



**Stakeholder Engagement on the future  
of House Beach  
from the Hassell family descendants**

Prepared by Richard Hassell via WOHA Architects on behalf of the family May 2021



View east to Whalebone Point



View from Whalebone Point towards House Beach

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House Beach at Doubtful Island Bay



View from the approximate position of the old Shearing shed back towards the house location

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## Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners

The Hassell family descendants acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country and recognizes their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures; and to elders both past and present.

The Hassell family had close engagement with the Noongar communities, much of it no doubt problematic, but much of it mutually engaging as well.

Ethel Hassell, who lived on Kendenup station had a very close relationship with the Wheelman tribe and documented the stories, customs and daily activities they shared with her, in a journal. This remains a rare and very important record.

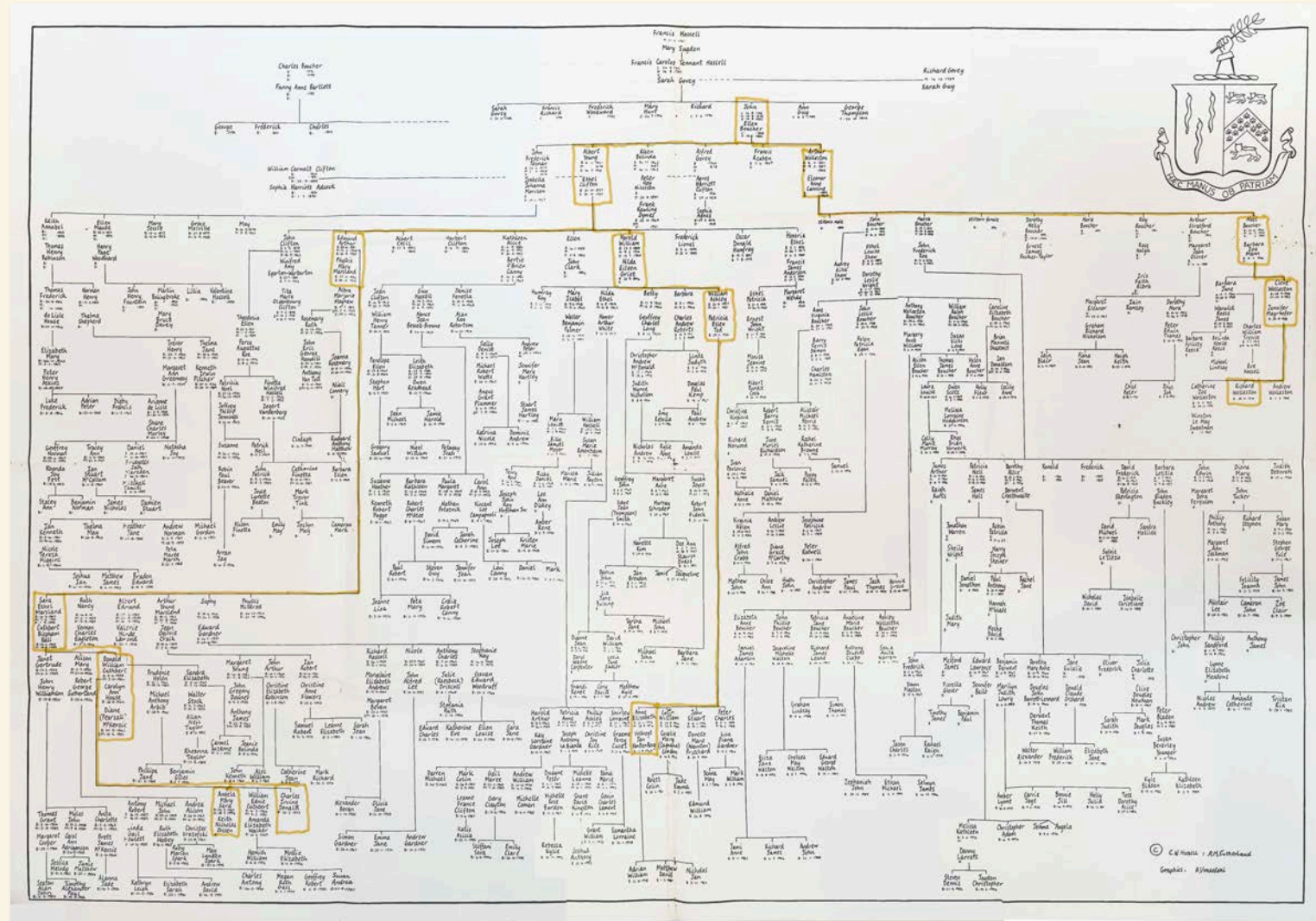
At right is a photo of an impressive large Noongar house from the Hassell archives, likely located at the Kendenup property.



# Contents

This presentation makes a proposal which we believe is in the interests of all parties, the Shire, the Department of Planning, Lands, and Heritage, the public, and us, the Hassell family descendants, who are very long term stakeholders in the community with a 198 year historical connection to the Doubtful Island coast.

- First we will respond to the Coastal Management Plan, and show how we believe engagement and partnership with the Hassell family descendants is more in keeping with the plan, rather than severing this connection.
- We will then share a little of this history.
- Finally we propose a transition and engagement process, resulting in a much better outcome for the House Beach transformation into a desirable attraction and resource for the wider community.



## Deep Connection

We, the Hassell family descendants who are the past leaseholders, do have a very deep connection to this coast.

This connection started with maritime visits by Captain John Hassell along the coast (from 1824) to establishment of Jerramungup and the pastoral corridor to Doubtful Island Bay (from the land taken up in 1849) to the use of Fishery Cove / House Beach for landing supplies and export of wool (1870s to 1930s), to recreational use from the 1940s formalized with a lease and replica of the original cottage from 1981, continuing to this day, 2021.

From John Hassell 1798-1883 to AY Hassell 1841-1918, his brothers and their descendants is a living, continuous and very strong connection, that has continued through seven generations, for 198 years.



# Acknowledgement and Agreement with Coastal Management Plan

The Coastal Management Plan has identified House Beach Tenure, design of camping area, access and weed management as Top Priority Issues. (Action 3)

The Hassell family descendants (Hassells, Vandenberg, Balls and Ohlsens) acknowledge and recognize the benefit and validity of the plan.

We would like to be acknowledged in return as key stakeholders, given our two centuries of knowledge of the area and long term time and financial investment in the locale.

We also bring access to our very detailed archives, stories, and expertise.

TABLE 3: TOP PRIORITY ACTIONS AND AREAS

**Top Priority Actions and Areas: See Section 7 and Appendix A for details**

1. **Main Beach and Bremer Beach:** Monitoring of this high use area for four wheel drive use and protection of shore birds.
2. **Fishery Beach Marina:** Planning for expansion of facilities and monitoring of erosion.
3. **House Beach:** Tenure, design of camping area, access and weed management.
4. **Little Boat Harbour:** Council to resolve visitor risk issues relating to access and consider development of more detailed design for layout based on adopted concept with assessment of technical requirements for trailers, tenure, erosion risk hazard and environmental impacts.
5. **Gordon Inlet:** Road access, shore birds and associated biodiversity, dieback risk reduction.
6. **Rock Cairn Lookout:** Development of iconic visitor location.
7. **Banky Beach:** Visitor risk management.
8. **Tooregullup Beach:** Incorporate information into AS compliant signage regarding dieback risk, values of shore bird and biodiversity.
9. **Point Henry:** Install AS compliant, 'Code Off-road' and dieback risk signage at entry to Point Henry.
10. **Fitzgerald River National Park interface:** Upgrade access to Point Ann (Pabelup Road; DBCA) and via Gordon Inlet Road (Shire of Jerramungup).



# Ongoing, Meaningful Engagement

As a key stakeholder in House Beach, the Hassell family descendants are looking forward to ongoing, meaningful engagement with the Shire.

At the same time, the family are realistic in the anticipation of changes, but see real value to all stakeholders in continuing the existing deep and complex relationship with the site.

The plan foresees a need for on-ground management activities.

The Hassell family descendants currently informally provide some services to the area, including supervision, provision of water, maintenance of a museum of the history of the area, and frequent cleanups of messes left by unsupervised visitors.

The family want to be involved in the transformation, rather than being evicted.

## 1.3 MANAGEMENT PLAN AREA

The area covered by this Management Plan includes Crown Reserves and UCL adjacent to the coast, within the Shire of Jerramungup, as shown in Figures 1a and 1b.

## 1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals, strategies and objectives for this Management Plan are outlined below.

### Goals (broad primary outcome):

To promote sustainable use of coastal natural resources, maintain high levels of biodiversity and facilitate community enjoyment of coastal areas.

### Strategies (approach to achieve goal):

- Shire of Jerramungup and other land managers to establish a budget category for coastal management projects, maintenance and monitoring.
- To strengthen the South Coast Management Group, an existing partnership group with membership including the Shire of Jerramungup, other local governments on the South Coast, other land managers, community members and stakeholders. The group currently meets regularly and will provide advice and feedback to the Shire of Jerramungup regarding projects, progress, and funding.
- To form a Coastal Action Group to allow the Shire to work with stakeholders to plan and implement coastal projects.
- Link outcomes of this Coastal Management Plan to the Shire of Jerramungup Strategic Community Plan.
- Engage with the community and key stakeholders to raise awareness, in support of the overall goal of this management plan.

### Objectives (measurable steps to achieve strategies):

The objectives for this management plan are:

- To undertake ongoing, meaningful engagement with coastal stakeholders and the community;
- To enhance and protect the natural environment through planning and implementation of realistic strategies and actions;
- The identification of on-ground management activities to allow for sustainable use;
- To provide planning direction for all land managers, including the Shire of Jerramungup Council and stakeholders; and
- To consider coastal processes, including hazards related to storm surge, sea level rise with identification of options and potential actions.

### Actions

To outline specific, measurable, achievable and time bound activities, including who is responsible for actions.

Actions for this management plan are developed in each section of this plan and summarised in Appendix A.

## The Plan envisages partnerships between community members supported by local government

The Hassell family descendants are a key community group at House Beach, who are very willing and able to help look after their patch, supported through a partnership with the local government.

In the spirit of the plan, the family would like to open a discussion with the Shire on how to implement this community group engagement.

We believe this would be the outcome most in alignment the terms of reference of the plan, more than eviction and severing of the long relationship.

### 2.5 SHIRE OF JERRAMUNGUP

The Shire of Jerramungup is responsible for the management of several high profile (and some lesser known) coastal locations (Figures 1a and 1b), including:

- Reserve 14988 at Beaufort Inlet/ Pallinup Beach;
- Reserve 511: Back Beach and Rock Cairn Lookout;
- Parts of Fishery Beach, Short Beach, Point Henry, Little Boat Harbour, Blossom's Beach, Native Dog Beach, Main Beach and Johns Cove.

Through its Community Strategic Plan, the Shire of Jerramungup has identified that the coast has high values to the local community and visitors to the area. The Shire also acknowledges that there is increasing pressure from recreational use which means that management of coastal reserves is high on the Shire's natural resource management priorities.

### 2.6 COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The South Coast region has many community groups and organisations which have an interest in the management of coastal and marine areas. Some of the key stakeholders include the following:

- Aboriginal groups including Native Title claimants, reference groups, Aboriginal Corporations, Goldfields Land and Sea Council, Southern Agricultural Indigenous Landholder Service and South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council;
- Gondwana Link;
- Green Skills;
- Fitzgerald Biosphere Group (with subcommittees comprising Friends of Wellstead Estuary Group (currently in recess) and Bremer Bay Trails Committee);
- Regional Development Australia – Great Southern (Australian Government organisation);
- Schools and tertiary institutions; and
- University of Western Australia and Centre for Excellence in Natural Resource Management.

Community members have been involved in local-level coastal management projects to look after their local 'patch', supported through partnerships with local government, state agency land managers, and other stakeholders.

### 2.7 SOUTH WEST NATIVE TITLE SETTLEMENT

The South West Native Title Settlement process will resolve native title claims in the South West of Western Australia in exchange for a range of benefits for Noongar people, including recognition of Noongar people as the traditional landowner of the south-west, creation of a trust to hold and manage benefits and assets arising from the settlement, establishment of six Noongar Corporations, access to Crown lands for customary activities, creation of a Noongar Land Fund (for land related projects) and determination of up to 320,000 ha of development and cultural land to be held by the Noongar Boodja Trust.

## Part of the Coastal History

The European Heritage history included in the plan does not currently include the Hassell family contribution to the area and the coast. John Hassell was a prime representative of all the categories in the first paragraph - an early seafarer in the 1820s, a sandalwood trader in the 1840s, an explorer for good land, and a very early and entrepreneurial settler, as well as the first gold miner in Western Australia.

We would be happy to assist the Shire in including these stories in future amendments.

John Hassell was a visitor to the Doubtful coast from 1824 and his holdings in the area Jerramungup date from 1848.

We will share a little of the long history of the family relationship with the region in the next few slides.

*as well as estuarine fish. Traditionally, we lived in the coastal regions during the summer months and moved inland for shelter with the onset of winter.*

The DPLH manage the Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System (AHIS) which maps and lists sites registered under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and shows 'other heritage places'. A search of the AHIS shows 21 registered sites and 37 other heritage places in the Jerramungup local government area which are associated with the coast or coastal reserves (DPLH, 2017; Appendix H). Further sites may exist which are not listed (Cummings, 2012).

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* protects site or objects that are of significance to Aboriginal people, or have historical, anthropological or ethnographic interest. The Act protects Aboriginal sites whether or not they have previously been reported or recorded. It is an offence to excavate, destroy, damage, conceal, or in any way alter an Aboriginal site. Areas near water, wetlands and river systems are likely to have Aboriginal association or significance.

### 3.15 EUROPEAN HERITAGE

Seafarers were first attracted to the region in the early 1800s. The main activities in the area were centered on the Great Australian Bight; initially whalers and seal hunters used various natural ports as bases in their land hopping along the coast. This led to an increase in sandalwood cutting that in turn promoted exploration and eventual settlement.

Matthew Flinders visited the area in January 1802, aboard the ship *Investigator* which sailed between the Doubtful Islands proving that they were, in fact, islands. It is claimed that Flinders landed at House Beach and dug a well to obtain water in 'Well Corner'. However, there is no mention of his having done so in his journals. The well was commonly referred to as 'Whalers Well' by early settlers but was not marked on maps prepared in 1895 and is now called 'Flinders' Well'.

Other early visitors to the area were the botanist Drummond in 1843 and the geologist Von Sommer and the Gregory's in 1849. John Septimus Roe first surveyed the townsite of Bremer Bay in 1848, with initial settlement by the Wellstead family occurring at nearby Peppermint Grove in the 1850s.

During the 1800s the Westerberg's were fishing in the Wellstead Estuary and kept fish in pens until the Mouchemores, who had established ice works at Albany, transported the fish packed in ice by sea to Hopetoun (Belton-Taylforth, 2005). The 7000-people living in the Kundip and Ravensthorpe area also made a ready market for the fish. As early as 1895, the Wellstead's caught fish at Bremer Bay and smoke-cured them for sale in the Goldfields.

The Heberle family arrived in 1936 and still hold a fishing lease today. After World War II, fishing (including salmon fishing) was an active industry along the coast. All beaches that could be reached by land were fished, including Reef and Foster Beaches where an ex-army tank or blitz wagons were used to assist operations. Before beaches were allocated to fishermen in 1960, the competition for schools of fish was often intense. Boats going over other people's nets and brandishing of rifles was not unheard of (Belton-Taylforth, 2005). The fishermen worked together, however, to make a cutting through the limestone cliff at Dillon Bay to gain access onto the beach. The method used was gelnignite, shovels and a 'one-horse' scoop.

## A Brief History of the Hassell family in the Great Southern

### Maritime History:

John Hassell (1798, Shoreditch, London) arrived in Australia in January 1824 as Chief Officer on the brig *Belinda*. The ship was wrecked on Middle Island off Esperance in July 1824 during a seal skin hunting trip. The 26 person crew had to survive for 5 months until their rescue in December 1824.

He became a ship's captain with the *Governor Arthur*, sailing out of Hobart back and forward to Sydney, and received a land grant on the Tamar river in 1828, where he could both farm the land, and anchor his ship.

He captained the *Hetty* next, delivering sheep, hay and wool to Sydney.

In 1830 he commanded the schooner the *Prince Regent*, then in 1833 the barque the *Freak*, and then the schooner the *Active*.

In 1838 he married Ellen Boucher back in Southwark UK, and immediately sailed for the new colony in King Georges Sound, (now Albany) as a passenger on the *Dawson*, with the intent to take up good farming land to start a pastoral business, funded by his wife's brother Frederick Boucher.

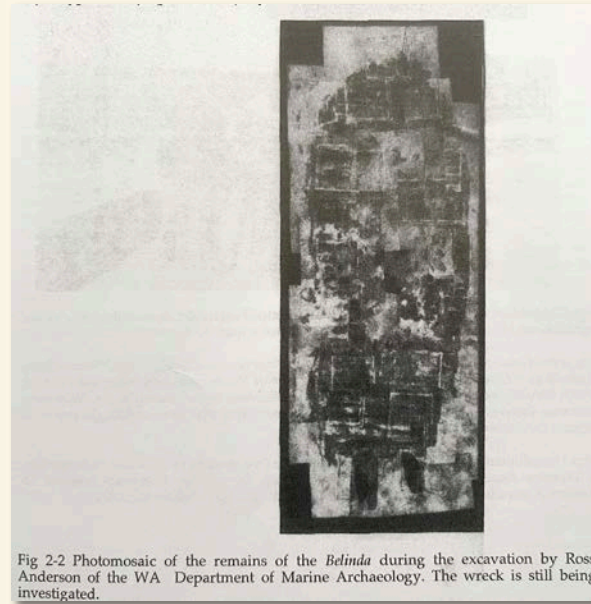


Fig 2-2 Photomosaic of the remains of the *Belinda* during the excavation by Ross Anderson of the WA Department of Marine Archaeology. The wreck is still being investigated.

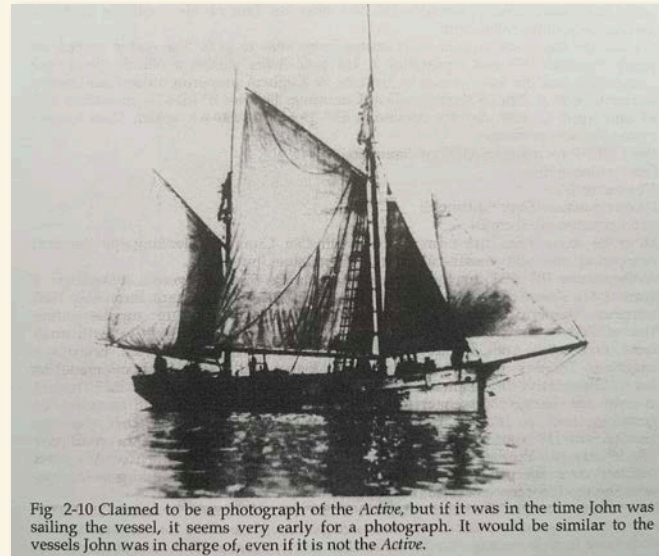


Fig 2-10 Claimed to be a photograph of the *Active*, but if it was in the time John was sailing the vessel, it seems very early for a photograph. It would be similar to the vessels John was in charge of, even if it is not the *Active*.



Fig 2-9 An advertisement for the sailing of the *Hetty* with J Hassell, Master, 1828, claiming 'excellent accommodation for passengers'.

## A Brief History of the Hassell family in the Great Southern

Pastoral History:

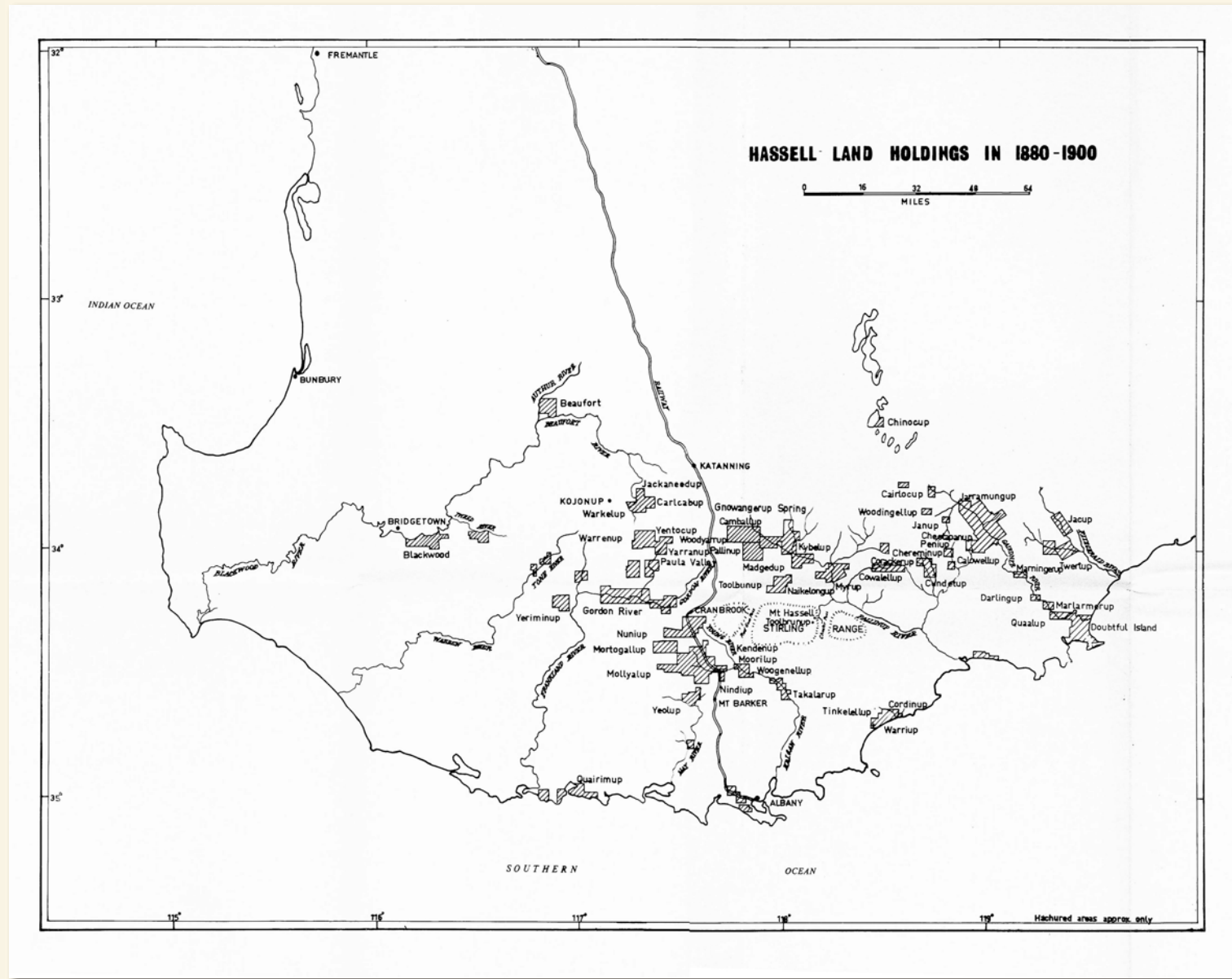
Upon arrival at Albany in 1839, John sold his cargo and commenced to buy land including Kendenup. With his experience in Tasmania raising sheep, he knew which land to look for. After completing this business he sailed for Adelaide and then Launceston, where he sold his ship and his land, and his wife gave birth to their first child. They returned to Albany by ship on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1840, with 8 workers and two maids, ready to start their new life.

Through the 1840s as he got to understand the country, he continued to apply for leases heading east. By January 1849 he had requested 8000 acres at Jerramungup, less than 3 months after Surveyor Roe had visited it for the first time.

By 1850 John Hassell had holdings of over 60,000 acres, a string of eastern properties centred around permanent water, allowing him to drive the flocks to Kendenup for shearing.

By his death in 1883 an astonishing 360,928 acres were held by John Hassell, as shown in the map on the right, 120,000 of it in Kent, with 10,000 of it at Doubtful Island.

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## Importance of Doubtful Island property and House Beach

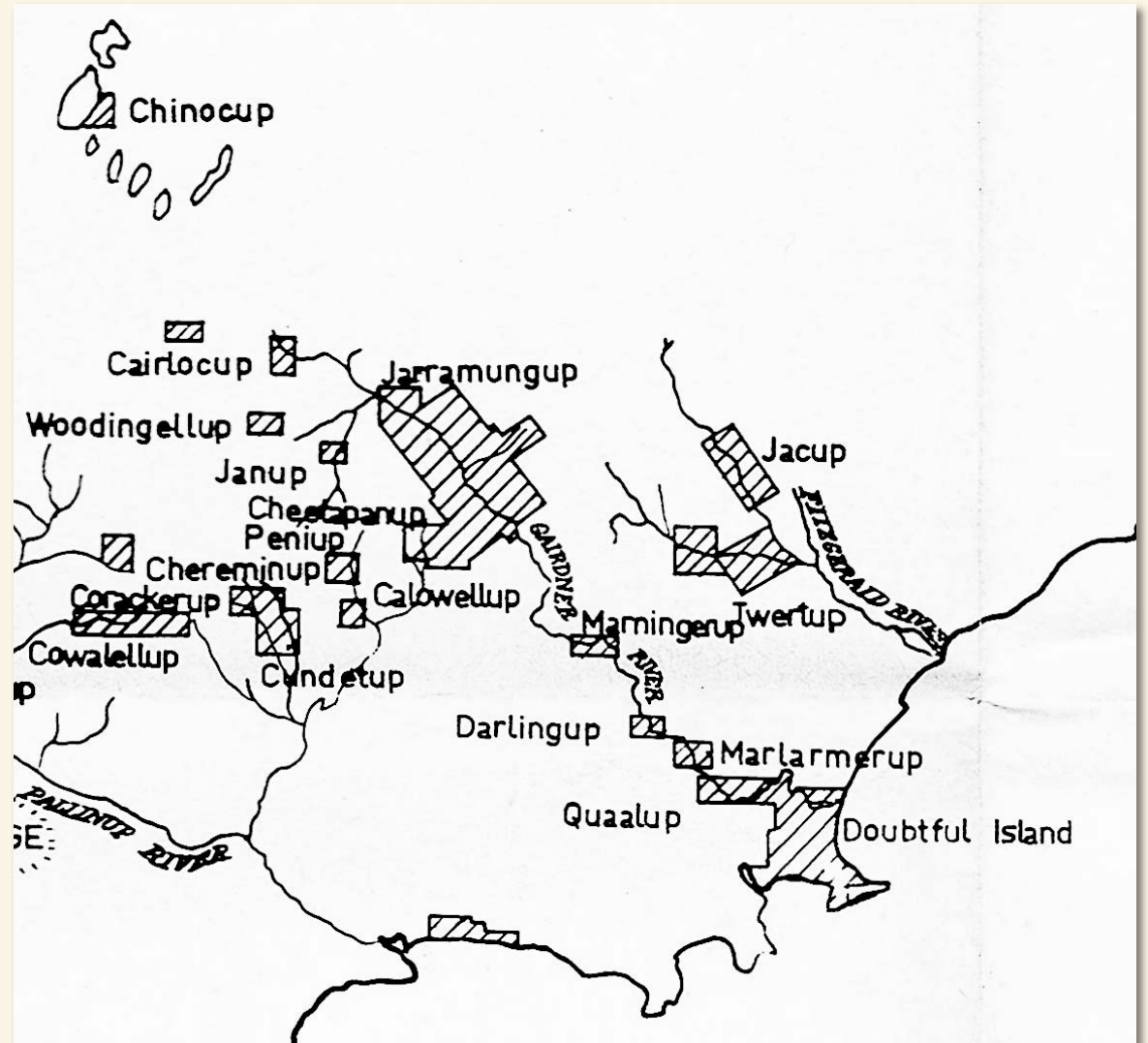
The Gairdner River linked a chain of properties along permanent water. This chain of properties provided the infrastructure link for the eastern end of the properties, down to the sea.

The Doubtful Island property was a very important asset for shipping out the wool, and sheep were driven from the good grass at Jerramungup down to the sea for shearing.

House Beach, opening up to the north-facing, well protected Fishery Cove, was the gateway to this eastern enterprise. This complemented the route back to Kendenup, which then connected to both Perth and Albany.

The eastern properties were managed by A.Y. Hassell, as the properties were divided amongst the sons.

In 1928 a private telephone line connected House Beach to Jerramungup.



## Consolidating the Jerramungup to Doubtful Connection

By 1876 John Hassell's properties surrounded Quaalup which was held by the Wellstead family from 1850s, as shown on the map on the right.

In 1892 A.Y. Hassell purchased the property from the Wellsteads, consolidating his holdings along the Gairdner River.

Several of these parcels are currently owned by Hassells, so have only been out of the family between for 28 of the last 130 - the years between 1950 to 1978.

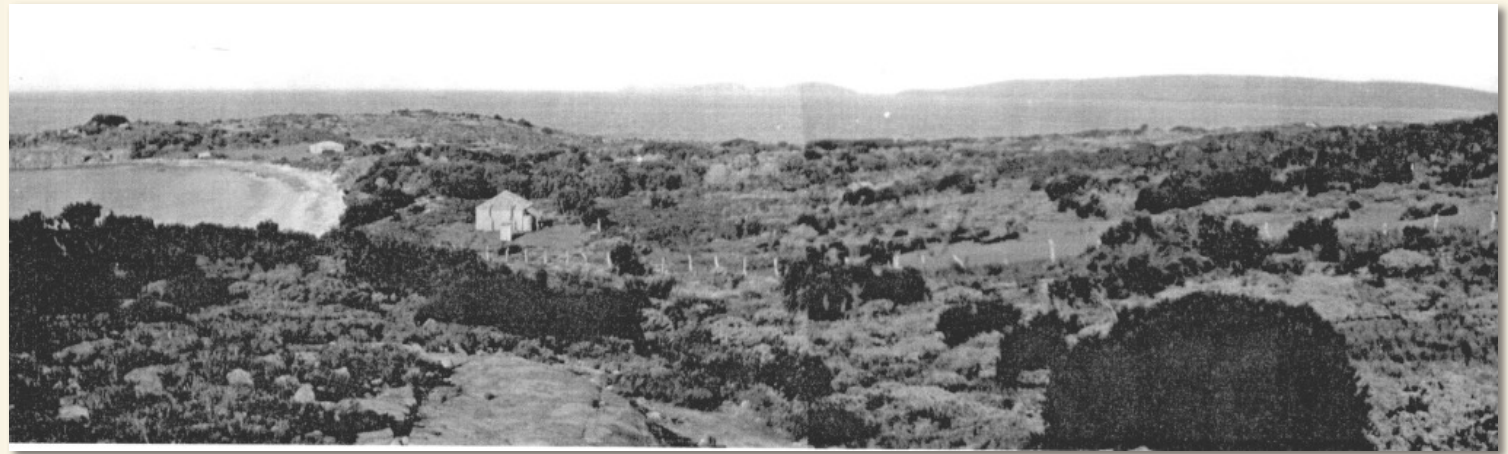
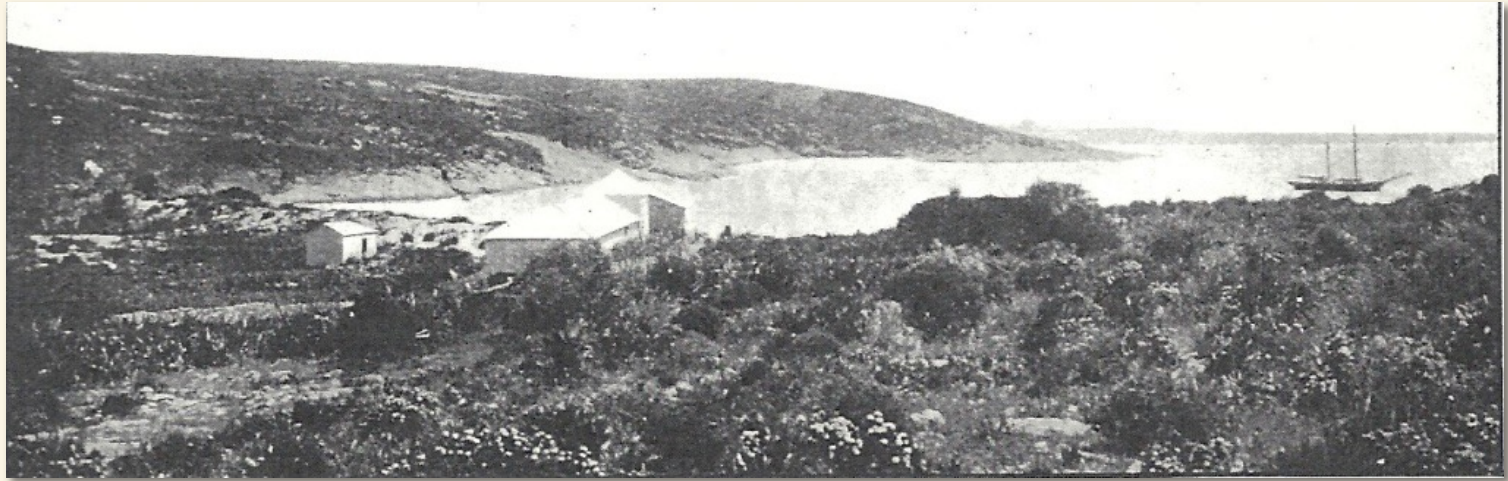


## The House at House Beach

These two views from 1910 and 1930 show the pastoral nature of the House Beach properties.

The house was located to the west end of the bay, while the shearing shed and wood shed were located on the east side.

The land was open grassland rather than scrub and trees, in the 100 years since these photos were taken, the bush has obscured the open views to some extent.





## Pastoral Activities

House Beach was basically the port for the eastern Hassell properties, where materials and supplies could be brought in, and the products of farming shipped out to Albany, as there was no good road.

Even the pre- 1900 house was shipped in prefabricated from Albany. Materials were in such short supply that these remote buildings were cannibalised as needs changed- Quaalup homestead was extended using materials from the shearing shed at House Beach.

Sheep were shorn close to the beach and the fleece loaded onto rafts that were then floated out to clipper ships just off the coast.

The many shearers and workers were housed in camps, so the location has always supported a population of campers.

The shearers and workers included aboriginal and Chinese, so it was a diverse and interesting mix of people for that time.



## Early Chinese History in Australia

“Extensive living quarters would have been needed, for 30 shearers and possibly 20 farm workers at times. Tents could have been used for seasonal workers. Many of the farm workers were Aboriginals (who would have had their own camp) and some Chinese were employed, notably for fencing.”

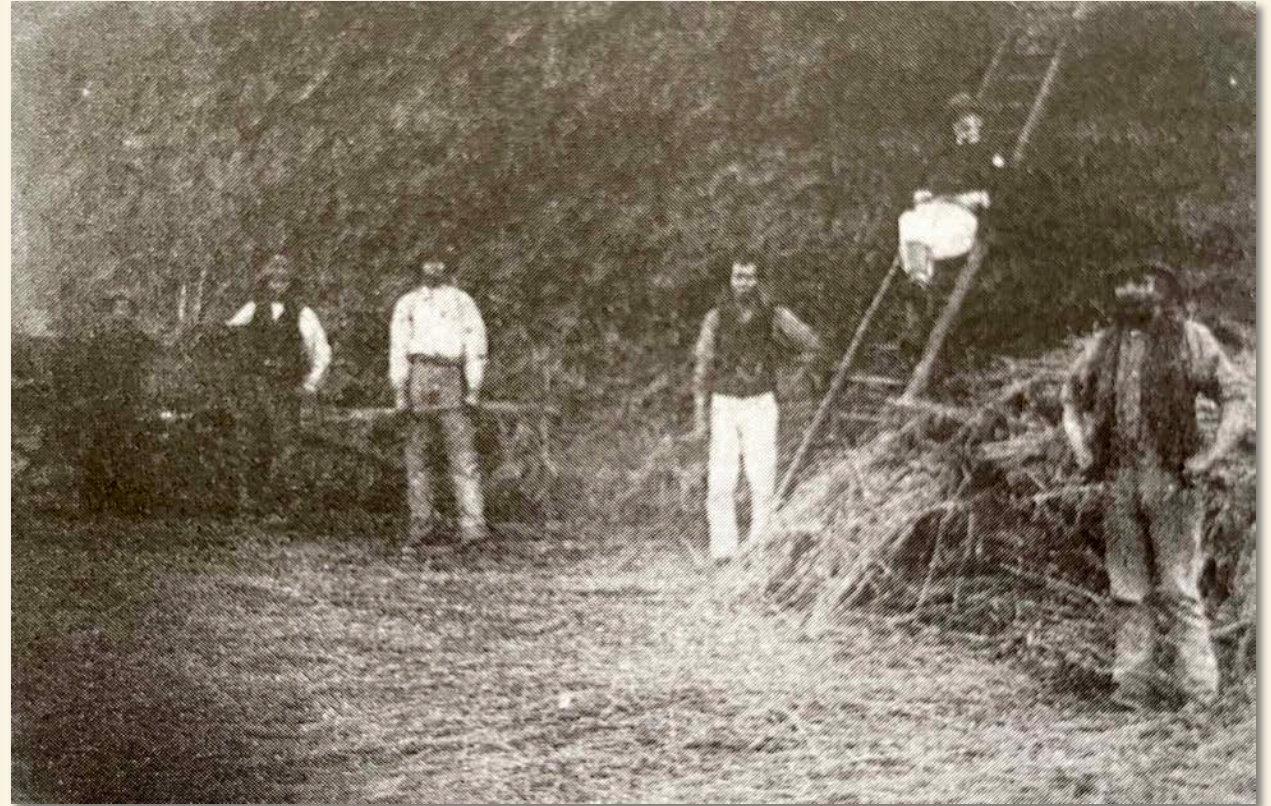
A unique aspect to the history of this place is the early presence of Chinese in Western Australia, which will be an important tourism story, and meaningful to Asian Australians.

The Hassell family employed many Chinese workers between 1850 to the gold rush time, and have records of their names and details.

The first group of 10 was employed from Singapore.

There is a grave of a Chinese cook Ping Hweng near Flinders Well, which should be documented and protected.

The image at right is of 3 Chinese stockmen plus two Europeans on John Hassell’s property in the 1870s.



## The four Houses of House Beach

The original house was built for John Hassell's son Albert Young Hassell,

From the Doubtful History website: "In 1894 AY Hassell had built a shearing shed and living quarters at House Beach so that wool could be shipped from there to Albany. The original house/humpy at House Beach was built in c1893. It and/or the 2nd house was shifted from Albany and transported on the *Grace Darling*. It was replaced in c1900, which burnt down in 1980."

So the House at House Beach is in fact a succession of houses built by the Hassell family, the current house is the fourth in the series. The current house has been there for over 40 years, the previous version lasted 80 years.

The current house was built to replicate the form and arrangement of the original house.

From the photo on the right it can be seen that the houses are very similar in plan, form (hipped roof plus lean to) openings and materials.



### House #3

The third house at House Beach was built around 1900.

It was located on the rise, just above the western camping area.

The loss of the original house through fire in 1980 is a great pity and we wish the Shire had done more to require it to be conserved and protected from harm.

A full Conservation Plan and legal protection for historic structures in the region is sorely needed.

Ron Heberle senior reported that there were some whaling station remains in House Beach, in the early days. He and Graham Bowden found whales teeth at House Beach. Bill Hassell found some broken try pots near Whalers / Flinders well and remains of huts.

The remaining artefacts around the Doubtful peninsular and graves should be given proper protection and conserved - especially the ones on private property before the new buyer develops the land.



## Recreational Use

AY Hassell's and later Edney Hassell's families did not only use the property for pastoral activities.

It has been a recreational spot for over 100 years for the family too.

At the top is a photo of Edney Hassell, AY Hassell and Jim McGlade driving on the beach in a Model T ford before 1918.

In the photo below Edney Hassell's daughters Marjorie and Rosy are swimming sometime around 1918-1930, with the wool or shearing shed visible in the background.

The centre picture shows a recent view. The vegetation to the dunes has increased substantially over period, particularly at the eastern end.



Fig 15-10 Fishery Cove on Doubtful Island Bay showing buildings towards the left, which would be the woolshed or possibly the shearing shed if the photo was taken before 1914. Wool was taken by sea from here until about 1918, and several times in the 1930's. Probably Marjorie and Rosy swimming.

## Discussion of House Beach and Lease in the Coastal Management Plan 2017-2027

We note that the Coastal Management Plan has various and conflicting statements on the lease, ranging from “Liaison with Leaseholders” to recommendations to review the lease. The lease is clearly identified as an issue to be resolved.

This submission requests that this process is carried out in accordance through liaison with the Leaseholder, as this stakeholder engagement has not yet happened. Instead the process has been opaque and unilateral.

We also note that most, if not all, of the actions recommended are not contingent on the lease, and the Hassell family descendants are looking forward to more engagement and liaison moving forward.

While the time frame suggested is quite short within 1-5 years, there are many processes involved that may take some time. We propose that a flexible lease arrangement can be continued which can slot into the actual schedule.

					DBCA		(years)
Access			Monitor tracks annually to detect and address track proliferation.	Number or length of tracks treated. Documentation of treatments undertaken.	DPLH and partners	Realistic but requires coordination and resourcing.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Tenure			Shire of Jerramungup to seek vesting of Reserve No. 3272.	Tenure change for Reserve 3272.	DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup	Clarification required of status of Reserve in light of Native Title Settlement.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Tenure	Land use		Review status of leases at House Beach.	Review documented. Liaison with DPLH and lease holders.	DPLH, DPIRD and Shire of Jerramungup	Outcomes depend on details in leases.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Camping			Develop and implement a camp design to protect vegetation. Needs to be consistent with reserve boundaries and to a standard similar to DBCA camping facilities.	Adopted design. Implementation of design. Funding allocated.	DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup	Dependent on tenure being resolved, funding and budget allocation by land managers.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Access			Rationalise vehicle and pedestrian tracks to beach.	No. of tracks removed/closed	DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup	Realistic if part of integrated planning.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Access			Rationalise vehicle tracks on headland.	No. of tracks removed/closed	DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup	Realistic if part of integrated planning.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Camping			Trial camp host at House Beach.		DPLH, DBCA and Shire of Jerramungup	Realistic if part of integrated planning.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Weeds			Monitor and manage weeds.	Extent of weed infestation and area treated annually.	DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup	Realistic if part of integrated planning and implementation.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Toilets			Decommission or upgrade pit toilet at boat ramp	Installation of new toilet (or refurbish existing)	DPLH, DBCA and Shire of Jerramungup	Realistic if part of integrated planning and implementation.	Short term (1 - 5 years)
Access			Upgrades to the clayey sections of Gordon Inlet Road and Doubtful Island Road.	Length of track upgraded with	DPLH and Shire of	Land tenure is problematic and	Short term (1 - 5

## The Reconstructed A.Y. Hassell Homestead.

Concerns about the lease being a precedent is not valid if the lease is tied to the requirement the leaseholders being Hassell family descendants – this is a unique and non-replicable situation.

The house #4 is built on the same floorplan and elevations as the previous house #3, and built by the same family to replace it, therefore is a reconstruction that is meaningful.

Since House #3 was and was on private land, even if not destroyed by fire, it would not have been able to become a public asset.

Now, the reconstructed homestead is on the public reserve, and will be accessible, and an excellent focus for future development. The building can be the anchor for historical interpretive materials and will add meaning and depth to the location.

Seen in the wider picture with Quaalup homestead and the interpretive materials at Point Ann about the rabbit proof fence and telegraph line, House Beach will enhance the experience of the Fitzgerald / Doubtful area as an interesting and unique historic attraction.

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### 7.3 HOUSE BEACH - CORNER COVE

#### Description

House Beach is a popular destination for campers and fishers. The area is accessed by Doubtful Islands Road (from the north) or by Bremer and Peppermint beaches (from the west). While only suitable for four-wheel drives, people often tow boats and caravans to House Beach via Doubtful Islands Road. While road reserves exist in the area, the actual road follows historic tracks which cross privately owned land. Local users note that in the 1960s to 1990s, the approximately 3.5km of clay on Doubtful Island Road was typically impassable for most of the four wettest months of the year (May, June, July and August). In more recent times the clay road is typically impassable for much of November, December and January, as well (Greg Heberle, pers. Comm.).

The House Beach area contains a relatively informal camping area with approximately 15 camping sites. However, during peak holiday periods, the camping areas are used beyond capacity and people tend to park under the trees, which causes compaction of the trees' roots and contributes to loss of understorey. Much of the camping area is on private land (see section below regarding tenure).

The 1995 Jerramungup Coastal Management Plan states:

*In 1981, a lease (Location No. 2060, 0.3 ha) was excised from part of Reserve No. 3272 at House Beach, for the purpose of "the reconstruction of the A. Y. Hassell homestead". On expiry of the lease in 1991, it was renewed for a further 10-year period for "residential" purposes. The lease, as it stands, poses a number of management issues for the House Beach area. A major concern is that the existence of a lease for residential purposes could set a precedent. Furthermore, the excision of the lease from the reserve means that only 1.7 ha remains for camping and recreation activities, and for a professional fisherman's camp. In 1980, it was noted by the Acting Divisional Surveyor that "the Northern portion of reserve 3272 [where the residential lease now stands] is comprised of some attractive Peppermint areas that have been regularly used by campers". The leasehold area remains the preferred location for camping activities, however, the area is now fenced off and access denied.*

*The structure built on the lease bears only superficial resemblance to the original A. Y. Hassell homestead, which burnt to the ground in about 1980. The "new" building uses different materials (zincalume rather than corrugated iron) and appears bigger than the original. The general view is that the new building has no historical significance, other than that it is owned by descendants of A. Y. Hassell. The attractive, sheltered cove provided at House Beach is one of the principle destinations for campers and tourists in the Doubtful Islands area. Management and the provision of facilities at House Beach is exacerbated by the limited area available to the Shire for vesting, and the fact that much of the beach's hinterland is private property.*

A fishing camp with a small shed exists close to the beach. However, it does not appear to coincide with an active lease.

There are multiple walk trails down to House Beach which are causing erosion. At the western end of House Beach, there is a beach boat launching area. Vehicles also enter the beach from the eastern end. The rocky headland to the east of the beach has multiple vehicle tracks.

#### Issues:

- Proliferation of access tracks.
- Lack of clarity regarding tenure and leases.
- Status of lease needs to be reviewed.
- Camping area poorly defined and mostly on private land.
- Some infrastructure in poor condition (e.g. pit toilet).



The House Beach camping area comprises interlinking informal tracks. The camping area is full during peak periods such as school holidays. During these times, people create new camp spots on the periphery of the camping area.



A beach boat launching area is located on the western portion of the beach.

## Stakeholder Response - Engagement vs Termination

The Hassell family descendants have always seen the lease as a way of preserving history, as well as continuing their 198 year relationship with the location.

Rather than eviction and unilateral termination of the relationship, the proposal is a transition through ongoing dialogue and engagement.

Historical ties are important, and the family is deeply connected to this region. The family is fortunate to have several archivists and historians and there is a wealth of information and artefacts which are not yet in the public realm, as well as published books and papers such as:

“My Dusky Friends” by Ethel Hassell (1910/1975)- one of the most important documents of the Noongar legends, customs and language from Jerramungup.

“The Hassells of Albany” by Cleve Hassell (1976)

“Fire Ecology Studies in the Fitzgerald National Park” by Cleve Hassell. (2000)

Shire of Jerramungup – Coastal Management Plan 2017 – 2027 (FINAL)



Multiple pedestrian tracks to the beach are causing erosion.



The Shire of Jerramungup has installed a new pit toilet in the camping area.

Shire of Jerramungup – Coastal Management Plan 2017 – 2027 (FINAL)



The rocky headland has multiple vehicle tracks.

### Tenure

The beach portion of House Beach is UCL with adjacent land being UMR (R 3272), a special lease and the balance comprising freehold land. The special lease on land parcel 2060 is described as a ‘replacement of residential lease’. (311/106622 FNA3687: DPI 560/1896/01RO Tengraph, 2017). A sign at the entry to the area reads ‘special lease for reconstruction by Hassell Family of AY Hassell DI Bay Homestead. Built 1893’. A fishing shack, in poor condition also exists adjacent to the special lease. Leases in the area need to be reviewed, with a view for broader community access and management.

RESERVE NUMBER	3272
RESERVE CLASS	C
LEGAL AREA HA	1.7004
DETAIL TEXT	560/96
CURRENT PURPOSE	LANDING PLACE
LU1	JETTY
VESTING	UMR
RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, LANDS AND HERITAGE



## High Cultural Value

The Hassell family descendants are in full support of the measures to preserve the land and biodiversity and to enhance the beauty and accessibility of the area.

Through their presence the family do perform an informal caretaker role for the area.

We would request that the Values include the social, agricultural and maritime heritage value of the site. As an early site for whaling, fishing, for droving, shearing, and using the shore to barge wool, sandalwood and other materials to ships in the protected anchorage, it is an important site in early European history.

There are graves, dams, sheep dips, ceramic insulators, and remains of telegraph poles in the area, and no doubt many other artefacts which should be documented, preserved, protected and explained.

Much has already vanished, along with the people with first hand knowledge and oral histories of the place.

It is an interesting place where Noongar shearers, American whalers, colonial settlers, Chinese labourers all interacted as Australia went through an immense transformation.

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### Assessment

Name of Location: House Beach		
Date: 16/3/2017	Surveyed by: Melanie Price	
Attribute		Comments
Values	Commercial fishing Recreation Aboriginal heritage	Boat launching for recreational and commercial users.  Registered Aboriginal sites and 'Other Aboriginal Heritage Places': 4463 (mythological), 4948, 4941 (artefacts and scatters).
Threatening Processes	Erosion, damage to vegetation, dieback introduction and spread.	
Level of Use	Medium - high. Used for camping, boat launching, fishing and four-wheel driving.	Low use: Used by few people (less than 10 per day) or very seasonally or for a narrow range of activities.  Medium use: Used by a moderate amount of people (10 - 50 people per day), seasonally or for a moderate number of activities High use: Used by a high number of people (more than 50 per day), most of the time or for a high number of activities

Coastal Processes	Beach between rocky headlands	House Beach and Corner Cove are located in a 700m long northeast-facing bay immediately west of Whalebone Point. The beach is a 150m long pocket of sand wedged at the base of steeply descending bedrock slopes and bordered by steeply sloping headlands. The beach receives low energy waves and has a steep reflective shore. The bay contains seagrass meadows.	
	Score	Action Required?	
Signage	0	High priority	Install AS compliant Coastal Safety signage at entry to camping area and at boat launching area. Advise of coastal risk, code of the coast, take rubbish out.
Toilets/ showers	2	-	A new toilet has been constructed at the camping area. The old pit toilet located adjacent to the boat launching area should be replaced or decommissioned.
Rubbish bins	-	-	Not present or recommended. People are requested to take rubbish out.
Dogs	-	-	Dogs not prohibited.
Fencing/ barriers	2	-	Fencing has recently been installed to protect dunes from campsite users and to delineate access.
Boat Launching	-	-	Informal, from beach.
Shade	-	-	The existing trees provide shade, but are at risk due to compaction of roots and removal for firewood.
Camping Areas	0	-	Some camp locations have been delineated, but an overall plan needs to be developed for the area. During peak periods, the camping area overflows and people create new camping locations. This area would benefit from having a camp host during summer and school holidays.
Barbecues	-	-	Not present or recommended.
Caretaker	-	-	This area would benefit from having a camp host during summer and school holidays.
Car parking	-	-	Informal.
Vehicle Access	-	-	Vehicle access is uncontrolled and consultation indicates that use of unlicensed vehicles can sometimes cause safety and amenity issues for other users.
Pedestrian Access	-	-	Informal. Multiple tracks to beach are causing erosion.
Beach Access	2	-	At east and west of beach. Access at east is very eroded.

# Design Masterplan for the Area

The report strongly recommends professional design of the camping area and rehabilitation.

We support this and would like to see the very important historical aspect to the area be emphasized, as a unique and key aspect of this beach, rather than it just being seen as another pleasant uninhabited beach along the coast.

It has only retained what it has due to its inaccessibility, the moment it is more accessible it will be destroyed unless very well designed and taken care of.

We support this statement:

“Consideration should be given to recognizing the historical significance of the building and broader access to the building by the public, while accommodating the need of increased camping and visitation to the overall area.”

Dune Stability	-	-	Erosion is evident due to indiscriminate use of vehicles which have created multiple tracks.
Vegetation Cover	1	High priority	Most areas in good condition, with disturbance in areas used for camping. Delineation of camping areas should be combined with rehabilitation.
Weeds	0	High priority	Boxthorn and bridal creeper high priority for monitoring and treatment/ removal.
Visual Appeal	2	High priority	Visual appeal is compromised by erosion and poor layout of camping area.
4WD Access to Beach	Y	-	Vehicles access beach at both east and western end. Boats are launched at the western end.
Disabled Access to node	N	-	No.
Survey Result	32	Lower than score in 2000 (41)	Score indicates that management in the area requires urgent attention.
<p><b>Overall:</b> Area is popular for boat launching, camping, four-wheel drives and fishers. Professional design of camping area and rehabilitation is highly recommended. Camp hosts during busy time may assist in management of area. Recommended that an AS compliant sign be installed at entry to camping area and boat launching area to indicate coastal risk, code of the coast, dieback risk and to take rubbish out. Treatment and monitoring for weeds and erosion is recommended. Vehicle and pedestrian access to beach needs review. Tracks on headland need to be rationalised.</p>			

### Recommendations

Location	Previous Recommendations	Status and Recommendations	2017 Priority, Responsibility and Timing
House Beach/ Corner Cove	Seek vesting of Reserve No. 3272 (Shire of Jerramungup).	This action has not been completed and the Reserve may be subject to South West Native Title Settlement.	Medium priority. Shire of Jerramungup in consultation with DPLH.
	The lease at house beach should not be automatically reviewed. Consideration should be given to recognizing the historical significance of the building and broader access to the building by the public, while accommodating the need of increased camping and visitation to the overall area.	Review status of leases at House Beach.	Medium Priority. DPHL and DPIRD.
		Develop and implement a camp area design to protect	High Priority. Achievable with adequate resources.

		vegetation. Needs to be consistent with reserve boundaries and to a standard similar to DBCA camping facilities.	DPLH in partnership with Shire of Jerramungup and DBCA.
		Rationalise vehicle and pedestrian tracks to beach.	High Priority. DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup
		Rationalise vehicle tracks on headland.	High priority. DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup
		Decommission or upgrade pit toilet at boat ramp	Medium priority. DPLH and Shire of Jerramungup
		Trial camp host at House Beach.	DPLH, DBCA and Shire of Jerramungup
		Monitor and manage weeds.	High Priority. Achievable with adequate resources. Shire of Jerramungup in partnership with DPLH and DBCA (and potentially other partners).
<p><b>Tenure:</b> Reserve 3272 and UCL may be subject to the Native Title Settlement process. Regardless of the outcome of that process, the management of this area requires a partnership approach.</p>			

## 7.4 DOUBTFUL ISLANDS PENINSULA

### Description

The Doubtful Islands Peninsula encompasses Peppermints, Doubtful Island and Drage's beaches and the rocky headland of Point Hood. When accessed via Doubtful Islands Road, tracks traverse a large area of freehold land (Figure 1b). Although there are road reserves through the freehold land, the historic tracks do not align with them. As noted in the previous section, access via Doubtful Islands Road is sometimes problematic due to inundation of clayey sections of the track. Vehicles also access the area from the north via Gordon Inlet and Tooregullup Beach. Bremer Beach provides access from the west.

The area is popular with visitors with notable locations including an informal lookout at Point Hood, the Chimneys and (air) Blowholes. These locations are relatively remote but are regularly visited by people who have four-wheel drives. The rest of the peninsula has some rough 4WD tracks which terminate at cliff tops. These areas appear to have a much lower visitation rate. Dogs are not prohibited across the peninsula.

## Concept for House Beach Visitor Centre and Camping Ground

Erasing history and turning House Beach into a purely recreational area is a great waste. This concept plan shows how house #4 can form the heart of a visitor and interpretative centre for House Beach and the Doubtful Islands.

Surrounded by private land, the reserve is deep rather than wide. Frontage should be preserved for history, nature, erosion prevention and beach access.

Ample camping spots and parking should be set back slightly from the coast to preserve the ambiance of the wild place, with planting restored and protected.

This concept separates boating and heritage recreational visitors, so each can focus on their own activity. Camping is kept off the main access road, and clustered around good stands of peppermint trees.

Walking tracks lead campers to the beach, off the road, through restored vegetation.

A walk to the east leads to the headland, Flinders Well and Ping Hweng's grave. Continuing along Torregellup Beach leads to the natural attractions and pastoral artefacts of the Doubtful Peninsular

W O H A



## Acknowledgements

Much of this material has come through the family archive maintained by my father Cleve Hassell, as well as materials online from the Wellsteads and Heberles.

Cleve and his father Noel have rescued several of the dilapidated historic buildings at Kendenup and Jerramungup from collapse - despite not having ownership, with the intent that the properties should be listed by the National Trust. Sadly the owners accepted the renovations but did not list the renewed buildings.

Cleve drew the family tree, and organized immense family reunions in the 1970s including a large one at House Beach.

Cleve became the family archivist and shared stories, artefacts, research with Bill Hassell - Anne's father and Donald Ball - Angela and Charles' father, and walked many of the sites many times detecting old fence lines, bottles, shears, equipment, wells and chimneys, which are disappearing with every fire and storm.

This hard-won knowledge deserves a wider audience. We thank Cleve, Bill, Donald, with many other relatives for their huge investment of time, money and mostly their passion for the past. This generation is passing but links the pioneer generation to our own.