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A message to residents of the City of Joondalup Foreshore from

The West Australian Kitesurfing Association (WAKSA)

We would appreciate you taking a few moments of your time to consider the content of this information bulletin

As you are no doubt aware the City of Joondalup has published a Draft Beach Management Plan which embraces all aspects of beach use for 17km of foreshore in the City's boundaries. It is currently at the 'public comment' phase which will close on **Tuesday 6th April**. It is a comprehensive plan which will impact on all beach users and almost all residents in one way or another. It warrants your scrutiny and your response if there are any aspects which you feel a need to comment on.

Our concern is focused primarily on the proposal for designated kite zones; as outlined for Pinnaroo Point and Mullaloo Beach; and the implications they have for the balance of the 17km coastal strip. WAKSA will be lodging an extensive submission of our own, as will over 140 Joondalup residents who are active kitesurfers & members of the association. But we are very small in number. By enlisting the assistance of you, the residents, we believe WAKSA will have a better chance of influencing the council into adopting strategies which are far more appropriate for the regulation of kiting than those proposed in the Draft Plan.

We represent a very small force in this democratic process. To ensure common sense and reasonable outcomes prevail, we need your understanding and support. Please help us to ensure that your City and Councillors are suitably informed to make correct and safe decisions rather than reactionary ones which may ignore best practice of safe kite surfing in favour of designing solutions which may not deliver real benefits to other beach users.

Background

WAKSA is a state based organisation representing members from all around Western Australia. We have been around almost since kiting began; way back around the turn of the century! We are also a part of a national body (AKSA) which is a confederation of all six state kite associations. At a national and state level, our primary goal is to promote safe & responsible kiting.

WAKSA sees a significant function of its role as being of assistance to local councils in developing safe and practical guidelines that allow for a mix of beach use so that all beach users concerns are met. In 2004 WAKSA assisted the City of Cottesloe design realistic and workable restrictions to a specific area of concern they were faced with. The simple and effective advice given then produced an easily managed, incident & hassle free outcome for more than six years. Since then WAKSA has continued developing policies which focus on safe kiting practice; especially with regard to our interactions with the non kiting public. As an organisation,

we believe we hold the most informed body of information available for establishing appropriate restrictions for the effective management of our sport. We would like to have our experience and knowledge listened to prior to the City of Joondalup moving forward from the draft plan.

We believe most people are passively pro-kiting. Kitesurfers provide an interesting spectacle which most see as adding to the interest of our amazing afternoon coastal vista. In close proximity we may appear a little intimidating to some but to the initiated, kiting is far less threatening than it may appear. We believe that many people are unfamiliar with kiting and this creates an unnecessary level of concern. However, with sensible regulation and a greater understanding of the practicalities of the sport, we know that kiting presents little or no risk to regular beach users.

Please consider a few facts on kiting since its appearance in Australia over 10 years ago.

- kitesurfing is best conducted in winds that make the beach uncomfortable for most other beach users. We tend to use the beach as winds get up past speeds of 17-18 knots – when most beach goers have packed up and headed for home.
- there has been only one incident of a non-kiter injury requiring ambulance attendance ever reported on Perth beaches.
- at least 6 non-kitesurfers have been saved from drowning by WA kitesurfers in this same period – including 3 from the one family!
- all AKSA/WAKSA members are provided with significant public liability insurance. In our 10 years of service to the sport there has not been one pay-out on the policy.
- there are more than 8 registered kite schools operating in Perth, all of which teach safe kiting principles to newcomers.
- WAKSA actively supports local beach user groups; eg MUGS – Mullaloo User Group; to produce and distribute safety & self regulation material to new and visiting kitesurfers.
- at this seasons inaugural Redkite Downwinder WAKSA kitesurfers raised more than \$13000 for a children's cancer charity.

We are small in number in this democratic process. To ensure common sense and reasonable outcomes prevail, we need your understanding and support. Please help us to ensure that your City and Councillors are suitably informed to make correct and safe decisions rather than reactionary ones which ignore best practice, safe kite surfing principles in designing solutions which we can see will not benefit all local beach users.



The Beach Management Plan – draft proposal. Find it here:

<http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au/govern/CommunityConsultation/DraftBeachManagementPlan.aspx>

You owe it to yourself and your family to review the content. It is YOUR beach front. The decisions which flow on from the draft plan will not only affect how you use your beachfront but will also affect such things as the value of your home and how the council will spend your rate dollars into the future.

SURVEY – find it here. <http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au/Files/Beach%20Managemt%20Plan%20-%20Survey.pdf>

Reply online. Its so simple and it gives you a say. Or pick up a hard copy from your council offices.

We suggest you check the content of all sections so you can respond with your own views on all aspects of the survey you find relevant to your family. We have extracted the items relevant to kitesurfing below. We would appreciate you considering our advice before selecting a response for each of those questions. As you will see the questions are not framed in our favour

ITEM 12 KITESURFING:

9. I would feel safer if Kitesurfers were required to remain within designated areas on the beach.

If you are a non kiter at all concerned about safety aspects of kiting we would encourage you to answer **strongly disagree** to this statement. Does that seem strange? Perhaps it does? But we know that designated kite zones are the **least safe & least appropriate** means of managing kitesurfing effectively. They tend to create more problems than they solve.

For eg: 1) too many kites in one area can become a problem. 2) the safest & most appropriate 'zone' on a beach can vary from day-to-day depending on wind speed & direction, other users present, tides, currents, rips & waves etc.

There are certainly areas kites should **NOT** go but designated 'go here only' areas are not a reasonable control option.

Responsible kites will naturally select the most appropriate and safest area to kite if they have options open to them. Designated kite zones reduce the freedom to act responsibly.

10. If designated areas were provided for Kitesurfers, I would have no objection to these areas being located at:

- a. North Mullaloo
- b. Pinnaroo Point

Given our serious reservations about designated zones these two questions become a bit of a nonsense. But we have been led to believe that the intended meaning of the question; and hence the answers; may be considered by reading:-

"If kitesurfing was managed safely and appropriately I would have no objection to kiting occurring in safe areas of a) North Mullaloo b) Pinaroo Pt.

On that basis, obviously, we would ask you to answer **agree or strongly agree** to both.

11. I would support kitesurfing exclusion zones in the water in front of:

- a. Mullaloo Surf Life Saving Club
- b. Sorrento Surf Life Saving Club

AKSA, WAKSA and kites in our local beach user groups advocate, and adhere to, a policy that all Surf Life Saving Clubs; patrolled areas of any beach ie between the flags & surrounds; and other high density user areas should be 'out of bounds' areas for all kites.

We will include that information in our own submission and therefore encourage you to vote **agree to both a) & b)**

Section Three – General Comments

There is a very small but very active minority of people intent on having kiting banned altogether from the City of Joondalup foreshore. If you agree that kites should be allowed a 'fair go' and that WAKSA should have the opportunity to improve kite management issues from those on offer in the draft we ask that you make a specific comment/s in our favour in this crucial "General Comments" area.

Neither the draft nor the survey mentions an outright ban of kiting but other, organised respondents will be using this space to request it.

A simple **"I do not support an outright ban of kitesurfing on our beaches"** will help negate this uninformed view.

Similarly a comment like; **"I believe WAKSA should be consulted in the development of the proposed Beach Management Plan"** will add weight to our offer of offering the council advice on how to best manage kiting for the benefit of all in *your* community.

If you chose to assist us in our campaign we thank you.

If you have any queries please feel free to contact the waksa c'tee via our website: www.waksa.com

Please remember to lodge your online, or hard copy, response to the survey before 4:00pm on Tues 6th April