

City of Greater Geraldton Council Policy

2.3 ABROLHOS ISLANDS TOURISM

SUSTAINABILITY THEME

Leadership

OBJECTIVES

To grow and diversify the local economy through the development of ecologically sustainable tourism on the Abrolhos Islands including the development of tourist access control and management regimes, utility infrastructure, permanent resort and other accommodation and related facilities and amenities for tourists.

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Greater Geraldton supports the development of sustainable Tourism on the Abrolhos Islands as a means to diversify and expand the City region economy, and grow local employment in the tourism industry.

POLICY DETAILS

1. The Houtman Abrolhos Islands (the Abrolhos Islands – see Appendix 1 (Maps) are included within the local government district boundaries of the City of Greater Geraldton.
2. **Jurisdiction**
 - 2.1. The national park, which comprises the unoccupied island areas extending to the high water mark, is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). This includes airstrips, public shelters and public toilets on these lands. It does not include infrastructure on the water (jetties, moorings).
 - 2.2. The Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) is responsible for management of the terrestrial area not included in the national park and currently occupied by commercial rock lobster fishers and aquaculture operators under four (4) separate body corporate leases. This is an A Class Reserve vested in the Minister for Fisheries for the purpose of “conservation of flora and fauna, tourism and for purposes associated with the fishing and aquaculture industries”. The state waters surrounding the Abrolhos Islands has special status as a gazetted Fish Habitat Protection Area (the FHPA), also managed by DPIRD. DPIRD has responsibility for public jetties, public moorings and dive trails.
 - 2.3. The Western Australian Museum (The Museum) is responsible for management of underwater cultural heritage and maritime archaeological sites under the *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018* (Commonwealth) and *Maritime Archaeology Act 1973* (State). The Museum works with DBCA and DPIRD in protecting, managing and interpreting the ‘Batavia shipwrecks and survivor camps 1629’ National Heritage Listed site under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth) which has its own heritage management plan.

- 2.4. There are a number of other entities that have important statutory responsibilities and deliver services that support management of the Abrolhos including Tourism WA, Department of Transport, Department of Health and the Abrolhos Islands Bodies Corporate.
- 2.5. As a Class-A reserve, the Islands are effectively excluded from the land use planning and management jurisdiction of the City under the State's Planning Legislation, and the City has jurisdiction limited to building and health matters.
- 2.6. The City has no formal responsibility for the provision of infrastructure, amenities or municipal services on the Islands.
3. **The City will actively support development of Abrolhos Islands tourism by:**
 - 3.1 Advocacy with Government for development of Abrolhos Islands tourism.
 - 3.2 Active participation in related State Government committees and working groups.
 - 3.3 Continuing support for tourism sector development, and implementation of the Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020 – 2023.
 - 3.4 Development of destination management plans for Abrolhos tourism experiences.
 - 3.5 Promotion and advertising of Abrolhos tourism in conjunction with industry and Tourism WA.
 - 3.6 Facilitating initiatives for private sector investment in Abrolhos Islands Tourism.
 - 3.7 Provision of building and public health regulatory services for on-Island developments within the City's local government jurisdiction.

KEY TERM DEFINITION

Abrolhos Islands – see Appendix 1.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Corporate and Commercial Services is responsible for implementing this policy.

WORKPLACE INFORMATION

Mid West Regional Blueprint (MWDC) pages 76, 78, 130.

Mid West Tourism Development Strategy (MWDC)

Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020 – 2023, Pages 8, 29 and 50.

Houtman Abrolhos Islands Strategic Direction 2020–2024

Houtman Abrolhos Islands National Park Draft Management Plan 2021

Houtman Abrolhos Islands Reserve Draft Management Plan 2022

Houtman Abrolhos Islands Fish Habitat Protection Area - Draft Management Plan 2022 (Part 1) and Draft Marine Zoning Scheme 2022 (Part 2)

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate		Officer	Review Cycle	Next Due
Corporate and Commercial Services		Director Corporate and Commercial Services	Biennial	2024
Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis		
3.	CCS703 26/07/2022	Policy Review		

Appendix 1 – Map 1



Appendix 1 - Map 2

