping by international travellers requires attention and could be addressed similar to that of car hire agreements regarding fines incurred for infringement of state road laws. This matter could be referred to VTIC to raise at state government level on behalf of GOT.
9. Should the City of Greater Geelong Council wish to proceed with investigating the establishment of an RV park, it is recommended that consultation with the commercial holiday park operators be undertaken in the first instance. This could readily be coordinated via Vic Parks.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Case Study – The Tasmanian Experience

Appendix 2

Legislation and Guidelines Applicable to Crown Land Caravan and
Camping Park Management under Committees of Management

Appendix 3

Consultations

Appendix 4

Abbreviations

Appendix 1**Case Study - The Tasmanian Experience**

Following formal complaints from holiday park owners in early 2011, the Local Government Association Tasmania prepared a Discussion Paper on the issue of recreation vehicles and overnight camping. A state government enquiry was held and the Minister for Local Government released the *Statewide Directions Paper - Review of Council Recreational Vehicle Overnight Camping Services* on 10 May 2012.

The Paper aims to assist councils in understanding how to apply competitive neutrality principles under the National Competition Policy when providing overnight camping sites for self-contained recreational vehicles (RVs). See the following link to the full report:
http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/review_of_council_recreational_vehicle_overnight_camping_services

The CMCA response to the review included the following key points (verbatim):

- This paper will have a dramatic effect on Tasmanian Tourism, and its proposals have the potential to spread throughout the rest of the country once a precedent has been set in Tasmania
- The loss of free council rest areas in Tasmania will have dire consequences for RV tourists, the Tasmanian RV tourism industry and businesses throughout the state
- This will point out that if RVers are disadvantaged in Tassie they will travel elsewhere, and that will greatly affect the state's economy
- The proposal to remove or restrict the rights of travellers to enjoy the freedoms currently available in Tasmania will greatly discourage mobile tourists from visiting
- The CMCA's position is that councils should continue to be able to offer low cost and free services
- Exclude all self-contained RVs from any fees or levies incurred while staying in a council owned rest area.

Appendix 2**Legislation and Guidelines Applicable to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Park Management under Committees of Management**

Crown land managers appointed by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change are responsible for the management of Crown land under the following legislative frameworks:

- Land Act 1958
- Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978
- Forests Act 1958
- National Parks Act 1975
- Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997.

The following legislation and policies apply specifically to caravan and camping park management:

Planning and development

- Planning and Environment Act 1987 (and other local government planning requirements)
- Coastal Management Act 1995
- Victorian Coastal Strategy 2007
- Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast (VCC 1998/2007)
- Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast (VCC 1998/2007)
- Australian Building Standards
- Australian Safety Standards.

Managing a Crown land caravan and camping park

- Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978
- Land Act 1958
- Local Government Act 1989
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations
- Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan Parks
- Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines
- Plumbing Code of Australia 2004.

Occupational health and safety

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Electricity Safety Act 1998
- Country Fire Authority Act 1958.

Country Fire Authority

- Caravan Park Fire Safety Guideline 2006.

Appendix 2**Legislation and Guidelines Applicable to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Park Management under Committees of Management cont.****Managing for the environment and cultural heritage**

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Environment Protection Act 1970
- Native Title Act 1993
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Victorian Heritage Act 1995
- Victoria's Native Vegetation Management: A Framework for Action 2002
- The Environmental Protection Authority's Code of Practice for Septic Tanks & Treatment Plants
- Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010.

Running a small business

- Retail Leases Act and Regulations 2003
- Land Tax Act 2005
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- GST Bulletin GSTB 2001/2
- DSE's Committee of Management Responsibilities.

Appendix 3**Consultations**

Vin McKay	-	CEO Bellarine Bayside
Richard Davies	-	CEO GORCC
Steve Sodomaco	-	Manager Health and Local Laws CGG
John Holliday	-	CMCA Geelong Representative
Lynne Hultaine	-	Melbourne City Council
Officers Peers, Bickley, Ferrara	-	Geelong Police
Miguel Del Rio	-	Lessee Crown Land Caravan Park/private holiday park owner
Elizabeth White	-	CEO Victorian Caravan Parks Association

Appendix 4

Abbreviations

CCG	City of Greater Geelong
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CMCA	Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia
CoM	Committees of Management
CRVA	Caravan, RV & Accommodation Industry of Australia Ltd
DSE	Department of Sustainability & Environment
GORCC	Great Ocean Road Coordinating Committee
RV	Recreational Vehicle
VCPA	Victorian Caravan Parks Association
VTIC	Victorian Tourism Industry Council

localclassies

SNNEWS

Tourism law review pitch

SHARE ECONOMY CAMPING REGULATIONS IN PLAY

By Madeleine Caccianiga

As significant changes in tourism continue across the nation, the Victorian Government has announced a review of laws around share-economy camping, as part of a look into the regulation of caravan parks and moveable dwellings.

With advances in technology allowing new platforms to search for and book accommodation such as the launch of national website **Youcamp.com** in 2013, inconsistencies in state and local laws around agritourism have surfaced.

Youcamp co-founder James Woodford said camping on private land had grown dramatically and it was critical that sensible regulation be introduced to help farmers be able to generate extra income.

"This review by the Victorian Department of Land, Water and Planning could turn out to be the beginning of generational change in how Australians experience the outdoors . . . It is great news and hopefully other states follow the Victorian lead," Mr Woodford said.

Recording more than 2000 properties registered on the website and about 100 000 campers, Mr Woodford said every state and local government area in Australia had different rules around share-economy camping.

"But the one thing they all have in common is that they are out of date and make it hard for farmers to enjoy the benefits of the share economy the way their city cousins have done with ride-sharing and home-sharing apps," he said.

THIS REVIEW . . . COULD TURN OUT TO BE THE BEGINNING OF GENERATIONAL CHANGE IN HOW AUSTRALIANS EXPERIENCE THE OUTDOORS

— JAMES WOODFORD

One exception to the review has been Rural City of Wangaratta, which Mr Woodford said had recently approached Youcamp to work together co-operatively to make sure hosts in that council area gained approval and operated legally.

He said Victoria was perhaps the state in which it was most difficult for a farmer to be able to legally welcome campers onto their land.

"We have had literally dozens of Victorian farms closed by councils who take the approach of finding ways to stop private land camping. The only losers are families looking for great new places to experience rural life, farmers wanting to make an income and small communities who miss out on an influx of tourists," Mr Woodford said.

He hoped the new review would help farmers to gain approval in their respective council areas to legally open their properties to boutique tourism opportunities.

US



'15 Volkswagen C
CANDY WHITE, GREAT
COMMERCIAL VEHICLE

WAS \$
\$2

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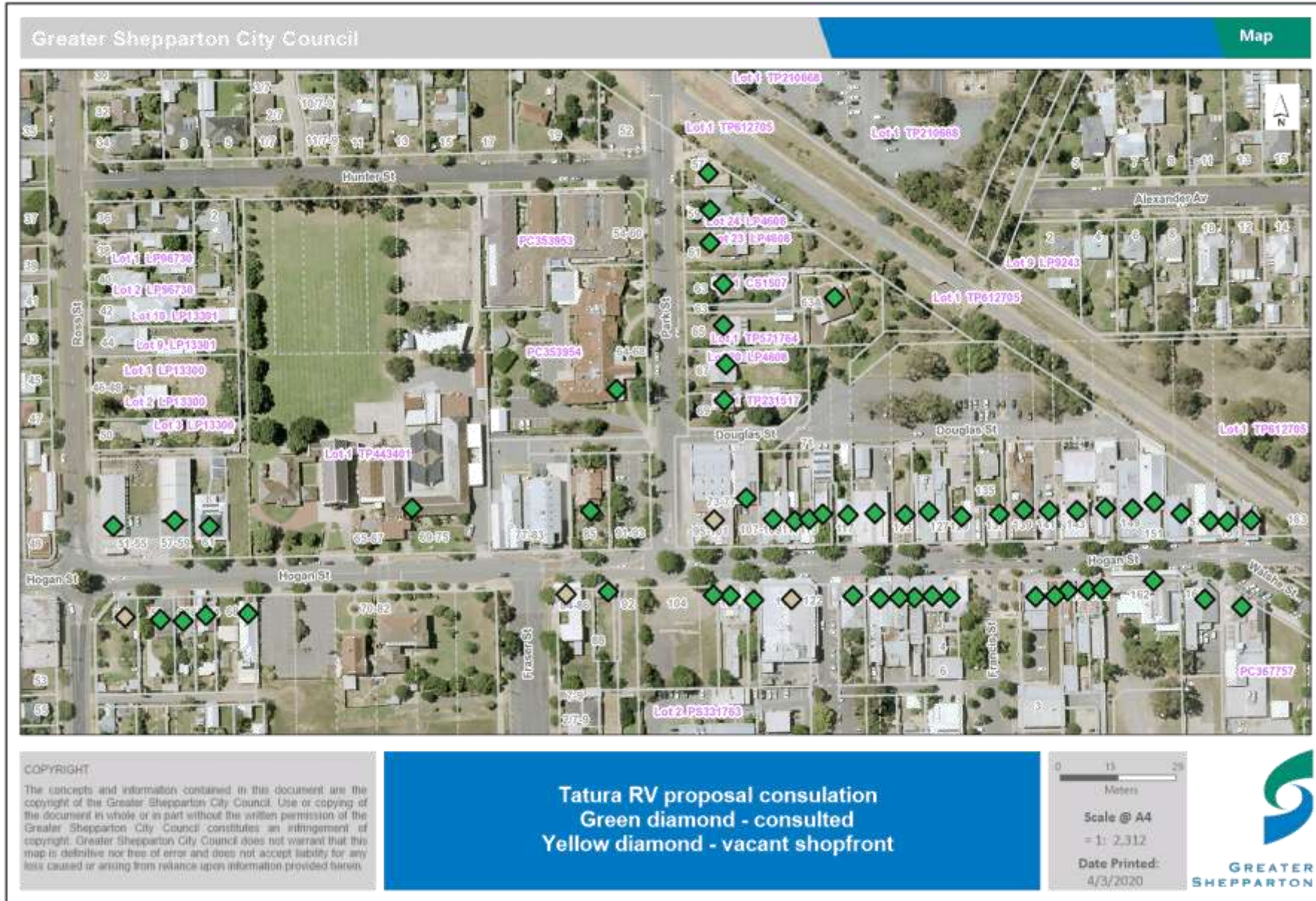


'14 Audi Q5 TDI
2 YEAR AUDI APPROVE
WARRANTY

WAS \$33
\$32

10M9BF

Darryl Tw
JUNE S



Greater Shepparton City Council

Legend

- Roads
- Major Rivers/Creeks
- Property
- Parcel
- Address
- Community Areas
 - Caravan Park
 - Cemetery
 - Gardens
 - Golf Course
 - Park
 - Sports Complex
 - Sports Ground
 - Tennis Court
 - Training Track
- Reserves and Conservations
 - Reserve
 - Conservation
- Locality
- Image
 - Red: Band_1
 - Green: Band_2
 - Blue: Band_3



Greater Shepparton City Council

Legend

- Roads
- Major Rivers/Creeks
- Property
- Parcel
- Address
- Community Areas
 - Caravan Park
 - Cemetery
 - Gardens
 - Golf Course
 - Park
 - Sports Complex
 - Sports Ground
 - Tennis Court
 - Training Track
- Reserves and Conservations
 - Reserve
 - Conservation
- Locality
- Image
 - Red: Band_1
 - Green: Band_2
 - Blue: Band_3