

Wellstead Estuary Bird Hide

Presentation to Shire of Jerramungup Council on 24th March 2021

Request to Council: We are seeking Council's 'in-principle' support for a project to construct the Wellstead Estuary bird hide (in accordance with planning and environmental requirements).

On receipt of approval: the FBG will work with Shire of Jerramungup Staff to develop a planning timeline and funding proposal.

At time of presentation, the FBG has investigated several funding options. It is likely that a cash contribution will be required by funders and the FBG has approached several potential partners to provide this cash component to spread the cost.

The FBG would return to Council with regard to a request for a cash contribution when a more precise project budget has been developed and a relevant funding program has been identified.

In seeking in-principle support, the FBG recognises that it does not bind Council to the project should issues arise during preliminary investigations that prove to be fatal flaws from an environmental, engineering or economic perspective.

Project Overview

The FBG, in consultation with community members, is developing a project focused on shorebird protection and awareness raising in Bremer Bay. Long term monitoring of the Wellstead Estuary foreshore has established its importance as feeding, breeding and loafing habitat for large numbers of waterbirds including several threatened species such as Hooded Plovers, and some migratory species that use the East Asia/Australasian Flyway. Monitoring has also demonstrated that one of the largest threats to successful breeding on the estuary is human disturbance.

This proposal will have several educational strategies and protection measures. A **bird hide on the estuary edge* is a key component of this strategy**. Other strategies include live feeds of nesting birds (in protected and unidentified sites), presentations to visitors, information signage at key points around the estuary and an assessment of physical protection measures already in place with the view to augmenting them as required.

We see the long term benefit of this project being greater community and visitor understanding of the values of the estuary, and the role they can play in protecting it, and increased appeal to birders. Birding is a very fast growing recreational pursuit in Australia and the Wellstead Estuary has several unique features that give it great appeal as a destination for birders. We are aware of considerable community concern about the impact that increasing tourism has had on the natural environment in Bremer. This proposal takes a proactive approach to the issue.

Role of Bird Hide

The Wellstead Estuary bird hide would include interpretative panels that identify water bird species, explain the impact of human disturbance and show simple things people can do to minimise that disturbance. It could also be used as a focal point or start-off point for workshops, educational programs and birding tours.

The bird hide location is close to the Wellstead Estuary Walk trail. The bird hide can also enable more controlled access to the estuary, an eco-friendly activity for visitors and a catalyst for leveraging funding for further eco-tourism developments.

*Please see accompanying map for exact location.

Recent Actions

Since presenting the bird hide proposal at the February 2021 Bremer Bay Community Development Committee meeting and receiving in-principal support, the FBG has investigated the proposal in more detail, with particular reference to concerns about maintenance and vandalism. We have received a build estimate from a local builder of between \$50,000 and \$80,000. This range takes into account a number of contingency situations including the current high price of hardwood timber because of current Covid-related building incentives. This cost also takes into account that the bird hide would be built to be very structurally sound and durable; thereby incurring lower maintenance costs.

Shire staff have advised that the type of vandalism that occurs in Bremer tends to be related to main walkways and beach access points, and acts of vandalism are greatly diminished when camera monitoring signs are used. The bird hide site is not on a major access point and camera monitoring signs would be used to prevent vandalism and misuse.

The FBCC Chair, Nathan McQuoid, and myself, have met with Noel Myers and Steve Elson on several occasions since the February FBCC meeting to discuss planning and environmental requirements that may arise during the course of investigations. We have also discussed the proposal with other potential supporters including:

- Regional Development Australia – Simon Lyas, Director of Regional Development
- BirdLife Australia – Vicki Stokes, WA Program Manager
- Lenore Lyons, Executive Director GSCORE
- Greenskills Denmark – Basil Shur (Festival of Birds)
- South Coast NRM (Brett Dal Posso, Johanna Tomlinson)

All have provided in-principal support to the proposal.

The purpose behind the bird hide proposal is also consistent with the purpose described in a number of relevant strategic plans including:

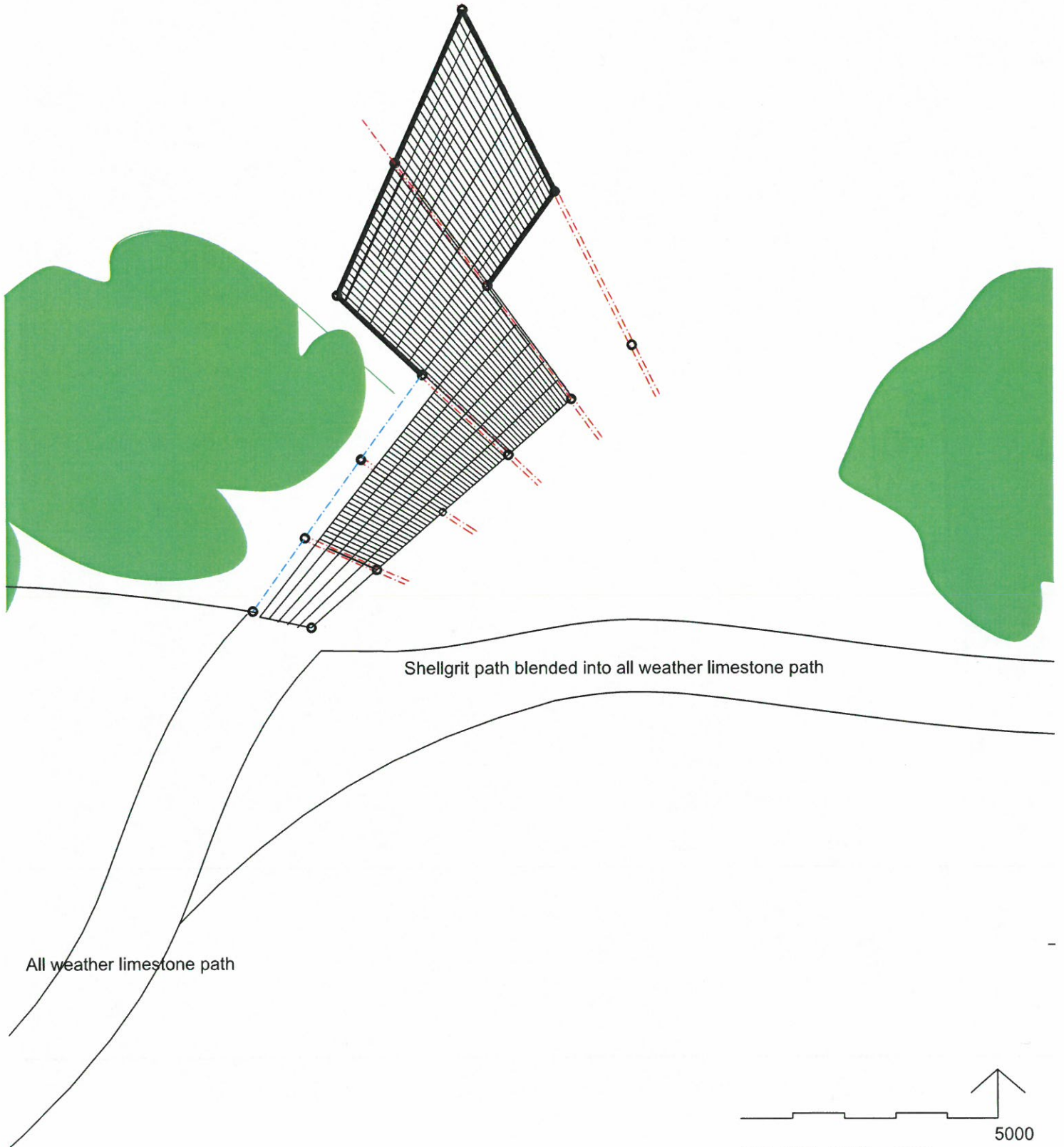
- Wellstead Estuary Management Plan
- Shire of Jerramungup Coastal Management Plan
- Southern Shores
- Fitzgerald Biosphere Action Plan
- Fitzgerald River National Park Management Plan
- Shire of Jerramungup Community Strategic Plan
- WA state Tourism Strategy, and
- GSCORE Regional Trails Master Plan.



All weather limestone path

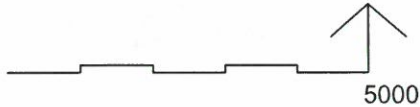
Seasonal Shell Grit Path

1 7.00
2 7.00
3 7.00
4 7.00
5 8.00
EXISTING MAT TO REMAIN
EXISTING POWER POLE STAY TO BE REMOVED BY OTHERS
C/S S 83
1:200

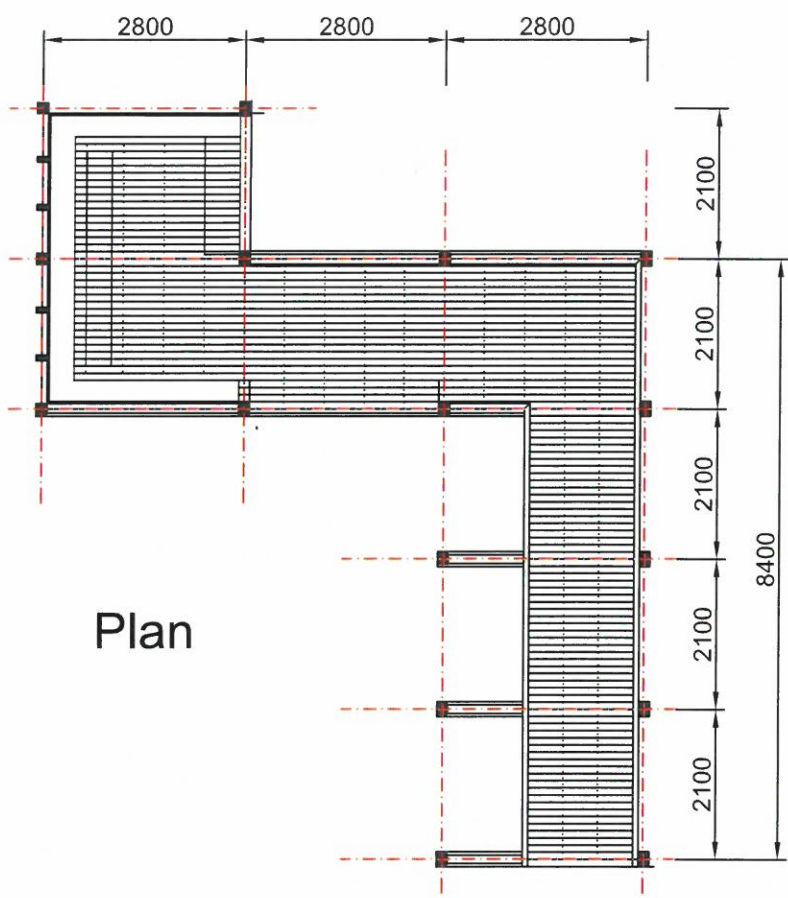


All weather limestone path

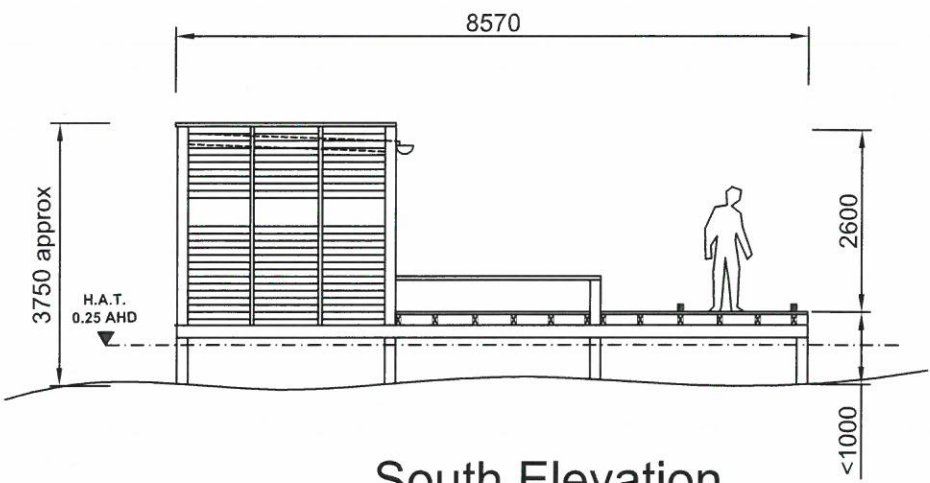
Shellgrit path blended into all weather limestone path



SK1. IJW. 25 May 2009



Plan



South Elevation

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

All structural framing: Jarrah.
 Decking seasoned machined Jarrah.
 Walls and roof: structural plywood, oiled.
 All construction details subject to engineers design.

Ian Weir Architect Queensland University of Technology Nathan McQuoid Ecologist		
School of Design Faculty of the Built Environment & Engineering	2 George Street, Brisbane, Qld 4001 Email: ian.weir@qut.edu.au	
Wellstead Estuary Bird Hide Bremer Bay, Western Australia For the Wellstead Estuary Management Group.		Date: 13th October 2009 Ref: WEMG Bird Hide Scale: 1:100 @ A4 Original DWG: Plan/South El.

