



Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

DRAFT MINUTES FOR MEETING 22

Thursday 11th October 2007

9am to 11.45 pm

Meeting Room 1, Darwin City Council Building, Harry Chan Ave, Darwin

1. Welcome And Apologies

Present:

Name	Representing
John Bailey	Independent Chairperson
Chris Makepeace	Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT
Duncan Dean	Community Representative
Prue Barnard	Australian Marine Conservation Society
Peter Ebsworth	Greening Australia NT
Donna Jackson	Larrakia Nation Governing Committee
Bob Wasson	Charles Darwin University, Chair Ecosystem Research Group
Alistair Black	Darwin Port Corporation
Peter Dummett	Chamber of Commerce NT
Juanita Croft	Director Environmental Assessment & Policy
Robyn Henderson	Environment, Heritage and the Arts – Project Coordinator, Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management
Chantal Caruso	Environment, Heritage and the Arts – Environmental Policy Officer LHC
Simon Townsend	Manager, Aquatic Health Unit, Chair Ecosystem Monitoring Group
George Maly	Environment, Heritage and the Arts - Project Officer WQPP

Guest Speakers

David Steinberg	Environment Heritage and the Arts
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Apologies:

Luccio Cercareli	Local Government Association NT
Greg Bicknell	Chamber of Commerce NT

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

2. Acceptance Of Previous Minutes

The Committee agreed that the minutes from the previous meeting be accepted.

Moved: Chris Makepeace

Seconded: John Bailey

3. Action Sheet From Previous Meeting

Action sheet noted and brief update given.

4. Water Quality Protection Plan

George Maly briefed the Committee on the agenda paper.

The paper recommended that DHAC endorse a number of actions arising out of the public consultation process on Beneficial Use Declarations review:

- the outcomes and comments of the consultation process be published on the WQPP project website together with some explanations as a way of educating the community on Beneficial Uses, water management practices and the WQPP, particularly the development of water quality objectives which will need to be understood and supported by the majority of the community;
- those submitters who indicated desire to be notified (including DHAC subscribers) be informed of the outcomes of the consultation process and periodically updated on the project milestones and pointed to information resources that would help in addressing knowledge gaps on water quality issues;
- an ongoing one-on-one consultation process with individual stakeholders be maintained to ensure that stakeholder needs and concerns are continually identified, acknowledged and reflected in the WQPP outcomes and to ensure stakeholder awareness and support for the WQPP outcomes; and
- current and future DHAC activities, including its monthly newsletter, to include a campaign of educating the community on specifics of water quality management practices to promote community involvement and better understanding of the WQPP project.

Action

Future DHAC Newsletters are to include an article regarding the Water Quality Protection Plan.
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Discussion was held on the education needs of the general public. Points raised include:

- The current information available to the public on the Water Quality Protection Plan is too complicated. Material produced for education purposes and engagement of the public must be simplified to enable people to understand it.
- There are two tiers of public needs
 1. The general community who need simplified information
 2. Semi experts who need greater detail and complexity of information.

- While the education material for the general public can be simple, discussion papers etc can provide for the needs of the semi experts and technical groups.
- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park information is clear, useful and has been reviewed. Russell Reichelt is the contact for this information.
- The Morton Bay information may also be a useful source of straightforward information.
- Large colourful posters of the Catchment would be helpful.

Action

Drafts of the website material is to be sent to DHAC for comment prior to uploading to the Web

5. Report from Working Groups

- **EMG – Simon Townsend**

The EMG held a meeting to discuss the development of Water Quality Guidelines. Beneficial Uses is the obvious basis to use for guidelines. Ecosystems Protection as a Beneficial Use was recognised over most waterways. This use has the most stringent water quality requirements and therefore will be used as the basis for the guidelines as well as some recreational and some other uses.

The water types are rivers and streams, reservoirs, groundwater, estuarine and marine. The next step is to determine the categories of water and this was discussed during the meeting.

The following step is considering the pollution status.

The outcome of the discussions with the EMG was to have one reference guideline value for each waterway type.

The water quality of the Harbour as it is now will be used as a baseline. The consideration of the water quality will need to exclude bays, rivers and streams that are known to be polluted.

This approach has moved away from the geographical boundaries for beneficial use declarations and has moved to water type. Each water type will have a different water quality.

The EMG meeting served to:

- start the group thinking about the issues; and
- set direction for Simon Townsend and Julia Fortune's work and preparation of a paper reporting on the meeting conclusions.

Action

The EMG Chair will provide a copy of the report on the EMG meeting to DHAC for information

Discussion was held on the possible differences in water quality for single water types. For example the differences between the upper and lower reaches of streams.

Spatial and temporal resolution and data during the Wet season is extremely variable and can change with each storm. It is not practical to set such guidelines. It may, however, be possible to have guidelines for seasonal recession flow.

Discussions were held on the need for DHAC to deal with other issues such as aesthetics and that these may not be interpreted by the public in the same way as they are interpreted for the purposes of the Water Quality Protection Plan.

6. Current Environmental Impact Assessment Matters

Juanita Croft reported that public exhibition for one month had commenced on proposals to:

- Amend the NT Planning Scheme for Gas-based industry at Middle Arm which actually allows all industry; and
- Rezoning of Glyde Point and Leaders Creek away from industrial.

John Bailey stated that DHAC had influence on the approach that Government will be taking.

Action

Robyn Henderson will seek further information about the proposed changes to the NT Planning Scheme affecting Glyde Point and Middle Arm and provide that information to DHAC. An out of session meeting should be organised to meet with Ann Stephens, Department of Planning and Infrastructure to discuss the proposed changes to the NT Planning Scheme.

7. Booya, and other Heritage sites of Darwin Harbour

David Steinberg provided an informative presentation on Heritage sites in the Harbour.

8. Proposed study to consider dredging of Patches

Alastair Black provided a presentation on the proposal to initiate a dredging study at Charles Point Patches. Darwin Port Corporation is in preliminary stages of the project.

Action

Alastair Black will provide a copy of the powerpoint presentation, omitting any material not owned by Darwin Port Corporation.

Darwin Port Corporation is looking to dredge a channel through the sand wave. Currently ships are required to travel a "dog leg" and need to keep their speed up and this increases safety risk.

For ships to pass through the patches they only have a short tidal opportunity. Ships are currently working around the tides; however, this will become a problem with delays in the future. Currently ships may be delayed for a few hours. Cruise ships do not have the difficulties and it is not a problem with frequency. The difficulty is with the large Panamax ships.

The study is due for completion this time next year.

The question of environmental assessment was raised; however, the Environmental Assessments Group has yet to have the discussions with the Darwin Port Corporation to establish whether Environmental Impact Assessment is triggered. Although the area is within Territory waters it may still trigger Commonwealth Environmental Impact Assessment.

One purpose of the study is to get an idea of the movement of the seabed to establish if the proposed dredged area is likely to reform. The study is considering the narrowest part of the sand wave.

The Reserve from Occupation over Darwin Harbour under the Mining Act does not apply in this instance as the sand is not being dredged for the purpose of mining and using the material removed. Although Darwin Port Corporation are not interested in the material it should be used appropriately.

9. Darwin Harbour's Environment Protection Policy

Duncan Dean led discussions on the question of Government's long term planning and outlook for the Harbour. Duncan raised concern that he considered development to have been ad hoc in some cases in the past and with proposals for development looking like a heavy working Harbour being developed he would be more comfortable if Government had a vision for the Harbour. He raised concern that Government may not have considered using land away from the Harbour for some developments.

Juanita Croft raised that there were a number of mechanisms in place to protect the Harbour but that they were not contained within one policy. Examples include:

- the Water Quality Protection Plan Project;
- the Reserve from Occupation;
- the Planning Scheme; and
- the Environmental Impact Assessment legislation.

The "Creating Darwin's Future" document may have provided a vision but this seems to have moved to a CBD focus.

Discussion was held on creating a long term vision or strategy for the Harbour. Development of a vision could be requested of Government or could be something that DHAC could achieve. The Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management could address this and become a longer term strategic document into the future. The Plan needs to have a process to deal with new ideas but to have a way to maintain long term values.

Some members raised the idea of hearing from Government about where Government plans to place future development. Other members suggested that DHAC tells Government what stakeholders require. If the Plan of Management sets out the strategic plan it could require Government to report to DHAC on what Government is doing to meet the Plan of Management.

There was general agreement that the direction that the Committee would like to take the Plan of Management will assist this outcome.

10. Community Consultation

As a community representative on DHAC, Duncan Dean expressed his concern that there are sectors of the community that may not be reached or represented on DHAC. The Youth sector was highlighted as an important group that may not be represented by DHAC.

During the Review of the Plan of Management and DHAC, consideration could be given to extending the DHAC membership to include a member from the youth sector. Darwin City Council youth groups or the NT Government Youth Round Table are organisations from which a representative could be drawn. The communications strategy for the Review of the Plan of Management should also include a mechanism to reach young people.

DHAC newsletters should be forwarded to schools.

Education, about the Harbour and Catchment, in general and particularly for high school and university students was discussed. The education campaign associated with the Water Quality Protection Plan may in part address the shortfall but only in relation to water quality. Consideration could be given to developing an approach to education, establishing the resources required and seeking funding/grants accordingly.

11. Plan of Management Review

The first phase of the Review commenced last Thursday with a DHAC workshop facilitated by Donna Quong. The facilitator will be writing up the results of the workshop including a position paper on the Review of the Plan of Management including a review of DHAC. The report is expected by 19 October 2007.

Robyn Henderson suggested an outline for a proposed way forward:

Workshop results

- Review, amendment and approval of the workshop reports including input from members who were unable to attend. This review should ensure that Section 4 (9) of the PoM has been considered and addressed.

Plan of Management

- Formation of a subcommittee to work on a new "Plan of Management" as discussed during the workshop;

- Drafting of a new Plan of Management;
- Consultation with Government Agencies;
- Consultation with Scientific groups, other Key stakeholders;
- Consultation with the wider community;
- Finalisation of the new "Plan of Management"; and
- Seeking Government endorsement and Minister's signature alongside DHAC Chair's signature.

DHAC

- Further review of the terms of reference and committee membership;
- Consideration of DHAC involvement in water allocation, the way forward and implications of this approach;
- redrafting of the terms of reference ; and
- Approaching Minister to make the changes.

The public consultation phase of the review is likely to be held in early 2008.

Discussion was held about how the ERG could be involved in the Review of the Plan of Management. Bob Wasson reported that many of the goals/purposes of ERG have been rolled into TRaCK but there will be additional areas that TRaCK does not cover. The scientific knowledge/monitoring etc are important to consider in the Review of the Plan of Management. ERG could hold a brainstorming session on how it could feed into the review.

Membership of ERG is not restricted and the ERG/Chair can suggest contributors. Meetings will be open to DHAC members and the chair can also update DHAC. Donna Jackson has been invited to be a member of ERG and the group felt it was important to co-opt social scientists to contextualise the research.

12. Local Larrakia Harbour Committee Update

Donna Jackson reported that meeting 5 of the Larrakia Harbour Committee would be held in the afternoon and the Committee would be undertaking a tour of the Harbour. The core purpose of the tour is to undertake cultural mapping of the Harbour and to discuss Aboriginal values of the Harbour to input to the public consultation of the review of the beneficial uses declarations. Members of DHAC are invited to join the tour and meet the Larrakia Harbour Committee. The next formal meeting of the Larrakia Harbour Committee will be held in December.

13. Correspondence

Incoming and outgoing correspondence was tabled. List of correspondence noted. Two letters were received following distribution of the correspondence list.

Date	In/Out	To/From	Topic
3 October	IN	Paul Tyrell, Chief Executive, Department of the Chief Minister	Invitation to meet with the Northern Territory Government's Onshore Gas Development Taskforce.
3 October	IN	Minister Delia Lawrie	Exhibition of the proposed changes to the NT Planning Scheme affecting Middle Arm and Glyde Point.

Action

A meeting is to be arranged with the Northern Territory Government's Onshore Gas Development Taskforce to discuss future projects and how the taskforce and DHAC can best work together.

14. Financial report

The financial report from the 2006-2007 financial year and the financial report for September 2007 were tabled.

15. Discussions with Minister Lawrie

Minister Lawrie was unable to attend the meeting.

16. Other Business

- (a) Chris Makepeace informed the Committee that the boat ramp proposed for development is currently on public exhibition.
- (b) The availability of an Acid Sulfate Soils package was highlighted and members may obtain their own copy of the package if requested.

Action

When mapping of Acid Sulfate soils in Darwin Harbour Catchment is complete a copy is to be requested.

Next regular meeting to be confirmed.

Meeting closed 11.45 am

ACTION SHEET
Meeting 22
Thursday 11 October 2007

ATTACHMENT 2

Agenda Number	Agenda Item Title	Action	Responsibility	Time frame	Status
4	Water Quality Protection Plan	Future DHAC Newsletters are to include an article regarding the Water Quality Protection Plan.	Robyn Henderson and George Maly	Ongoing	To be addressed in future Newsletters
4	Water Quality Protection Plan	Drafts of the website material is to be sent to DHAC for comment prior to uploading to the Web	George Maly	Prior to uploading	Material has yet to be finalised but will be sent to DHAC prior to uploading
5	Working Groups EMG Report	The EMG Chair will provide a copy of the report on the EMG meeting to DHAC for information.	Simon Townsend	When report is finalised	Meeting Minutes provided.
6	Current Environmental Impact Assessment Matters	Robyn Henderson will seek further information about the proposed changes to the NT Planning Scheme affecting Glyde Point and Middle Arm and provide that information to DHAC. An out of session meeting should be organised to meet with Ann Stephens, Department of Planning and Infrastructure to discuss the proposed changes to the NT Planning Scheme.	Robyn Henderson	25 October 2007	Completed
8	Proposed Study to consider dredging of Patches	Alastair Black will provide a copy of the powerpoint presentation, omitting any material not owned by Darwin Port Corporation.	Alastair Black	30 October 2007	Outstanding
13	Correspondence	A meeting is to be arranged with the Northern Territory Government's Onshore Gas Development Taskforce to discuss future projects and how the taskforce and DHAC can best work together.	Robyn Henderson	25 October 2007	Outstanding
16	Other Business	When mapping of Acid Sulfate soils in Darwin Harbour Catchment is complete a copy is to be requested.	Upon availability.		Outstanding.