



Date & time: Thursday 23rd June 4pm-6pm, Airport Boardroom

Participants:

- Paul Aylward (WA Country Health Service)
- Glen Chidlow (North West Tourism)
- Gloria (YIC – Youth Involvement Committee)
- Vikki Stevens (YIC – Youth Involvement Committee)
- Lisa Baldock (BHP)
- Peta Greening (BHP)
- Morag Loewe (National Real Estate)
- Donald Beaumont (B&T Builders)
- Lisa Locke (Netball Association)
- Georgia Armstrong (FORM)
- Rob Cornish (Centauri)
- Matthew Weeks (Port Hedland Rugby Club)
- Julie Hunt (Dalgety House Historical Society)
- Victor Bellotti (Dep of Sport and Recreation)
- Geoff Diver (Diversity Consultants)
- Genna Dodge (Pilbara Development Commission)
- Lorna Seegray (ToPH)
- Leonard Long (ToPH)
- Gordon McMiles (ToPH)
- Owen Hightower (RPS)
- Craig Lovering (RPS-lead consultant)
- Daniel Marsh (WorleyParsons – Facilitator)
- Ned Baxter (WorleyParsons- Scribe)
- Cassandra Woodruff (ToPH – Scribe)

Session Objectives and Process

The objective of this session was primarily to test reaction to the Growth Plan's approach to place-making including provisioning for public spaces. Receiving feedback to place-making concepts would allow the consultant team to obtain a snapshot of how participants viewed the essential character of South and Port and how the group defined the key attractors that should influence the place-making work. Within the overall place-making strategy, feedback was required to test the concept of Port as the cultural precinct and South as the main commercial centre.

The process followed was:

- 'Refresher' on previously-adopted place-making visions (ToPH Strategic Plan and FORM's Pilbara Place-making Series consultation on the West End)
- Preview of working amenity/place-making concepts for key precincts
- Semi-structured discussion of reaction to place-making concepts

A short presentation by Craig Lovering of RPS is attached.



Advice on Direction

Early Action

There was a strong reaction to the presentation of place-making treatments for the public realm and the advice provided was that the Growth Plan should be cautious in how many places it attempts to address. The rationale given was that by first concentrating effort in a few key areas, there would likely be a higher quality outcome and this would then set the bar higher for subsequent focus areas.

“We can’t afford to go into too many areas within the town, we should first concentrate on going forward with key areas identified within the community and get those areas right before we move onto others”

A notion was expressed that a hierarchy of needs should be established to ensure key areas of concern were catered to first.

Advice was received that Growth Plan needs to be focused and avoid stretching resources too thinly in the short-term and this advice was allied to the a sense of frustration that previous planning work had led to insufficient action on the ground.

“The future will look after itself if the things that are needed now are looked after first”

“We have to look at the future while concentrating on the now”

Character & Attractors

Participants were asked to describe the key attractors to residents of Port Hedland - the ‘feel’ of the town and the community spirit that exists within it. Port Hedland was compared to Karratha and said to be friendlier, more open to events and new ideas, and less concerned with making money. The industrial character is evident but a distinct and subtle sense of humour can take time to appreciate.

There was support for the view that many people misunderstand Port Hedland and this affects people’s propensity to reside in town rather than FIFO. It was said there is a need for greater promotion of the history of the town.

“We are proud of our town but we do need to promote it better”

“We all know how good the character of the town is and what areas promote this character but it is a really well-hidden secret”

Interpretation of history was noted as virtually absent and in need of improvement.

“The 1946 strike by Aboriginal workers is of national significance never mind local significance but nobody would know about it from walking around”



Examples of 'easy wins' were provided to illustrate the modest cost of such initiatives:

"The historical photos and memorabilia of the old Port Hedland hospital could be highlighted at the new hospital site with photos commemorating the pioneers of the town – it's something that shouldn't be forgotten"

Public Realm & Sense of Place

In addition to celebration of significant events of its past, it was said there is a need to celebrate the present and the significant events that are happening now:

"We need to be also mindful that this town is creating history now, we should also recognise this"

"We'll be the world's largest port and that's something to work with"

Celebration was unpacked to mean greater activation of key areas day and night. Key areas were West End and South Hedland shopping area.

Favoured strategies were larger-scale publicly engaging projects including public art and creation of identity in public open spaces. There was a view that high quality art has one effect and extensive, high involvement community participation projects have another, related effect on place ownership.

"We need to create areas and icons that celebrate the fabric, spirit and belief we have in the town now"

Gateways

The group identified the international airport (in particular the terminal facilities) as a priority given its ability to affect perceptions of Port Hedland. The (apparent) urban myth) was recited that one spouse arrived at the airport, turned around and departed on the same plane.

"The airport is an essential tourist precinct"

"It's the first thing tourists see when they arrive and if Port Hedland is going to be presented as the 'gateway to the Pilbara' the airport should be brought up to a standard that represents this notion"

Public Open Space & Sporting Facilities

It was noted the Growth Plan requires a hierarchy of open spaces with areas set aside for regional, district and local recreation. There was a view that there was a need for greater levels of public open spaces in both Port and South Hedland including sporting facilities:

"Sport is a huge part of the South Hedland community and even though we're getting some new facilities, more needs to be done at the grass roots to support sporting clubs"



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