

# **Burrup Peninsula Land Use Plan and Management Strategy**

Prepared by the  
Burrup Peninsula  
Management  
Advisory Board

September 1996



Consultant to the Board:  
O'Brien Planning Consultants



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**Copies of this plan are available from:**

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# FOREWORD

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Dear Minister

I am pleased to present you this Burrup Peninsula Land Use Plan and Management Strategy (the Plan) prepared by the Burrup Peninsula Management Advisory Board (the Board).

The Burrup Peninsula is home to one of the world's richest areas of Aboriginal heritage, while being of strategic industrial and economic importance to the State and Commonwealth.

The Plan represents an integration of the wide and varying interests of the community, industry, and government representatives on the Board. All members are to be congratulated for their dedication and commitment to the development of a plan which accommodates the expansion of strategic industry and the conservation of the unique environmental, heritage and recreation values of the Burrup Peninsula. The difficulty of the task facing Board Members is highlighted by the many attempts that have been made to resolve such issues in the last three decades.

The Board considers that the Plan presents a workable approach to multiple land use on the Burrup Peninsula. It sets out proposals for land allocation and accompanying Policy Statements to guide the preparation of detailed management plans, statutory planning schemes and development approval.

The Commonwealth Native Title Act was proclaimed during the preparation of the Plan, and the Peninsula was included in a Native Title claim, currently being pursued by the Roebourne based Nanga-Ngoona Moora- Joorga Land Council (NNMJ). Even though the Roebourne community is represented on the Board, more extensive liaison with the NNMJ Land Council is required before land tenure issues can be finalised.

Subsequent to the Board's finalisation of the plan a further Native Title claim was lodged over the area. This does not alter the proposals herein other than there are now two claims which need to be addressed in the implementation phase.

The establishment of an Implementation Group is recommended to progress matters of land tenure, vesting, and management.

Adequate funding will be required for successful implementation of the Plan. This should be seen as an investment by the Government in the future of the region, which is at the threshold of spectacular growth.

I take this opportunity to thank Board members for their cooperation and perseverance in the development of the Plan, and for the professional manner in which difficult and contentious issues were handled.

I commend the Plan to you for endorsement.

Yours sincerely,

**Noel Ashcroft**  
**Chairman, Burrup Peninsula Management Advisory Board**

# INTRODUCTION

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***The Burrup Peninsula contains a number of significant natural, scenic and cultural values including an area which contains the world's richest known concentration of rock art.***

**I**N ADDITION, the Peninsula is potentially one of the most important industrial and port sites in Australia. It also offers a number of recreation opportunities, and demand is expected to increase in the future as the local population grows to support increased mineral resource development and processing. The demand for access to the Peninsula by tourists is also expected to grow, independent of the growth in industrial development.

The Pilbara 21, Final Strategy Report, published in 1992, included a multiple land use plan for the Burrup Peninsula. In the light of information from a subsequent study into port sites on the Burrup, and an extensive Aboriginal sites survey, the Minister for Resources Development appointed the Burrup Peninsula Management Advisory Board (the "Board") to prepare a more detailed land use and management plan and make recommendations accordingly. In August 1993, the Board commissioned O'Brien Planning Consultants to assist with this task.

During the course of the planning, a public participation program was undertaken which included public meetings, a public workshop, and a separate series of meetings with the Aboriginal community at Roebourne who claim custodial rights over the Burrup Peninsula.

In May 1994, the *Burrup Peninsula Draft Land Use and Management Plan (Draft Plan)* was released for public comment. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) withdrew an earlier decision to assess the Draft Plan under Part IV of its Act. This was challenged but later upheld by the Supreme Court, which gave its judgement on the case in April 1995.

In December 1995 the EPA Published its advice on the Draft Plan, under Section 16(e) of the Environmental Protection Act, in Bulletin 801.

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1 Following the Board's finalisation of this Plan, a second Native Title claim in order to implement the Plan it will be necessary to consult with interested parties in accordance with the Native Title Act.

During the preparation of the Draft Plan the Commonwealth Native Title Act (1993) was enacted. In June 1994, representatives of the Ngarluma and Injibarndi people lodged an application for determination of Native Title over a large area of the Pilbara, including the Burrup Peninsula. The National Native Title Tribunal accepted their claim in December 1994. The claim is presently in mediation and its expected date of determination is unknown. Since lodging the Native Title Claim, the Nanga-Ngoona Moora-Joorga Land Council (NNMJ) was formed and assumed responsibility for proceeding with the claim, and for ongoing negotiation on a range of land use matters in the region<sup>1</sup>.

The Board was unable to finalise the Plan until it had reviewed all public and government agency submissions, including advice from the EPA.

## REVIEW OF SUBMISSIONS

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***A total of 47 submissions, some being group submissions or letters, were received commenting on the proposals contained in the Draft Plan.***

**A** WIDE variety of issues, including a number of common issues, were raised in submissions. The concepts promoted in some submissions were contradictory to those promoted in other submissions. An analysis of the submissions is presented in a supplement to this document.

Significant issues raised included:

- the need of a regional perspective, broader terms of reference and lack of information, especially on the natural environment;
- the proportion of land allocation to conservation and industry;
- the protection of the environmental, scenic and heritage values of the Peninsula and the adjoining marine environment;
- proposals for an infrastructure corridor to the north end of the Peninsula and the industrial use of land at the northern headland of Conzinc Bay; and,
- dome of the proposed land uses in the Conservation Zone.

Following an independent review of submissions prepared for the Board, the Board made a number of changes to the Draft Plan including:

- the re-titling of the 'Conservation Zone' to "Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area' to better reflect proposed land use;
- the deletion of the term "zone" in favour of "area', or "Policy Area" with all Policy Areas being distinctly labelled (1 to 3 in the Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area, and A to E in the Industrial Area);
- the addition of Policy Statements for each Policy Area describing acceptable uses and development considerations;
- the deletion of industrial use to the north of Conzinc Bay, with re-allocation to the Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area;
- the deletion of an infrastructure corridor to the north of Withnell Bay, but retaining access to Conzinc Bay and Conzinc South;
- the inclusion of a requirement that further research of the local environment of Conzinc South be carried out ahead of the environmental impact assessment for development approval; and,
- the re-definition of the boundary of the proposed Withnell East Industrial Area to exclude the Protected Area proclaimed under the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

# BURRUP PENINSULA LAND USE PLAN AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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***The Board's vision for the allocation of vacant Crown land on the Burrup Peninsula is to assist in meeting the strategic industrial land needs of the State, and to preserve the quality of the outstanding natural resources and cultural heritage while also providing for the recreational and educational needs of the general public.***

**T**HUS THE primary purpose of the Burrup Peninsula Land Use Plan and Management Strategy (the "Plan") is to allocate land for industry, conservation, heritage and recreation. In addition, the Plan provides management objectives and outlines acceptable uses and development considerations (Policy Statements) for all areas. Government endorsement of the Plan would enable issues of land tenure to be resolved and orderly development of the Peninsula to proceed.

In due course, detailed management plans should be prepared within the framework of this Plan by the appropriate management authorities. Any management arrangements would need to be discussed with the NNMJ Land Council before being implemented.

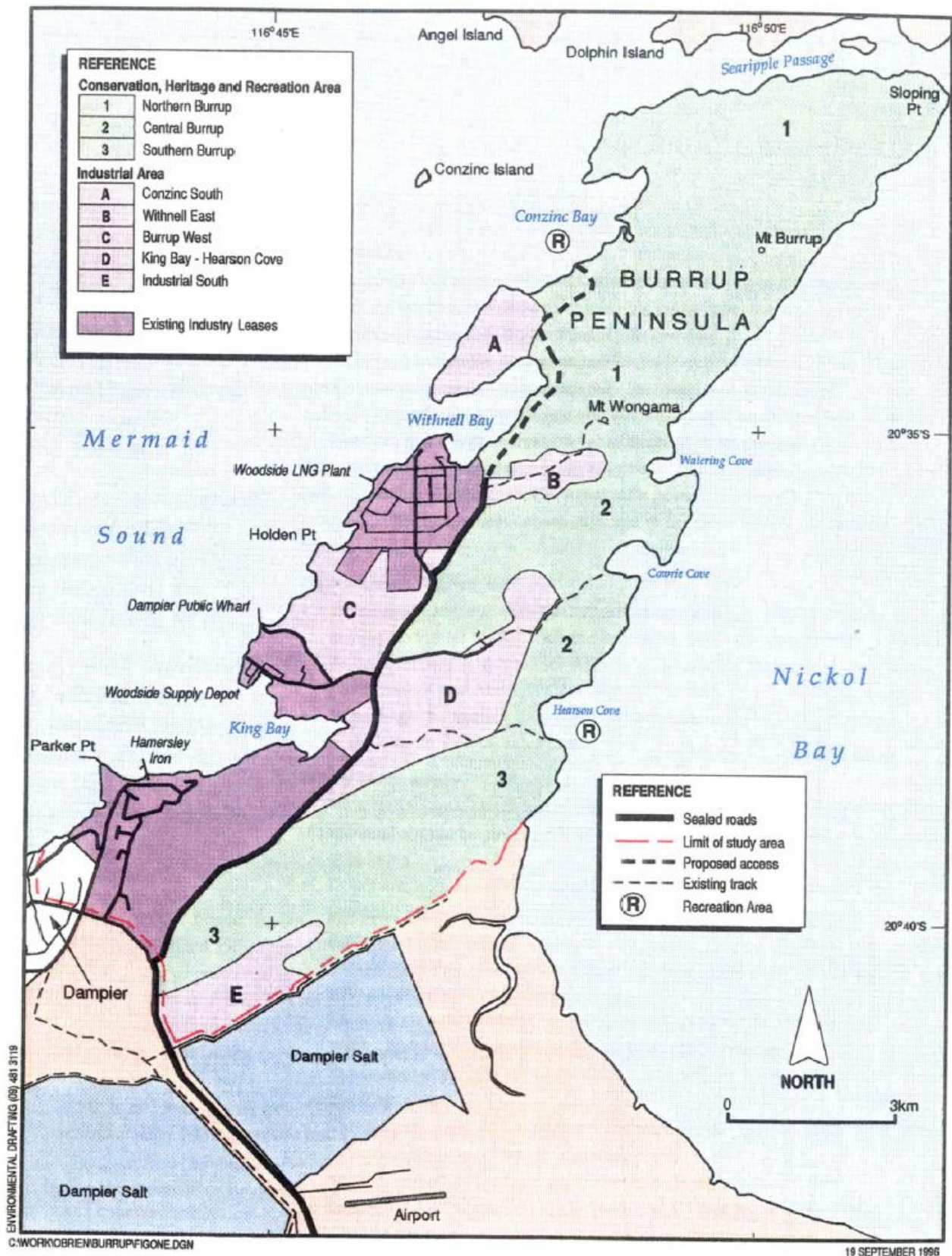
It is envisaged that the Plan will provide the basis for the inclusion of the Peninsula within a statutory planning scheme to control development.

In summary, the Plan consists of Policy areas for which Values, Management Objectives and Policy Statements are described. The Board's recommended land allocation into the Policy Areas is shown in Figure 1 on the following page.

The key features of the Plan are as follows:

- a balance between competing land uses;
- the division of the Burrup Peninsula into two broad land use areas, namely,
  - Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area, and
  - Industrial Area;
- the allocation of approximately 5,400 hectares (62%) of the Peninsula for conservation, heritage and recreation, and associated uses;
- the allocation of industrial land (in addition to existing industrial leases) with an emphasis on port sites and strategic industry;
- the separation, for safety and amenity reasons, of recreation and industrial uses;
- the designation of the Northern Burrup for preservation of its renowned Aboriginal heritage and environmental values, and the designation of a recreational site on Conzinc Bay; and,
- the allocation of land for support industries at the southern end of the study area.

Notwithstanding the proposals in this Plan all developments on the Peninsula, whether private or government, will require formal environmental and other development approvals.



**Figure 1: BURRUP PENINSULA LAND USE PLAN**



# CONSERVATION, HERITAGE AND RECREATION AREA (5,400 ha)

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*This is one continuous area that has been divided into three Policy Areas:*

- *Policy Area 1 - Northern Burrup*
- *Policy Area 2 - Central Burrup; and*
- *Policy Area 3 - Southern Burrup*

*The Values, Management Objectives and Policy Statements that apply to each Policy Area are described in this section.*

*Management Objectives and Policy Statements common to all Policy Areas are repeated to ensure that each Policy Area is comprehensively treated.*

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## **NORTHERN BURRUP (Policy Area 1)**

### **Area Values**

This Area contains the highest known concentration of Aboriginal sites on the Peninsula, spectacular scenery, and a representation of all vegetation communities on the Peninsula. The majority of the Area is listed, or nominated for listing, on the Register of the National Estate. The Area is relatively undisturbed, generally free from weeds and feral animals, and adjoins a significant and sensitive marine environment.

The Area has a high recreation value because of its proximity to Dampier and Karratha, the good quality beaches at Conzinc Bay and the lack of suitable alternatives. The Area has a potential strategic port site situated in the north west corner adjacent to the deep waters of Mermaid Sound.

### **Management Objectives**

- To maintain and enhance the conservation, Aboriginal heritage and recreation values of the land, and adjoining marine environment.
- To undertake research to increase the knowledge of the natural environment and Aboriginal heritage of the area.
- To manage the human interaction with the natural and cultural values of the area in a sustainable manner.

### **Policy Statements**

- Walk trails, signs, beach recreation, basic amenities, and interpretative material should be provided in accordance with management objectives.
- Upgraded vehicle access to Conzinc Bay and Mt Wongama should be provided following the establishment of a permanent management presence in the area.
- Vehicle access to other points should be minimised, in accordance with management objectives.
- An entry statement to the Northern Burrup, noting the Area's key values, should be provided in the vicinity of Withnell Bay.
- Permanent overnight accommodation facilities are considered unacceptable.
- Camping facilities are considered undesirable, but may be acceptable if restricted to short stays in specified areas.

## **CONSERVATION, HERITAGE AND RECREATION AREA (5,400 ha) cont'd**

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- An Aboriginal Cultural and Environmental Interpretation Centre should be constructed on the Burrup, and Mt Wongama should be considered as an option for its location. The final decision on the location for this Centre should be made in conjunction with the NNMJ Land Council.
- The engagement of a local Aboriginal person, with knowledge and understanding of culture and Aboriginal heritage is recommended.

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### **CENTRAL BURRUP (Policy Area 2)**

#### **Area Values**

This Area contains a mixture of undisturbed environmental resources, Aboriginal sites, public recreation areas, and known basic raw material resources (including gravel, sand and limestone).

#### **Management Objectives**

- To provide multiple land use opportunities to accommodate the character of the varying resources and values.
- To protect the basic raw material resources in the Area.

#### **Policy Statements**

- A basic raw materials study should be undertaken to define primary resources and extraction areas.
- Vehicle access to Hearson Cove and Cowrie Cove should be improved and located to avoid transecting the King Bay – Hearson Cove Industrial Area.
- An entry statement, noting the Area's key values, should be located near the junction of Burrup and Hearson Cove roads.
- Walk trails, signs, beach recreation, basic amenities, and interpretation should be provide in accordance with management objectives.
- Developments should be located and designed to harmonise with the Area's environment.
- Vegetation for landscaping in the area should be restricted to local native species.

# CONSERVATION, HERITAGE AND RECREATION AREA (5,400 ha) cont'd

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## SOUTHERN BURRUP (Policy Area 3)

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### Area Values

This area covers the Pistol Range and contains a large number of Aboriginal sites, rugged mountainous scenery, and native flora and fauna. Owing to the steep terrain the Area is in a relative undisturbed condition. It has been nominated for listing on the Register of the National Estate on the basis of its heritage and natural environmental values.

### Management Objectives

- To maintain and enhance the conservation and Aboriginal heritage values of the land.
- To manage the human interaction with the natural and cultural values of the area in a sustainable manner.

### Policy Statements

Some carpark areas on the periphery of the Area and walk trails could be provided in accordance with management objectives.

An entry statement, noting the Area's key values, should be located on the main entry road to the Burrup.

## INDUSTRIAL AREA

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*The Industrial Area consists of the existing industrial leases and five new Industrial Policy Areas (1,820ha in total) to provide for the development of strategic and support industry.*

*The Values, Management Objectives and Policy Statements for each of these new Policy Areas are described in this section.*

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### CONZINC SOUTH (Policy Area A – 190ha)

#### Area Values

This Area, adjacent to the deep water of Mermaid Sound, has high value for strategic industrial and port development sites. The Area is known to contain Aboriginal sites. The marine environment to the north has a high environmental value.

#### Management Objectives

- To use the Area for the development of a strategic industry requiring adjacent port facilities, and/or separation from other activities.
- To minimise the impact of development on the adjacent marine environment.
- To minimise the impact of development on the visual and recreation values of Conzinc Bay.

#### Policy Statements

- Further research of the local environment should be undertaken ahead of the impact assessment for any development approval.
- Development should be designed and located to minimise impacts on the Area's values, and the values of the adjoining Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area.
- Construction and operation of port facilities should aim to minimise impacts on the marine environment.

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### WITHNELL EAST (Policy Area B – 110ha)

#### Area Values

This Area is located to the east of existing gas processing plants, and has potential for downstream processing related to the adjacent industry. The Area adjoins a Protected Area under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, and has recorded Aboriginal sites. An access track to Mt. Wongama currently transects the Area.

#### Management Objectives

- To use the area for strategic industrial developments.
- To preserve, as far as possible, the environmental values and significant Aboriginal sites.

#### Policy Statements

- Development should be designed and located to minimise impacts on values (including landscape) of the adjoining Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area.

## INDUSTRIAL AREA cont'd

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### **BURRUP WEST (Policy Area C– 520ha)**

#### **Area Values**

This Area, situated between the existing Woodside Supply Depot and the Woodside LNG Plant, has high value for major strategic industrial and port development sites. The proximity to the deep waters of Mermaid Sound ensure port potential. Holden Beach presently has recreation value. The Area also has environmental and heritage values.

#### **Management Objectives**

- To use the land for industries requiring adjacent port facilities.
- To preserve, as far as possible, the environmental values and significant Aboriginal sites.

#### **Policy Statements**

- Recreation at Holden Beach is inconsistent with the industrial use proposed for the Area.
- Construction and operation of land and port facilities should aim to minimise impacts on the marine environment.

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### **KING BAY – HEARSON COVE (Policy Area D – 670ha)**

#### **Area Values**

This Area is strategically located to accommodate major new resource development. It contains the largest expanse of relatively flat land on the Peninsula. The Area contains some environmental and heritage values but not in such concentrations as in other parts of the Peninsula. An important mangrove community is located on the western margin of this Area. Parts of the Area have been utilised in the past for the Woodside Construction Village, a laydown area and limesand mining. Access to recreation areas at Hearson Cove and Cowrie Cove currently transect the Area.

#### **Management Objectives**

- To use the Area for strategic industries that depend on proximity to the major industries and port facilities in the Burrup West and Conzinc South Areas.

## INDUSTRIAL AREA cont'd

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- To ensure that the impact of development on the mangroves in King Bay and on recreation at Hearson Cove is minimised.
- To minimise the impact of industry on the adjacent Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area.
- To collect and review data on the known or likely impact of storm surge and tsunamis on the Area.

### Policy Statements

- The mangroves in King Bay are to be protected by ensuring appropriate controls on effluent discharge and fugitive emissions, and by detailed assessment of the impact of development on the local hydrology.
- Development should be designed and located to minimise impacts on values (including landscape) of the adjoining Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area.
- Storm surge should be considered in the design of developments.
- A Hearson Cove/Cowrie Cove access route which avoids transecting the industry area should be investigated.

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## INDUSTRY SOUTH (Policy Area E – 330ha)

### Area Values

This Area is strategically located on the entry road to the Burrup. It currently supports a range of uses, such as quarrying, sand extraction, speedway and rifle range. It is considered suitable for the location of support industries, including those that will serve the needs of resource projects on the Burrup.

### Management Objectives

- To plan the area for support industry incorporating present uses that are compatible.
- To ensure planning and developments contribute to or enhance amenity values.

### Policy Statements

- The relocation of the rifle range to an alternative site should be negotiated with the Commonwealth Department of Defence, and the rifle club.
- To take into account landscape impacts on adjacent areas in the design of developments.

## IMPLEMENTATION

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*The implementation of the Plan will involve discussion within the NNKJ Land Council<sup>2</sup>.*

**O**N 20 DECEMBER, 1994, The Native Title Registrar accepted a Native Title claim on behalf of the Ngarluma and Injibarndi people. The Native Title Determination will be dealt with in due course under Section 68 of the Native Title Act 1993.

It is recommended that the Minister for Resources Development and the Minister for the Environment establish an Implementation Group to oversee finalisation of land tenure and management arrangements, and advise the Ministers on progress.

This Group, which will focus its discussions with the NNMJ Land Council to achieve the above objectives, should be steered by representatives of the Department of Conservation and Land Management, The Department of Resources Development and LandCorp. The Pilbara Development Commission, the Shire of Roebourne and the Aboriginal Affairs Department have a primary interest and should be the focus of ongoing liaison during the process.

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### INTERIM MANAGEMENT

It is recommended that the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) be funded to undertake interim management of all vacant Crown land on the Peninsula.

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### FUTURE VESTING

All vacant Crown land in the study area is covered by two Ministerial Temporary Reserves under the 1904 Mining Act. The current land tenure is considered to be inappropriate for development and/or management of the Conservation, Heritage and Recreation Area, and the Industrial Areas.

With the introduction of the Native Title Act in late 1993, and the subsequent registration of the Native title claim by the Ngarluma/Injibarndi people, the Board considers that it was an inappropriate authority to recommend vesting.

The Implementation Group should explore vesting options, and make recommendations to the Ministers following discussions with the Land Council.<sup>2</sup>

## IMPLEMENTATION cont'd

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/COST ESTIMATES

The vacant Crown land on the Peninsula, which is the subject of this Plan, is in danger of increased degradation through uncontrolled access and lack of on-the-ground management. For the Plan to be effective appropriate funding is required for ongoing management costs and capital works.

Immediate funding is required to cover the cost of on-the-ground management, to commence the task of preserving the various values on the Peninsula, and pay for capitals works such as signage, access tracks, and recreational facilities. This should be followed by the construction of an Aboriginal Cultural and Environment Interpretation Centre, to complement the Woodside visitor centre which attracts some 15,000 visitors a year.

It will ultimately be the responsibility of the land tenure holders to plan and manage this work, but CALM should be given a special allocation to commence the program. The Plan is intended to be non-prescriptive in this area but the Board made an assessment of capital works costs, and management costs, based on a general knowledge of this area.

The following items are considered essential to the Plan but management authorities would need to prepare details cost estimates.

The recurrent annual cost for management of the Conservation, Recreation, and Heritage Area is estimated to be \$200,000. It is considered that this would cover the salary and overhead costs of two rangers (including vehicles), plus basic materials for maintenance, and weed and feral animal control. At least one of the rangers should be a local Aboriginal person, with knowledge and understanding of culture and Aboriginal heritage, to assist the Implementation Group with management proposals for heritage issues.

Capital costs are estimated at \$6.4M, over a four year timeframe, to meet the urgent needs of access to Hearson Cove and Conzinc Bay, construction of an Aboriginal Cultural and Environment Interpretation Centre and for walk trails and signage (see table below).

Funding at this level is necessary to ensure that adequate management and control can be provided over the Burrup Peninsula, and that key elements of the Plan can be implemented.



## IMPLEMENTATION cont'd

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### **Estimated Capital Budget Requirements (over 4 years)**

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#### **Vehicle Access Roads (design, construct and seal) to:**

Conzinc Bay	\$1,800,000
Hearson Cove	\$1,400,000
Cowrie Cove	\$100,000

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#### **Aboriginal Cultural and Environment Interpretation Centre:**

Building Construction	\$2,000,000
Access Road	\$800,000

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#### **Signage and Recreation Facilities**

**\$200,000**

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#### **Walk Trails**

**\$100,000**

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#### **TOTAL**

**\$6,400,000**

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# BURRUP PENINSULA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

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(as at September 1996)

## Chairperson

**Mr Noel Ashcroft**      Department of Resources Development

## Members

Mrs Susan Starr      Karratha Community  
Mr Trever Solomon      Roebourne Aboriginal Community  
Mr Chris Muller      Department of Conservation and Land Management  
Cr Sue Barnett      Shire of Roebourne  
Mr Allan Bennett      Woodside Offshore Petroleum  
Mr Colin Norman      Dampier Port Authority  
Mr Ron White      Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd  
Ms Tonia Swetman      Pilbara Development Commission  
Mr Mike Allen      Ministry for Planning  
Mr Louis Warren      Department of Aboriginal Affairs

## Executive Officer

Mr John Prior      Department of Resources Development

## Lead Consultants

Mr Rory O'Brien      O'Brien Planning Consultants  
Mr Charlie Welker      Welker Environmental Consultancy