Boddington Interpretation Plan 2016

Prepared for the Shire of Boddington

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Introduction

This Interpretation Plan represents stages one to three of the interpretation planning process outlined in the scope of works. It provides a framework for the development and management of an interpretive experience at Boddington that will engage visitors in the history, culture and natural environment of the town. In addition to identifying themes, stories and media, the plan also provides concept design suggestions.

This Interpretation Plan has been developed in line with the Draft Tourism Strategy, Town Growth Plan and Townsite Strategy. It is developed in accordance with the principles of the Burra Charter and with reference to the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries.

Further stages of the process involve expanding on the site with outdoor interpretive nodes, trails, walks and signage at other significant heritage sites.

Background

Boddington is a town and shire in the Peel region of Western Australia, located 120 kilometres southeast of Perth. The town sits on the road from Pinjarra to Williams on the Hotham River. The region was originally home to the Noongar people who used the area seasonally for food and water as well as quarrying stone and ochre mining. Many of the Aboriginal people worked in the agricultural industry after the settlers came providing laboring and shearing services.

One of the first Europeans to explore the area was Captain Bannister who undertook and expedition to travel overland from the Swan River to King George's Sound (Albany) in 1830, he was impressed by the quality f the land in the area. In 1835 Alfred Hillman of the Surveyor General's Office undertook an expedition to the west of Bannister's route, later that year settlers began to leave the Swan River Colony to take up land grants. Settlement of the region did not occur as a single event but as a series of actions. Some of the earliest settlers were Captain Fawcett and the Farmer, Pollard

and Batt families.

Boddington was gazetted in 1912 although there have been settlers in the area since the 1860s. The town is named for Henry Boddington, a shepherd who frequently camped at a pool on the Hotham River and which the early settlers named Boddington Pool. The district includes several localities including Marradong, Crossman, Hotham, Camballing, Lower Williams and Quindanning. Many of the early settlers set up their farming operations in these locations and built communities around their farms. Marradong was the centre of the district in the early days with a Road Board being founded in 1892. In 1961 it was renamed the Shire of Boddington.

In addition to farming the town had a number of key industries including timber, which led to the construction of a railway line from Dwellingup to Boddington and then on to Narrogin that was used to cart the timber to local sawmills. The town also had a Tannin Extracts Factory, which provided employment into the 1960s. The town's main industries now are agriculture and mining with gold being the main mineral produced.

A new library and visitor centre is being developed in part of the old school. The main part of the school is the home of the Community Resource Centre (CRC) and is also home to the local historical group, which also has a number of historic resources telling the stories of Boddington. The new centre will house the library and an interpretive centre in the old science block of the school and will provide an additional resource to tell the story of the district.

Scope

The brief provided by the Shire of Boddington identifies the following as the broad objectives for the project:

a) Highlight our foreshore
b) Tell our story ensuring to capture indigenous railway, timber, mining and agricultural heritage
c) Provide a place for regional tourism promotion
d) Provide space for local produce and industry to be highlighted, and
e) Offer a start and end point for local tours including Gold Mine Experience tours.

The scope of works for the projects were identified as follows:

1. Research and development of 4 main stories covering Agriculture, Mining, Timber and Indigenous.
2. Design & layout of interpretive space to include the 4 key stories with space provided for additional material such as brochures, books, movies and media that help to tell those stories.
3. Design of outdoor interpretive nodes in immediate proximity to visitor centre including some play spaces that connect the stories to the outdoors. Deck and playground will face north from the building.
4. Research and Development of Rail Heritage story and design of nodes for inclusion in the Rail Heritage Trail walk that will be formed along the banks of the Hotham river in front of Visitor Centre as per the Main Street Vision.
5. Research and Development or extension of interpretation along River Walk that starts from Old School and takes walkers to the river past the visitors centre. This would include interpretation that includes buildings such as Boddington Old School& the Boddington Town Hall along with and including our foreshore flora and fauna, Boddington Lions Weir and indigenous connection to water, bush tucker etc.
6. Upgrade of interpretation signage at our significant sites, heritage buildings, walks trails in and around town.

Steps 1 – 3 will be implemented and launched as part of the visitor centre project. This Interpretation Plan represents steps 1–3.

Steps 4, 5 & 6 would be done on separate funding as individual projects that include the walkway renovation & construction along the Hotham River pathway.

Methodology

The following methodology was used to develop this Interpretation Plan.

Table One: Methodology

Stage	Activities

Stage One: Project Initiation	The key purpose of Stage One is to discuss the rationale, purpose, goals, risks, constraints, and time and performance requirements of the project.
	
	Two staff members from Creative Spaces and Claire Savage met with the client and stakeholders in Boddington to finalise the project brief and to establish:
	
	• To establish time frames/milestones
	• To agree stakeholder involvement
	• To agree project outcomes
	• To identify relevant background information
	• To define the scope of work for the project team
	
	At this stage the Shire was asked to provide:
	
	• The architect's plans of the building in an editable format (such as a .dwg file).
	• Any other relevant material that would inform the design process. These included:
	    o Conservation Plans and any other existing plans.
	    o Historical photos/imagery that would provide context to the project.
	• A familiarisation was undertaken at the site to identify opportunities and constraints.

Stage Two: Desktop Research	The following tasks were undertaken during this stage: • Review all documentation provided by the Shire of Boddington Project manager • Research the four stories identified by the Shire of Boddington and develop an over arching theme for the visitor centre interpretation • Research material online including Trove, the National Library of Australia's website (http://trove.nla.gov.au) and other relevant sites and sources • Identify high quality images for use in the visitor centre
Stage Three: Site Familiarisation and Stakeholder and Community Consultation	The following tasks were undertaken during this stage: • Undertook consultation with key stakeholders identified by the Shire of Boddington Project Manager • Facilitated a workshop with the broader community. A half-day workshop was undertaken in addition to a series of conversations with key community members • Undertook interviews with Aboriginal community representatives identified by the Shire of Boddington Project Manager
Stage Four: Interpretation Plan Development	The following tasks were undertaken during this stage: • Identified a range of stories that could be told at the site in addition to the four identified by the Project Manager

Stage	Activities
	• Identified a range of interpretive media that could be included in the visitor centre to create the interpretive experience • Submitted the draft plan for comment. Creative Spaces developed a schematic design of the Visitor Centre. Up to two design concepts have been included in the scope. These concepts included: • Floor plan layouts and circulation • Arrangement of the spaces in relation to the themes • Indications of the location and size of furniture and cabinetry • 3D perspectives of each proposed scheme (three per scheme, six in total) • Cost estimates
Stage Five: Final Interpretation Plan	Incorporate feedback and comments into the final plan and submit for approval.

The Site

Boddington is located 128km south east of Perth. The town is in the Peel region and falls within the Experience Perth Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) area. There are a number of state forest and other reserves close to Boddington including the Dwellingup State Forest, Youraing State Forest, Monadnocks Conservation Park and Lane Poole Reserve.

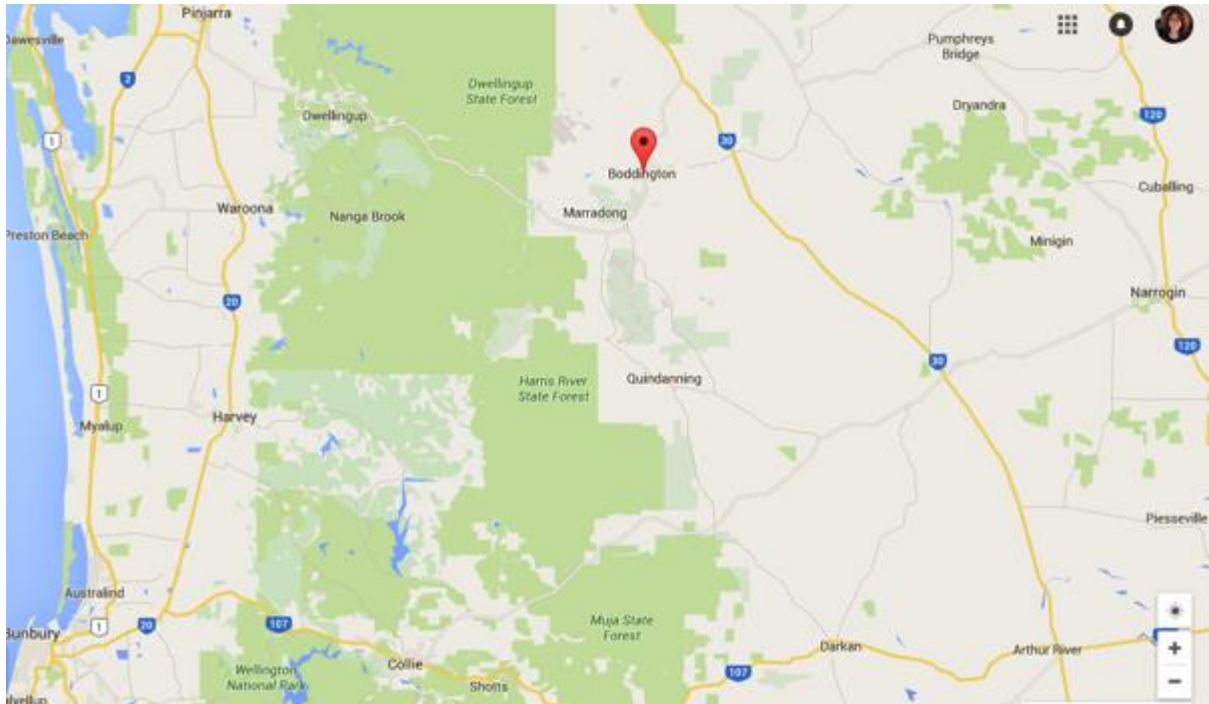Figure One: Boddington as it relates to Perth
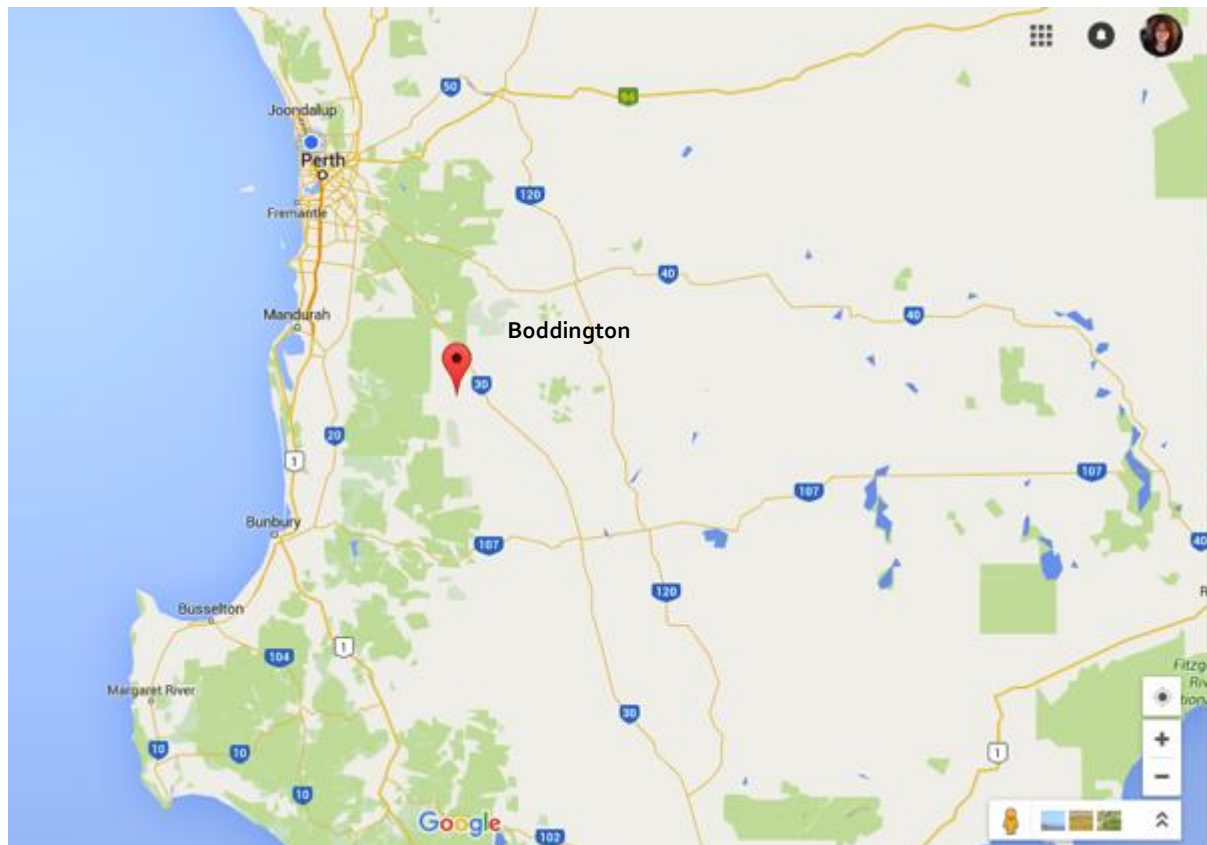
Source: Google Maps

The Bibbulmun Track walking trail and Munda Biddi cycle trail both pass close to the area and there are a significant number of camping areas in the reserves and forest areas. The major trails provide a range of experiences for visitors including day walks and cycles, camping facilities and visitor experiences like the Dwellingup Visitor Centre.

The Hotham River passes through the town and eventually joins up with the Murray River before linking to the Peel outlet and feeding into the Indian Ocean. This provides the opportunity for a rage of water based recreational activities.

The region is a popular weekend destination for Perth residents and provides a range of easy to access soft adventure activities as well as a range of safe activities for families including overnight camping, walking and cycling. The region is also popular during the spring wildflower season and provides some excellent opportunities for wildflower viewing and other nature–based experiences.

Boddington also has an annual Rodeo, which attracts significant numbers of people to town and has linked with the local Newmont Gold Mine which provides guided tours of operations for visitors and locals.

Figure two: Boddington and Immediate Surrounds

The site is part of a visitor complex that is being developed behind the CRC. The building was once part of the school complex and the interpretation centre will be housed within the old science room off Wuraming Street. The site is currently being transformed into a new town library and interpretive centre. There also has a recreational vehicle (RV) waste dump point and free water, which assists in bringing visitors to the location.

Figure Three: Boddington Town Detail and Centre Location
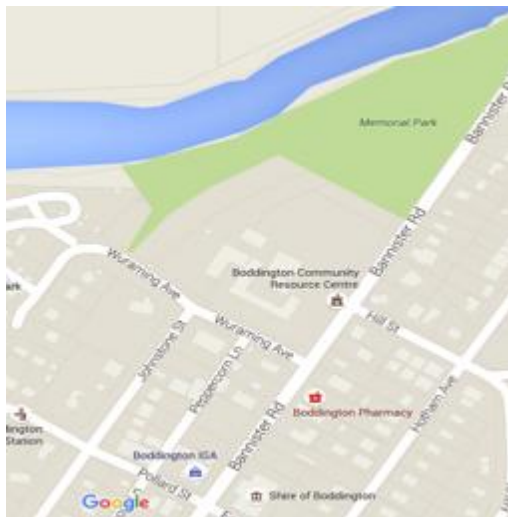
Brief History

The following provides a brief chronology of the development of Boddington.

Pre Settlement

This area provided a range of important resources for the Noongar community including food and water, stone for tools and ochre.

1830

Captain Bannister passed through the area on an expedition to find a route between the Swan River Colony and the settlement at King George's Sound (Albany).

1835

Alfred Hillman from the Surveyor General's Office went through the area to the west of Bannister's route.

Mid1800s

Aboriginal groups reportedly using red clay sites around Mokine Homestead area.

1858

Captain Theodore Fawcett arrived in the Swan River colony to take up property formerly owned by a relative near Pinjarra. Fawcett intended to breed horses for the Indian Army but found that the land around Pinjarra was unsuitable for horse breeding as the horses suffered from the 'Murray Complaint'. This was later found to be an ailment caused by a lack of trace elements in the soil. A house and mill was built here in 1865 known as Mokine.

1860s

William Pollard was born in 1820, in Country Wicklow, Ireland. He arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1839 aboard the Hindoo, as a worker for Captain F. C. Singleton who had bought part of the Peel Estate on the South Dandalup River. Pollard established himself at North Dandalup on a property named 'Mundup' which is still owned by his descendants. Pollard later obtained 50 acres at Marradong also known as Williams Location 47.

Settlement took place over a number of years. The Batt and the Farmer families were among the first to settle in the area. The Batts settled Marradong and Arthur Batt married Jane Pollard the eldest daughter of William Pollard.

The Farmers settled Hotham River; Thomas Farmer came from Beverley in around 1862. He set out from Beverley, with his friend and later brother-in-law George Blechynden, in search of a suitable piece of land on which to settle. Thomas' son, also Thomas, was the first white child born on the Hotham and was given the nickname of Deegee, meaning little one, by the local Aboriginal people.

1872

The largest flood in Boddington's history occurred and it impacted the original Farmer homestead, which had to be rebuilt with bricks fired on the site.

1875

Henry Boddington, after whom the town is named, leases land in the area and establishes his first farm.

1886

Noted Aboriginal man Dilyan murdered and buried about 5km south of Boddington on the Boddington-Marradong Road.

October 1891

Marradong Roads Board meets for the first time and is officially gazetted the following year.

1894

St Alban's Church built & graveyard established.

1894

Boddington railway line precinct is built. The construction of the railway through Boddington prompted the town to become the focal point for development, instead of Marradong and Hotham River.

1901

Marradong Hall is built. This was the original Roads Board meeting site and offices from 1902.

1905

Hotham River and Marradong Districts School was constructed with donated land from Mr. C. R. Farmer. The school was located on the riverbanks. It was the first school in the district and only closed when the Boddington Town School was built 15 years later.

1912

Boddington is officially gazetted.

Tullis Bridge is built creating stronger, swifter links with Pinjarra and Narrogin.

1913

Water tank erected at Etmilyn near Dwellingup and Mooliaman for supplying steam trains.

1914 to 1918

WORLD WAR ONE

Early 1920s

Farmer's Crossing railway siding is built.

1920

Boddington Old School is built, replacing the Hotham River School. This was later amalgamated with all in district in the 1940s.

1928

A road bridge built over the Crossman River.

January 1930

Black Monday fires devastate the town site.

> "Many settlers lost everything but their dwellings and only by strenuous efforts of the firefighters were the hall, church and Post Office at Boddington saved."
>
> Western Mail (Perth, WA: 1885 1954).

1931

Boddington Returned Service League sub branch is formed.

1934

Dick Strange discovers gold ore deposits on his Boddington property but it comes to nothing. He is accused of 'salting' his land and the cost and effort of processing the ore is deemed not to be viable at the time.

1936

Tullis Mill opens near the railway sidings. The Tullis Mill, owned by Bunnings, was the first general-purpose mill within the Marradong Roads Board area. It made a significant economic contribution to the town of Boddington.

21 April 1937

The Tannin Extracts Factory opened. The White Gum forest and Wandoo trees of the region were ideal for tannin extraction. The factory was located on the river to make use of river water for the boilers and extraction of groundwater was also instrumental to the factory's processes.

1939

Heavy rainfall saw the highest floods on record, undermining housing and culverts and threatening stock.

1939 to 1945

WORLD WAR TWO

Post 1945

The Banksiadale Bush Camp (or Single Men's Camp) was established after the Second World War and was still operating in 1962.

1949 to 1952

Asquith Railway Bridge over the Murray River is built.

1954

Infant Health Clinic is built with funds raised by local women.

1957

First Tannin Extracts Factory stops production, causing loss of jobs and movement away from the town.

1961/1962

The Mount Wells fire tower is built/rebuilt. It is the second highest such tower in WA and is indicative of the risk of fire due to the forest lands surrounding the town. It now has links with the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track as a campsite.

1961

Dwellingup fires ruin timber industry in the region beginning a decline of the Boddington township.

20 March 1964

The Tannin Extracts factory closes causing an exodus of families who had been employed there from the town.

1964

Camballing Road Bridge is built (collapsed 1992).

1968

The railway is closed, resulting in the cutting of an important lifeline for the town.

1960s and 1970s

Bauxite exploration programs begin exploring the south west for deposits. Partnerships are formed and dissolved between several major companies including Bauxite Holdings Pty Ltd, News Ltd, Alwest Pty Ltd, Dampier Mining Co, Reynolds Australia Alumina Ltd, Shell, BHP and Kobe Alumina Associates. Several key agreements are formed, namely the Bunbury Agreement (1971) and the Worsley Agreement (1978).

1973 to 1976

Geological mapping of the Boddington region by the Mines Department reveals greenstone belts, overlaid with clay and laterite, which held bauxite. This discovery lead to further testing as greenstone belts in other parts of WA had revealed gold deposits.

1976

The first Lions Club meeting is held. The Lions Club was very active and involved in several major developments in town.

July 1977

The Boddington Rodeo Grounds are built, opening a new attraction for the town and surrounding communities. The first rodeo is held on 5th November 1977 and it continues to draw visitors today.

1980

The Boddington Arts Council is established.

Bauxite mine construction begins at Worsley.

1981

Lions Weir is constructed

1984

Operations begin at the Worsley bauxite mine. The mine is connected to the refinery by a 51km over ground conveyor belt through the forest, the longest of its kind in the southern hemisphere.

1985

Government approval is given for gold mining to begin in Boddington, just northwest of the town site.

1986

Gold mine facilities construction begins (pool, club, school, houses etc.)

6 August 1987

The first gold pour from Boddington Gold Mine (BGM).

October 1988

Hedges Gold Mine commences operation to the west of the BGM site.

1990

Boddington War Memorial is constructed.

2009

Newmont takes over as sole owner/trader of gold mine.

2015

Waroona bush fire destroys the Long Gully bridge

Audience

There are no specific figures available for visitors to the Boddington area due to the small sample size. Figures provided below are from the peel Development Commission area which although not specifically about Boddington they do provide a broad understanding of visitor numbers to the region.

The majority of visitors to the region are intrastate (86%) with 9% from interstate and 5% international. Having said that only 68% of overnight trips are by intrastate travellers with 16% from interstate and 22% from international visitors suggesting that although small the interstate and international visitors stay longer in the region

Table Two: Visitor Summary

	YE Dec 2014/15 Annual Average	YE Dec 2014/15 %
Estimated Visitors		
Intrastate	488,500	86%
Interstate	50,000	9%
International	28,800	5%
Total	**567,300**	**100%**
Estimated Visitor Nights		
Intrastate	1,324,000	63%
Interstate	331,500	16%
International	455,700	22%
Total	**2,111,200**	**100%**
Average Length of Stay (Estimated Nights)		
Intrastate	2.7	
Interstate	6.6	-
International	15.8	-
Total	**3.7**	**-**

Source: Tourism WA Peel Development Commission Area - Two-Year Annual Average – YE Dec 2014/15

The majority of domestic visitors to the region are either on holiday (45%) or visiting friends and relatives (VFR) 41%. This is a similar breakdown with international visitors with 50% VFR and 48% on holiday. This suggests that visitors to the region could be in the frame of mind to explore and could be encouraged to visit Boddington if the experience is considered engaging enough.

Table Three: Purpose of Visit

	YE Dec 2014/15 Annual Average	YE Dec 2014/15 %
Estimated Domestic Visitors		
Holiday	242,000	45%
Visiting friends and relatives	220,000	41%
Business	66,000	12%
Other	10,500	2%
Estimated International Visitors		
Visiting friends and relatives	14,400	50%
Holiday or leisure	13,800	48%
Business	1,000	4%
Other	500	2%

Note: "Other" includes education, employment, personal appointment (e.g. medical), and all other purposes.

Source: Tourism WA - Peel Development Commission Area - Two Year Annual Average – YE Dec 2014/15

The majority of both domestic and international visitors fall in the ages 25-44 and 45-64, with many visitors travelling alone or in couples suggesting a significant representation of the grey nomads. This group ha a stronger interest in heritage and environmental experiences and are more likely to stay longer and explore further. Families are represented although they represent a smaller proportion of visitation.

Table Four: Age Profile

	YE Dec 2014/15 Annual Average	YE Dec 2014/15 %
Estimated Domestic Visitors		
15-24 Years	97,500	18%
25-44 Years	195,000	36%
45-64 Years	168,500	31%
65+ Years	77,500	14%
Total	**538,500**	**100%**
Estimated International Visitors		
15-24 Years	2,200	8%
25-44 Years	10,100	35%
45-64 Years	11,400	39%
65+ Years	5,100	18%
Total	**28,800**	**100%**

Source: Tourism WA - Peel Development Commission Area - Two Year Annual Average – YE Dec 2014/15

Table Five: Travel Group

	YE Dec 2014/15 Annual Average	YE Dec 2014/15 %
Estimated Domestic Visitors		
Travelling alone	144,000	27%
Adult Couple	140,000	26%
Friends / relatives	126,000	23%
Family group - parent(s) and children	108,500	20%
Other	20,000	4%
Total	**538,500**	**100%**
Estimated International Visitors		
Travelling Alone	12,900	45%
Adult couple	9,300	32%
Family group - parent(s) and children	3,300	11%
Friends / relatives	3,000	10%
Other	300	1%
Total	**28,800**	**100%**

Note: "Other" includes business associates, school groups, and sporting groups or other groups/clubs.

Source: Tourism WA - Peel Development Commission Area - Two Year Annual Average – YE Dec 2014/15

In developing the experience at the interpretive centre it is recommended that the following key audiences be considered:

- **Local Residents:** Many visitors are coming to the region with friends and relatives so it is important that people living in Perth, Mandurah and other towns in the Peel are encouraged to visit the centre and bring their friends and family when they come to visit. Linking the town's experience with other attractions in the region could assist in encouraging people to come and visit.
- **Perth Day Trip Market:** Boddington is an easy drive from Perth and provides an excellent opportunity for Perth day-trippers to explore the region and experience a range of activities including the forests, walking, cycling and potentially canoeing on the Hotham River.
- **Visiting Friends and Relatives:** This is an important market for Boddington as the town is off the main routes south so will rely on local knowledge. Encouraging local residents and people from Perth and Peel regions will provide an opportunity to increase visitation.
- **Grey Nomads:** This market tends to travel for longer and disperse further than many other sectors. They are educated and interested and generally have some knowledge of the region and its culture and history. Linking Boddington with other local attractions can assist in raising the profile of the town and encouraging the grey nomads to explore further.
- **Local School groups:** This is a vital market for the centre and in addition to raising awareness amongst local schools of the heritage of their ton it also provides a local experience for schools throughout the Peel region. It will be important to develop resource kits for teachers to encourage visitation.

Linkages

Although Boddington is not on the main road south it is in relatively close proximity to a number of popular visitor attractions that can be cross promoted to encourage longer stays and greater dispersal of visitors throughout the region. Some of the key linkages that could be investigated are:

- Department of Parks and Wildlife: Lane Poole Reserve and Dwellingup Forest Centre

- Bibbulmun Track
- Munda Biddi Trail
- Newmont Gold Mine Tour
- Forest reserves
- Hotham River
- Boddington Rodeo
- Wildflower season

Creating experiences that link to these attractions could assist in providing reasons for people to come off the Albany Highway and explore the region.

Marketing

Website – a website is essential for sharing and storing content. A good quality website will enable visitors to find out information about tourism activities and history prior to visiting in the planning phase of a trip. As a lot of the interpretive content is going to be digital there needs to be an accessible portal for sharing this content online. This should be linked with social media channels to encourage engagement and reach wider audiences.

Social Media – a social media strategy needs to be developed to identify which platforms should be used and plan for suitable content and scheduling of posts. It is suggested Boddington start with the following:

Facebook –a dedicated Facebook page for the VC, separate but linked with, the Shire of Boddington page. Council pages generally focus on operational information and attract different audiences than those seeking tourist or historical information.

Lost Boddington – any Facebook page should establish a connection with the Lost Boddington Facebook group as they have an existing dedicated group of followers and contributors.

YouTube – as audiovisual material will form part of the collection, a video sharing platform will make the sharing of this content simple.

Instagram – as photographic material will be key to the collection a platform such as Instagram will enable sharing of these images as well as allowing for competitions or encouraging use of hashtags for locals and visitors to associate with their Boddington experiences. For example, the #justanotherdayinwa campaign inviting people to share their typical Western Australian experiences. Other existing hashtags will help with developing content i.e. using #onthisday for date specific images.

Brochures – promotional flyers and posters could be useful locally and regionally to promote the centre. Distribution in other meeting places (library, CRC, Arts Centre, Council buildings, community meeting spaces) will get exposure. There may be opportunities in other regional visitors centres.

Bodd News – a regular article in the local newsletter could be used to share stories and historic photographs (in conjunction with the existing historic newspaper extracts already published in the newsletter). It is also a good place to invite contributions to the collection from locals.

Joint Promotions – linking with exiting tourism associations such as the Mandurah and Peel Association, Australia's South West and Experience Perth with provide an avenue for more traditional promotion through brochures and visitor centres as well as a broader level of distribution. Experience Perth prints thousands of brochures and has a sophisticated distribution system which will ensure a much broader reach than the Shire could have through existing

marketing and promotions budgets. Membership of these organisations is reasonably priced for the associated benefits.

Themes, Stories Media

The National Association of Interpreters (NAI), the peak body for interpretation in the USA defines interpretation as:

> A **mission based** communication process that forges **emotional and intellectual connections** between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.

The important aspects of this definition are that the process is mission based, meaning that the organisation is trying to achieve something through the communication. The other important element is that the aim is to connect emotionally and intellectually with the visitor. Interpretation is not merely providing information about a place or creating an entertaining experience; Interpretation provides a bridge between the intellectual and the emotional, the tangible and the intangible. It provides the visitor with an understanding of why they should care about the resource as well as forging strong connections between visitors and the resource.

Professor Sam Ham, a leading interpretation expert, suggests that interpretation should be: themed, organised, relevant and enjoyable. This provides the ability to attract the attention of the visitor and then provide them with an engaging message that they are more likely to remember after the experience. It must be remembered that the visitor is not obliged to undertake the experience and is giving their attention freely, therefore creating something that not only connects but also engages the audience it vitally important. Making something enjoyable does not mean that challenging subjects should be avoided; it simply means that the perspective of the audience needs to be taken into consideration when delivering difficult messages.

The **mission** of this project is to create an engaging visitor experience that recognises the history of the Boddington Shire and encourages visitors to stay longer and spend more money in the area.

A thematic approach allows the organisation to identify a core message that they would like the visitor to understand by the time they leave the site. It has been found that the majority of visitors do not remember the specific facts that are presented to them but they do form an understanding of the place based on the information they receive. Therefore, it is important to develop the interpretation with a specific message in mind.

A theme statement is a complete sentence that is specific and interesting, and creates a bridge between the tangible resource and the intangible meanings, concepts, feelings and ideas associated with them. The ultimate question being answered is "so what?" why is this resource or place important to the visitor and the community. The central theme is then used to guide the development of a series of linked sub themes. Creating a central theme allows the organisation to narrow the stories that can be told at a place and assist in creating a more cohesive visitor experience.

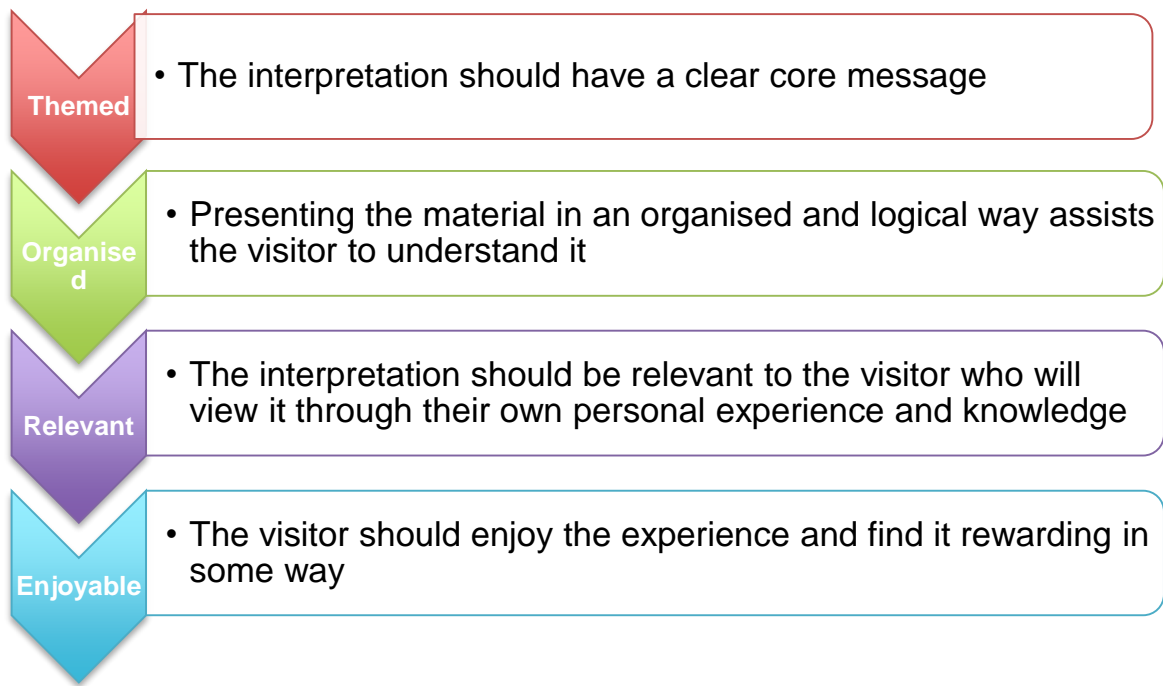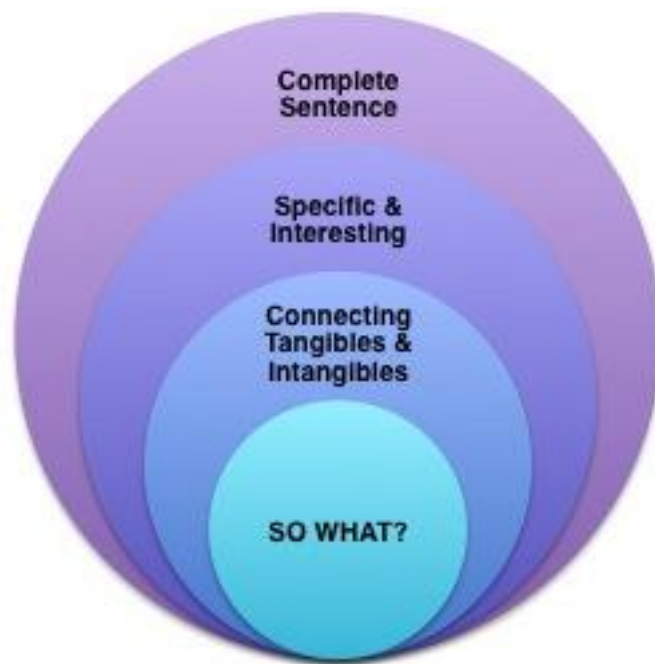Figure Four: Themed Interpretation Model

- Themed: • The interpretation should have a clear core message

- Organised: • Presenting the material in an organised and logical way assists the visitor to understand it

- Relevant: • The interpretation should be relevant to the visitor who will view it through their own personal experience and knowledge

- Enjoyable: • The visitor should enjoy the experience and find it rewarding in some way

Figure Five: Creating a Theme Statement

Complete Sentence

Specific & Interesting

Connecting Tangibles & Intangibles

SO WHAT?

Source: Tim Merriman & Lisa Brochu Workshop

Central Theme

The natural environment is one of the most important driving forces for the settlement of this area and it has continued to have a significant impact on the fortunes of the area. Aboriginal people visited the area to take advantage of a range of natural resources including the river, plants and animals as well as ochre for ceremonies and a stone quarry for tools. Many challenges have occurred over the settlement period linked to the environment including fires, floods and the growth and decline of different industries reliant on the environment such as timber harvesting, agriculture and the tannin extracts factory. This suggests that **resilience** is a key universal theme that runs through the story of Boddington and the ability of the communities to adapt to often harsh environmental conditions from the Aboriginal people using the resources to settlers finding ways to make a living on the land.

> Boddington and its people have been shaped, challenged and blessed by the environment.

Sub Themes

There are many stories that could be told about Boddington to highlight the rich natural and social history of the region, choosing a limited number of sub themes can provide a means of organising the stories into a coherent framework.

Five sub themes were identified by the Shire at the beginning of this process these being agriculture, mining, timber, railway and indigenous. A number of additional themes were explored including the environment and prominent people. The stories of agriculture, mining and timber can be brought together under the sub theme of industry and three other story topics could be explored.

Environment: the natural environment is the driver behind Boddington's location and ongoing survival. Boddington has been, and continues to be, shaped by the environment. The river plays an important role, as do the forests and reserves that surround the town. All of the industries associated with Boddington rely on the environment including timber, tannin extraction and gold and bauxite mining.

People: The people of the area have a strong connection to the place and to each other. The Indigenous people used the area for water and food as well as using it as a source of ochre and stone for tools and weapons. Settlement brought a diverse community that supports one another and is active in contributing to the town's development and strong sense of place.

Railway: The railway was a vital link connecting Boddington to other regional towns. Though not all positive, it influenced the built and natural environments of the town as well as providing jobs, transport and social links with the rest of WA.

Industry: Primary industry has shaped Boddington's history, influencing the ebb and flow of the town's population. The timber industry, Extracts Factory, agriculture and mining could all be explored here with mining being a more recent part of Boddington's industrial history that is now the lifeblood of the town, drawing on and influencing the unique natural environment and bringing Boddington to global attention.

Stories

The stories are the substance behind the sub themes, detailing the lives and occurrences that have shaped Boddington and demonstrate the resilience of both the environment and the community. A workshop held with the community identified a number of stories that could be included. Further research would need to be undertaken to develop the story content and to uncover appropriate images. Table six below outlines some of the stories identified through the consultation process.

Table Six: Sub Themes and Stories

Subtheme	Possible Stories

Environment – The Environment has shaped the development of Boddington and challenged the people that live here	• **The Rivers System**
	   o Hotham, Crossman, Bannister, Williams and ultimately the Murray
	   o Fertile plains for farming
	   o Fertile valleys – Marradong and Quindanning
	   o Water catchment
	• **Forests**
	   o Jarrah
	   o Milling
	   o Timber Industry
	• **Parks and Reserves**
	   o Crossman Reserve, Redhill Reserve, Quindanning reserve, Lane Poole Reserve, Dwellingup State Forest
	   o Rare flora
	   o Wildflowers
	   o Fauna
	• **Pre Settlement**
	   o Seasonal use of the area by Aboriginal people (the river as a resource)
	   o Food and medicine from flora and fauna – freshwater clams, perch, marron, eels.
	   o Ochre pits
	   o Animal traps
	   o Stone quarry
	• **Natural Resources**
	   o Jarrah Forest - Jarrah is associated with Bauxite – timber industry
	   o Minerals & Ore (Bauxite, Gold, Copper)
	   o Rehabilitation of the Bauxite mine
	• **Farmland** – fertilising and tree clearing and the resulting impacts including salinity
	• **Tannin Extracts Factory** – the effects of the use of caustic soda in the processing on Ranford Pool
	• **Railway** – located here because of the topography
	• **Dams** linked to block settlement

People and Community Life – Creating the community took many people and	**Indigenous People** • Noongar • Land Use • Shield trees • Working on the land with the settlers • Today's Indigenous community **Explorers** • Hillman to Albany Highway, Ranford was the surveyor • Survey Trees – Cnr Bannister and Chalk Road – how they marked the routes,

Subtheme	Possible Stories
	• Early families – Farmers, Batts, Pollards, Fawcetts, Buchholtz, • Boddington Pools – Where Boddington watered his sheep (allegedly) • The Farmer Family – Boddington • Fawcett and the Pollards at Mokine • The Batt Family – Marradong Farm • Family rivalries **Waves of Settlement** • Pre Settlement traditional Aboriginal life • 1850s – Farmer settlers – Farmers, Batts, Fawcetts, Pollards • 1900s – Timber and Railway • 1910s – Boddington Town and Railway • 1920s – School extended • 1930s – Tannin Extracts • 1940s – European migrants and displaced persons, Ranford and returning soldiers • 1950s – post war migrants • 1960s – Extracts expansion then closure • Decline of farming • Closure of Extracts **Notable People** • First indigenous pilot • Poet Jack Davis • Carol Stagbouer – Fiona Stanley's colleague • Notable stories e.g. love triangle murder **Social Life** • Cricket • Footy • Sports Groups • Dances at Marradong and Ranford • Horse Racing • Bicycle Races • Boddington Rodeo – 40th **Anniversary** in 2016 • Community Clubs – Lions, RSL, CWA (some built by Worsley) **Coping with isolation** • Mrs. Farmer – first white woman in town who gave birth to the first white baby – Thomas Farmer - Deejee • Relationships with Indigenous people • Community supporting one another **Health and Wellbeing** • Epidemics in the early days (Walwalling – measles) • Doctors and nurses (first doctor Neil Sames) • Distance to help – nursing post at Dwellingup until the 1950s • Infant Health Clinic – fundraised by women of the town

Subtheme	Possible Stories
	• Teachers and nurses received free training in return for a country placement – (Heather Stevens) • Being embraced by the tiny community **Migration** • Early clearers – Italian stick pickers • Banksiadale Migrant Camp • Post war migration **Education** • Links with industry – employment lead to need for schools – expanding schools with the growth of the population • Shared teachers – Marradong, Camballing, Hotham River • 1950s school bus – amalgamated lots of little schools and transported the kids to one place • Going to school and school experiences • Oral history project
Railway	• Main Railway – Pinjarra, Dwellingup, Narrogin • Steam – rail trail • Impact on environment – construction, timber industry, fires from sparks (letter from a lady at Marradong saying she didn't want the railway because of the sparks and potential for fire) • Timber transport • People that worked on the railways – building, operating • Passengers and social connection • Bridges their construction and destruction (Tullis, Farmer's, • Long Gully) • Water Tanks – Mooliamans, Etmilyn and Congelin (built heritage) • Decline then closure of the railway and impact on town • Railway as built heritage and attraction (rail trail)
Industry	**Timber industry** **Extracts Factory** • Contribution to the war effort tanning leather **Agriculture** • Crops • Nomadic workers • Aboriginal workers (poison plant clearing) **Farming** • Early shepherds • Sheep farming & wool • Cattle **Mining** • Earlier discovery – Dick Strange – rumours around him 'salting his land'

Subtheme	Possible Stories
	- Links with Environment (Wandoo = greenstone belt = minerals) - Bauxite - Gold - Development of town – growth of population, community facilities including swimming pool, club, school, houses etc. - Infrastructure largest single belt conveyor in the southern hemisphere Boddington to Worsley near Collie

Media

Panels – high quality replaceable or interchangeable text panels will hold the majority of the information in the centre. Any objects can be attached to the panels and should be used for design or interpretive purposes either secured safely for touching or safely displayed behind acrylic for objects too fragile or significant for touching.

Objects and Artefacts – At this stage there is no collection as such at the centre and as the site is likely to be an unmanned, self guided experience it is recommended that no objects or artefacts be used. Images of relevant artefacts could be used or short videos of artefacts being used could be used instead of the actual object. This could also be a good way of showing shield and survey trees without exposing them to visitor impact.

High Tech/Multimedia – Static panels can provide an overview of the stories but there will always be a limitation on space and the amount of content that can be included and still maintain visitor interest. The development of digital context could facilitate a deeper connection and understanding of the area's stories. This could include the development of oral histories as well as interviews with local people to preserve stories, this could be particularly effective with some of the region's older residents that have stories that will be lost once they have gone.

The development of a smartphone application could provide visitors wit a souvenir of their visit and the ability to learn more about Boddington before and after their visit. The content of the application would have to be stored on some kind of web application and this could then be used within the centre loaded on to iPads or tablets that would give visitors access to deep layers of information and digital content. Interactive touch screen tablets will enable a larger collection of images or audiovisual material to be made available in the centre. They are cost effective, easy to manage and content can be updated and changed regularly and easily. For audio content headphones should be used to prevent noise spill in the small space.

On Line – The development of an application of any kind relies on the availability of information and digital resources. Ensuring that the back end of the application is developed in such a way to allow the easy ongoing development of resources is important to encourage repeat visitation and connection with the place before and after the visit. This also provides a resource that people can access from home and can assist in creating a stronger connection with the place for locals and visitors.

Low Tech Interactives – These would provide a range of touchable and sensory experiences to provide a more kinaesthic experience, this is particularly important for younger visitors who learn through "doing". There is a huge potential for 'touchable' displays to encourage a hands on experience for visitors. The gold panning tables currently used for the Gold Mine tours could be integrated into the experience (on the deck proposed in stage 4), and touchable minerals and ore would be simple but interesting inclusions in the centre. In addition the different crops that are farmed in the area could be included on a touch table as well as stones that were used for Aboriginal tools and possibly shards of stone resulting from the working of the stone for tools and weapons.

Community Display Case – a showcase or display area should be made available for community displays, this could include schools, community and sporting groups that could be invited to create small displays to add to the centre and encourage community involvement. The visitor centre staff could also create temporary exhibitions around time and theme specific events such as wildflowers or the rodeo. They could also develop displays with partners such as a specific gold mining display.

Oral Histories – The town already has some oral histories but there are a number of community members that are aging and it would be good to undertake a project to interview these people and collect some of their memories linked to the themes in the visitor centre and resources that already

exist such as images and artefacts. T may also be worth recording them with a view to the development of trails around town giving their reminiscences about places that would be included on the trail. This would add depth to any commentary that may be developed for a trail and could be provided as a podcast or a series of podcasts linked to topics important to the development of Boddington. The Oral History Association of Western Australia can provide information and resources for the collection of oral histories as well as identifying grant funding available to assist with the professional collection and storage of these histories. http://www.ohaa-wa.com.au

Brochure racks – One of the important aspects of the centre is the provision of linkages to other experiences in and around Boddington. The inclusion of a map identifying some of the other attractions would be useful as well as the provision of brochure racking for local activities. This could also be included in the website that could be accessed through the iPads/Tablets.

Management

Management

It is understood that the interpretive centre will be unmanned with staff in the library area of the building and visitors being encouraged to undertake a self guided experience of the interpretive space. Some thought will need to be given to the management of the interpretive space in terms of security of displays and equipment, refreshing the interpretive experience and maintenance of the space to deal with any damage or cleaning requirements. Whilst the space may be unmanned it will still have staff requirements and the responsibility for the centre is likely to fall to the manager of the library/visitor centre space.

Collections

As there is little to no physical collection for use in the centre a collections policy should be developed outlining what the Shire would like to collect and how they will manage this. This will give some control over what is collected and ensure resources are allocated appropriately. It is recommended that the focus be on digital collections to avoid issues of storage, conservation and care of physical objects. The Shire may want to make their underlying collections policy one that avoids the collection of physical objects but works with the community to create a virtual collection through photographs and stories.

Managing Content

It will be important to update content regularly and it is recommended that a 'bank' of digital images and oral histories be collected to allow for the displays to be refreshed. Not all content needs to be displayed at all times. Digital storage, copying and formatting will need to be considered and advice can be sought from organisations such as the Oral History Association of WA. If content is to be displayed on iPads and Tablets in the centre then updating and changing content will be able to be managed more simply.

Security

As the site will be manned in conjunction with the Library and Cafe it is recommended that all objects on display be secure and hardwearing. Any significant objects should be behind display cases and any on open display securely attached to panels. A motion sensored audio upon entry is recommended which could provide a welcome to the site or Country while also alerting staff to visitors on site and enable staff to greet visitors when possible.

Linkages with CRC

The CRC has an existing display of promotional and tourist information as well as a historical schoolroom interpretative experience. Instead of duplicating the school interpretation there should be linkages established between the two sites to encourage visitation of both. It is recommended that the tourist information be moved from the CRC to the new visitor centre, which would enable expansion of the school interpretation into the modern part of the CRC building, thus enhancing the existing story.

Engagement Strategy

Ongoing engagement activities and events will encourage locals to use the site and feel connected to the history. Through high quality engagement activities the visitor centre can become a new social space for locals as well as a key attraction for visitors.

Memory Sharing Day – as there is little to no existing collection it is recommended that a memory-sharing day be planned. Invite locals to share their photographs, videos, stories and memories and possibly objects to contribute content to a community collection to be used for interpretation.

On the day material can be scanned or digitised (to keep a digital copy for the collection and avoid having to manage a physical archive) and memories can be recorded either audio visually or physically. If the day is successful it may be necessary to take loans of materials to complete digitising at a later stage. This sort of activity will also identify key individuals for future collecting and engagement activities.

At the community consultation some key figures were identified who could be a starting point for the memory day:

- Ray Farmer
- Denise Hardie
- Joan Batt
- Gloria Batt
- Alex Pollard
- Byron Wessels (architect for the project)

Opening event – a small celebration for the opening of the visitor centre inviting all contributors. This will make the community feel ownership and pride in the centre.

Town Heritage Walks or Trail – given the proximity of the new visitor centre to natural and built heritage sites in the town, namely the historic centre with the Roads Board Hall and Arts Committee building, walk trails should be developed. An application or simple brochure trail could be developed to encourage exploration of the town and river, building on the key themes in the visitor centre.

Living Books – A storytelling event whereby people with interesting stories about the town can be 'borrowed' from the Library or visitor centre to have conversations about set topics. This is very successful as an intergenerational activity with schoolchildren and elders of the town.

Demonstrations – small demonstrations of relevant skills could be staged at the visitor centre, tying in with the themes in the interpretation plan. The existing gold panning experience is a logical place to start given the equipment is already there.

School activities – the space has been designed to accommodate school activities and material should be developed in accordance with the Australian Curriculum and in consultation with local schools to create meaningful learning experiences. This could focus on the sub themes and include Aboriginal history and easily link with the river and surrounding natural environment, working in conjunction with local Aboriginal community.

National Trust Heritage Festival (NTHF) – a nationally coordinated, month long festival held in April/May each year. The Festival encourages participation in history and heritage across Australia. By registering events with the NTHF host organisations are provided with templates and promotional material, as well as having their events promoted at a state level, reaching new

audiences. The Festival will be held from 18 April –18 May in 2017 and the theme is "Having a Voice", a topic which Boddington could easily get involved with.

Bibliography

Ferrell, J (1992) *Becoming Boddington*, Self Published

Boddington SuperTown (1992) Volumes 1 & 2

www.trove.gov.au - accessed for additional information

Personal interviews and conversations

Appendix One: Community Consultation

Boddington Consultation

10 June 2016

RSL Hall

Attending

- Megan Ugle
- Rod? (from the Motel)
- Amanda Blunt
- Elizabeth
- Greg Marston
- Graham Reynolds (from the mine - I think that was his name)
- Heather Stevens
- Geoff
- Dot Darby
- Dawn (who left early - I didn't catch her last name).

Suggested Topics

- Old School: Education (note: the historical society has created a video on education stories)
- Transport: Railway, Truck and Cart Haulage
- Industry: Timber, Mining, Extract factory (tannin), employment, displaced persons, farming
- Indigenous History: Pre and post settlement, farming links, elders, reserves, families, land use
- Community Life: recreation, schooling, rodeo, learning from each other
- People and families
- Settlement
- Dog Stories???
- Other communities: Marradong, Ranford, Quindanning
- Environment: 47% of the region is forest (check this figure), river, minerals in the soil that were not available at the coast, ochre, stone chips, art now and then, flora and fauna

Stories and Media

Topics	Stories
Transport	Railway • Steam – rail trail • Main Railway – Pinjarra, Dwellingup, Narrogin • 1912 Farmer's Crossing • Timber transport • Passengers • People that worked on the railways – building, operating • Bridges – 1912 Tullis Bridge (central section gone) – to Farmer's Crossing • Long Gully Bridge burnt out in 2015 fire • Water Tanks – Moolianabs (?), Etmilyn (check spelling and heritage trail?) Siding on the Murray River • Start of Boddington – letter from a lady at Maradong saying she didn't want the railway because of the sparks and potential for fire • Fear of fire – sparks from the train • People using the train
Pre Settlement	Indigenous • Seasonal Use • Landscape reference points – Mount Saddleback, Hills, River, Sacred Sites • Ranford Pool • DIA Website has Aboriginal sites marked – uses – Ochre, river for food and water • Farming linkages – shearers • Camping and Corroborree sites • Families: Thorns, Collards, Ninyettes (1950s) • Fawcetts • Dilyan • • Vinnie to facilitate • SWALSC registered contacts •
Settlement	Explorers • Hillman to Albany Highway • Survey Trees – Cnr Bannister and Chalk Road – how they marked the routes, shield trees • Ranford was the surveyor • Naming stuff after their mates • Pollard family • Boddington Pools – Where Boddington watered his sheep (allegedly)

Topics	Stories
	• Hall family – early settlers – Bucholz (?) • Farmers – Boddington • Batts Marradong Farm • Rivalries • Stevens • Wilkies – Bushy Park – Transcontinental Railway • Walwalling where the children that caught measles were buried – epidemics in the early days
	Waves of settlement • 1850s – Farmer settlers – Farmers, Batts, Fawcetts • 1900s – Timber and Railway • 1910s – Boddington Town and Railway • 1920s – School extended • 1930s – Tannin Extracts – contribution to the war effort – tanning leather • 1940s European Migrants and displaced persons, Ranford and Returning soldiers • 1950s – Karafils family from Albania • 1960s Extracts expansion then closure • Links to the mining industry • Decline of farming • Closure of Extracts • 1 Jan 1980 – Construction saddleback bauxite mine • 1984 – Started mining • Conveyor belt built through the forest from Boddington to Worsley near Collie – largest single belt conveyor in the southern hemisphere • 1986 – Gold mine construction including swimming pool, club, school, houses etc • 1987 mining began
Country Life	Education • Every mill had a school • Half schools – shared teachers – Marradong, Camballing, Hotham River • 1950s school bus – amalgamated lots of little schools and transported the kids to one place • CRC has school story resource • Extending schools with the growth of the population • Going to school • Price Brothers drowning – memorial by the river
Trials of Life	Coping with isolation • Mrs Farmer – first white woman in town and first white baby • Relationships with Indigenous people

Topics	Stories
	Health and Wellbeing • Doctors and nurses • Distance to help – nursing post at Dwellingup until the 1950s • First Dr. Neil Sames • I will never live here – famous last words (Heather) – Teachers and nurses received free training and in return had to do a country stint – Heather came here as a recently graduated teacher never wanted to live here but has been here since the 1950s • Being embraced by the tiny community and easily became part of it • Early clearers – stick pickers - Italians
Recreation	• Cricket • Footy • Sports Groups • 3Dances @ Marradong and Ranford • Horse Racing • Bicycle Races • 1976 Rodeo started – this year is its 40th birthday – should be a big event this year • Photos • Community Clubs built by the mining company in 1986 – Worsley Alumina as part of the Gold Mine Development. Also contributed a significant amount of infrastructure to the town – hospital, school etc • Lions, RSL, CWA – back page of the community newsletter has information • Telephone came to town with Worsley
	Hotels – Socialising and music venue • Boddington • Marradong (Leura) • Quindanning Post office, accommodation etc Sly Grog
Environment	Rivers • Hotham, Crossman, Bannister, Williams and ultimately the Murray • Food and Water in and around the rivers – freshwater clams, perch, marron eels Salinity – • River

Topics	Stories
	• Farmland – fertilising and tree clearing impacts Industry • Extracts – Ranford Pool • Causic Soda in processing Railway – • Located here because of the topography • River courses • Fertile plains for farming • Fertile valleys – Marradong and Quindanning Forests • Jarrah • Milling • Timber Industry Dams linked to block settlement Natural Resources • Jarrah Forest • Jarrah is associated with Bauxite • Bauxite • Gold • Copper • Rehanilitsation of the Bauxite mine Crossman Reserve Flora and Fauna and indigenous uses – food and medicine Rare flora/wildflowers Water catchment Redhill reserve, forest and Quindanning reserve
People	First indigenous pilot Poet Jack Davis Carol Stagbouer – Fiona Stanley's right hand person Love triangle murder – Sherry/Waldock Other folk to speak to Ray Farmer Denise Hardie Joan Batt Gloria Batt Alex Pollard Wessels (Byron is the architect for the project)

Collecting personal stories at community events