Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

GLOUCESTER NATIONAL PARK
NATURE BASED/ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Call for REGISTRATIONS OF INTEREST

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

ROI Closing Date 2:30pm (WST) Thursday 7 February 2019
ROI 1 243 2019

For more information or a site visit please contact Matthew King on (08) 9219 8499 or matthew.king@dbca.wa.gov.au
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An exciting opportunity exists to develop a new ecotourism venture in Gloucester National Park. The State Government is calling for Registrations of Interest (ROI) from suitably qualified individuals and organisations interested in developing and operating a nature-based tourism or adventure activity development.

Located only three kilometres from Pemberton, Gloucester National Park is home to one of Western Australia’s most famous karri trees, the Gloucester Tree. This magnificent tree is one of a series of eight fire lookouts that were constructed in the top of very tall karri trees in the south west as a way of spotting fires. Visitors can now climb up the 58 metres to see one of the most spectacular views of the karri forest and surrounding farmland.

This opportunity includes three possible development areas; two within the vicinity of the Gloucester Tree in Gloucester National Park and an area in the Pemberton Arboretum. The arboretum is located within the Warren State Forest, which is adjacent to the Gloucester National Park. Applicants can apply for any or all the three areas. DBCA may choose to progress more than one proposal from different proponents if activities complement each other.

Should a suitable applicant be found, authority to operate the venture will be by way of a commercial operations licence or lease pursuant to the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (CALM Act) and regulations.

 Applicants are advised that it will be the responsibility of the successful applicant to finance and undertake any works associated with the development.

2. MANAGEMENT OF GLOUCESTER NATIONAL PARK

2.1. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) was created on 1 July 2017, following the State Government’s decision to bring together the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, Rottnest Island Authority, Zoological Parks Authority and the former Department of Parks and Wildlife.

DBCA is the State Government agency that has the lead responsibility for conserving the State’s unique plants and animals, and world-class network of terrestrial and marine parks and reserves on behalf of the people of Western Australia. For more information please visit www.dbca.wa.gov.au.

2.2. Gloucester National Park and Warren State Forest

Gloucester National Park and the Warren State Forest are vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission and managed on its behalf by the Parks and Wildlife Service of DBCA.
The primary goal for management of national parks, as defined in the CALM Act, is to fulfil as much of the demand for recreation by members of the public as is consistent with the proper maintenance and restoration of the natural environment, the protection of indigenous flora and fauna and the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest. All CALM Act land, including national parks and State forest, has the management objective of protecting and conserving the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons. This involves:

- maintaining natural values and visitor experiences;
- protecting the land for Aboriginal cultural and heritage values of the area;
- minimising environmental impacts by directing visitors to more robust sites and providing a wide range of opportunities to distribute visitor pressures;
- maintaining and improving the quality, rather than quantity, of existing recreational opportunities; and
- linking DBCA's visitor management and recreational facilities with interpretation to improve visitor amenity and environmental safeguards, as well as ensuring sustainable recreation by portraying a strong conservation education message.


2.3. Working with Aboriginal people

DBCA recognises that Aboriginal people have a connection to, and an ongoing interest in, the care of lands and waters which are managed under the CALM Act. DBCA acknowledges the right of Aboriginal people to express and maintain their culture and connection to country. The Department is committed to providing opportunities for Aboriginal people to help manage and promote parks through joint management arrangements and other partnerships, and by providing Aboriginal tourism opportunities.

Under the CALM Act, DBCA has a responsibility to protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons, in particular from any material adverse effect. This includes ensuring the conservation of sites of significance, as well as making allowances for Aboriginal customary activities to be undertaken on CALM Act land.

Applicants are asked to be aware of these legislative provisions and are encouraged to consider how they will work with the South West Boojarah people, the traditional owners of the area, to contribute to Aboriginal employment and include culturally appropriate information in their business proposal.
3. TOURISM OVERVIEW

3.1. Pemberton

Located four hours south of Perth in the Shire of Manjimup, Pemberton has history dating from the early Aboriginal peoples through the first settlers and the development of the timber, agriculture and tourist industries. The area is renowned for its majestic karri trees, scenic pastures and crystal-clear streams. Recreational activities such as canoeing, fishing, swimming, bushwalking and mountain biking are popular pastimes. The area also offers a range of accommodation options, gourmet food producers, art galleries, wineries and breweries.

3.2. Gloucester National Park

Gloucester National Park adjoins the town of Pemberton and is accessible via sealed roads from Pemberton. The Gloucester Tree can also be accessed through Pemberton via a dual use pedestrian/cycle path which links the tree to the town site.

The community of Pemberton values the Gloucester Tree as one of the premiere local attractions. Initial consultation with community stakeholder has confirmed support for the enhancement of the area through a nature-based tourism or adventure activity development.

3.3. Bushwalking and mountain biking

Pemberton has many picturesque walk and cycle trails ranging in length and degree of difficulty. The Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail wind past the town through some of the most enchanting stretches of karri forest.
The South West Mountain Bike Master Plan identifies Pemberton as a high priority area for trail development, including a trail hub a population centre that offers a large range of high-quality services, facilities and trail related business. The Gloucester National Park is highlighted as a potential area for development of a trail hub and network of trails. Proposals that are consistent with this master plan will be considered favourably.


3.4. Climate

Pemberton typically experiences cool wet winters and warm summers. Records show an average annual rainfall of 1188 millimetres with each of the months of May to September typically receiving over 100 millimetres.

3.5. Visitation

The Gloucester Tree site received around 108,000 visitors in 2017/18 while the Gloucester National Park in total received over 143,000 visitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloucester Tree Site</th>
<th>Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>96,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>77,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>102,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>109,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>108,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>108,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>108,024</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Annual visits to the Gloucester Tree site

3.6. Potential development site/s

There are three possible development sites available through this process. Applicants should consider how their proposal would fit with the proposed site, with consideration to current levels of visitation. Any proposal should attempt to use existing open or cleared areas and/or areas of regrowth karri forest.
Two of the development sites are situated within the vicinity of the Gloucester Tree (see Appendix 1 – Gloucester Tree indicative development sites).

The third area available for consideration, known as the Pemberton Arboretum, includes significant plantings of mature exotic tree species and some open areas. There are several entry points to the arboretum though the primary access unsealed gravel road (see Appendix 2 – Pemberton Arboretum).
4. REGISTRATIONS OF INTEREST SUBMISSIONS

4.1. Point of Contact

All communications, requests for information or clarification of matters associated with the process should be addressed to the Commercial Business Coordinator, Matthew King, using the contact details listed below:

Matthew King
Tourism and Concessions Branch
Parks and Visitor Services Division
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
17 Dick Perry Avenue
Kensington WA 6151

Telephone (08) 9219 8499
Email: matthew.king@dbca.wa.gov.au

4.2. Site Visits

Site visits are welcome and may be requested through the Point of Contact.

4.3. Process

Organisations or individuals are invited to register their interest in progressing discussions with DBCA for this opportunity. This process will be undertaken in two stages as outlined below:

4.3.1 Stage 1 – ROI

This stage of the process will allow applicants to submit a concept proposal and to demonstrate their background, experience and capacity to progress a nature-based tourism or adventure activity development. If you wish to register your interest at Stage 1, please complete Section 6 of this document.

4.3.2 Stage 2 – Detailed Proposal

If there is more than one suitable applicant identified from Stage 1, a competitive process will be applied to select the most suitable and to determine which proposal would deliver the best outcome for the community. Under Stage 2, successful applicants to Stage 1 will be invited to develop a more detailed proposal for the Department’s assessment. The requirements of Stage 2 will be outlined by DBCA.

DBCA may, at its discretion, enter into direct negotiation for a lease opportunity with an applicant found suitable under Stage 1 of the ROI should it consider this appropriate.
4.4 Response Date

RESPONSES CLOSE AND MUST BE RECEIVED BY
2:30 pm WST, Thursday 7 February 2019

Please forward your registration of interest for Stage 1 to:

Attn: Mr Matthew King
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

E-mail: matthew.king@dbca.wa.gov.au

Address: 17 Dick Perry Avenue
KENSGINGTON WA 6151

Important Note: Late Submissions

DBCA may, at its discretion, elect to accept a late submission where DBCA considers it appropriate in the circumstances and is satisfied that no applicant has been materially advantaged or disadvantaged.

No legal promise or contract

This document contains information about the ROI evaluation process. None of the information in this document, nor the result of the ROI process, shall give rise to any promise or contract, and no legal relationship shall be created between the State and an applicant at any stage prior to the grant of a licence.

5 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Disclaimer

Applicants must make and rely upon their own investigations and satisfy themselves in relation to all aspects of the project. DBCA will not be liable for any incorrect or misleading information or omission to disclose information in relation to any part of this document and reference documents thereto.

5.2 Public liability insurance

It is a standard DBCA licence/lease condition that commercial operators are covered with a minimum million public liability insurance. It will be a requirement of the successful applicant to obtain a minimum coverage of $20 million public liability insurance for the operations before a licence/lease is issued. This will need to include cover for all activities allowed by the licence/lease.
5.3 Costs borne by applicant

All costs and expenses incurred by applicants in any way associated with the project, preparation and submission of applications to this ROI or subsequent stages of the selection process, including but not limited to attendance at meetings, discussions etc., and through provision of any additional information required by DBCA, will be borne entirely and exclusively by the applicants.

5.4 Addendum/General Advice

Addendums and notices of General Advice may be issued during the ROI process if required. These will be advertised via the DBCA’s website or email broadcast system.

5.5 Rights to amend process

DBCA reserves the right to amend the process set out in this document by notice in writing to applicants who have not withdrawn or been excluded from the process. Such amendments may include cancellation, variation or supplementation of the process.

5.6 Absence of obligation

No legal or other obligation other than those associated with this section shall rise between the applicant and DBCA unless and until formal project documentation has been signed and all necessary Ministerial approvals and consents have been obtained. DBCA is not obliged to proceed with any application or applicant.

DBCA has no contractual or other legal obligation to the applicants with respect to the consideration, the evaluation, the acceptance or the rejection of any submission or the failure to consider, evaluate or accept any submission.

5.7 Cultural/heritage/environmental and planning issues

DBCA takes no responsibility with respect to any site impediments including but not restricted to encumbrances on title, heritage status, native title claims and environmental, planning and other approvals. Applicants must satisfy themselves in regard to the implications of heritage status, native title claims and the requirements of any other relevant legislation. Any approvals associated with the development required under legislation are to be arranged by the proponent at the proponent’s expense.

5.8 Confidentiality

All information submitted by applicants will be examined and assessed by a panel appointed by DBCA, its specialist consultant advisers and any other party from whom DBCA may seek advice.

The confidentiality of any information submitted by applicants, which is not available to the public, will be respected except where disclosure is permitted or required by law.
All applicants will be required to maintain confidentiality with respect to their own bids and should not seek details of competing bids.

6 **REGISTRATION OF INTEREST**

If you wish to register your interest for this opportunity, please provide your contact details and a brief outline of your background; describing the skills, qualifications and experience of key personnel, as well as a brief outline of your proposal and your capacity to meet the requirements of a lease/licence. Your application should address the headings below. These will be used to assess applications to this ROI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation Name.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Title.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-Mail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of person signing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief outline of the proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please include details of the proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suitable qualifications and experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please outline your (or your organisation’s) qualifications and experience to undertake your proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability to meet the requirements of a lease including financial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please briefly outline your (or your organisation’s) capability to implement your proposal. This may include access to finance, grants or partnerships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Closing date for Stage 1: 2.30pm WST, Thursday 7 February 2019.**
Appendix 1 – Gloucester Tree indicative development sites
Appendix 2 – Pemberton Arboretum