



Point Lonsdale Civic Association Inc.

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Representing Point Lonsdale Residents since 1910

March 2017 NEWSLETTER

2017 Annual Subscription Payment.

If you have not yet paid your annual subscription, **the annual subscription payment for 2017 is due & payable.** The subscription **amount for 2017 is \$10 per person.** Donations are welcome in addition to the payment of the subscription amount. The preferred method of payment is by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to the PLCA bank account. Alternatively, payment can be made by cheque or cash by hand delivery at a member meeting, or via the Treasurer.

2017 Membership Renewal form is below, please fill in and return with your payment:

[Membership Renewal Form:](#)

The PLCA bank account details are:

Account Name:	Point Lonsdale Civic Association
Bank:	Bendigo Bank, Queenscliff
BSB:	633108
Account Number:	131346017
Description:	<u>Surname and Initials of the member must be shown</u>

If payment is made by cheque, please write your name on the reverse of the cheque if it is from an account different to your name. Please, **DO NOT** send cash via the post.

Please ensure you complete the Membership Renewal and Subscription Payment form. Forms will be available on website for new membership, if you know of family or friends who wish to become a member of PLCA, please advise them to join. Just scan & email form or deliver at meeting or post.

Open House Presentation on Front Beach Soil Erosion from DELWP

The State Department of Environment, Land, Water, & Planning (DELWP) presented an “Open House” to present to the community information about the ongoing issue of soil erosion on the Front Beach on the 18 January 2017. at the Pt. Lonsdale Bowls Club. The 2 sessions, were very popular – with approximately 400 interested and concerned 3225 residents and visitors looking at the displays and contributing to the discussion.

The full report is here - <https://engage.vic.gov.au/lonsdale-bight>

The official community engagement process has finished, and following this an 'Engagement Summary Report' has been slated to be released on 30 March 2017.

Point Lonsdale Light House Reserve – Application for National Heritage listing.

An application has been lodged with the Commonwealth Government Department of the Environment and Energy to have Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve's military and maritime history formally recognized by a National Heritage listing.

The National Heritage application can readily be found on the website of the Friends of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve: www.lonsdalelighthousereserve.org

There are only 108 sites on the National Heritage list of which 26 are in Victoria including the Point Nepean defence sites and quarantine station. The application proposes to link Point Lonsdale with Fort Queenscliff, Queenscliff Lighthouse and Point Nepean due to their similar importance to the development of safe navigation & trade, together with their interlocked military history dating back to the reports produced by Sir Peter Scratchley on the defence of Port Phillip Bay in 1860. Fort Queenscliff already has a Commonwealth Heritage listing (as it remains under Commonwealth Government management).

In 2014, the Council-appointed Community Reference Group for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve sought progress on a National Heritage/Park listing for the Reserve as part of its recommendations for the future use of the site. In June 2016, the Federal Minister for the Environment (The Hon. Greg Hunt MP), and Member for Corangamite (The Hon. Sarah Henderson MP) announced support for National Heritage listing, noting such recognition not only provides greater protection for the site but also opens up new options for grant funding to maintain and improve the badly deteriorating built assets on the Reserve.

In January this year, the Council advised it did not have the capacity to undertake the research and assess the likelihood of a successful application. Consequently, with applications closing in mid-February, a local resident has made a submission with the goal of having the Council taking over the engagement with the Commonwealth.

The application cites socio-economic research by the NSW Government which identifies clear benefits to regional economies stemming from 'protected areas'. The report states "Protected areas attract visitors into these regions who buy goods and services such as accommodation, food and beverages, and souvenirs, and spend money on...recreational activities. This expenditure has a positive direct impact on local businesses, and those businesses providing inputs to these suppliers. Businesses that directly and indirectly provide services to park managers and park visitors also employ labour and make payments to households. These households then also purchase local goods and services. Thus expenditure on goods and services made by park managers and park visitors has direct and flow-on impacts on the economies around national parks."

Correspondence with the Council contained in the application notes National Heritage listing can provide an excellent opportunity to achieve greater recognition and understanding of the Borough's depth of heritage, which in turn will act as a year-round tourism draw card aligning with the Council's tourism strategy.

The Council recently called for nominations for a new reference group to assist with the implementation of a works program for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. Applications close on 17 March and details are on the Council's website. It would be expected that any works to be undertaken on the Reserve would be done in context of a possible National Heritage listing.

Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group Update

At its February meeting Council resolved to establish a new Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group, endorse a Terms of Reference document drafted by Council Officers, appoint 2 Councillors to the Reference Group consistent with the Terms of Reference, request the CEO to administer a recruitment and selection process for public membership to the Reference Group and provide a report back to the March Council meeting. The primary purpose of the Reference Group, consisting of up to 10 community and or skills based members, will be to provide information and feedback to assist Council's decision regarding the detailed design of improvements to the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. Other Reference Group members will include 2 Councillors (Community Wellbeing & Amenity and Planning, Heritage, Arts and Culture portfolio holders), relevant Council Officers appointed by the CEO. Specialist design consultant presentations may also occur throughout the process.

Objectives of the Committee are to assist the production of a detailed design of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve (based on Option 2 Master Plan), provide information and feedback on detailed design options proposed by Council's project staff, provide an avenue for the views of community members and provide a conduit to present this information to the Reference Group. A detailed Terms of Reference document was attached to the Council Agenda.

Following a submission for Stage 1, of a 2 Stage program, Council is currently awaiting news regarding a \$500,000 State Government grant which will be matched by a Federal Government contribution to the "Green Army" program and \$100,000 in cash from Council. Stage 1 will comprise landscaping and revegetation, removal of old buildings, new and improved paths through the site and connecting to adjacent areas, construction of a ship viewing platform with live shipping data and improved BBQ facilities and interpretative signs. Stage 2 will comprise reconfiguration and upgrade of car park and entrance to the reserve, upgrade public toilet, upgrade of historic "Engine Shed" and new kiosk (exact location to be determined).

Council have now called for Expressions of Interest for up to 10 people to form a Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group. Written Expression of Interest submissions will be received at the Council Offices, 50 Learmonth Street, Queenscliff or by email at info@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au until 4pm Friday 17 March 2017. Applicants must meet eligibility criteria and address the selection criteria as outlined in the Terms of Reference. For further information regarding the Terms of Reference and Expression of Interest template visit www.queenscliffe.vic.gov.au

Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve – PLCA member meeting 10 March.

At the PLCA member meeting on the 10 March 2017, a discussion was held around the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve – and the direction the Reference Group should take:

The Following was put forward by members present:

- PLCA should be allocated 3 positions on the Reference Group (see above)
- Members of Reference group should come from expertise in relevant areas including previous Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group membership.
- Terms of Reference need to be qualified.
- Community overwhelmingly expect "option 2" from the original Community Consultation on the PLLHR to be actioned. This was re iterated by many on the night.
- If Ratepayers are ultimately footing the bill for ongoing upkeep of the PLLR, they should get what they wanted (Option 2); not BoQ telling ratepayers what they are getting.

- Roads and Entry point needs looking at.
- National Heritage should be acknowledged.
- Discussion about inaction on the site ,whilst awaiting finding announcements, by the BoQ:
 - Grafitti is getting worse.
 - Damage to the site
 - People living/squatting on site (Toc-H building)
 - Gun shots heard at the site by nearby residents and have been reported to Police.
- Big picture/integrate with Shortlands Bluff (Queenscliffe Light House Reserve) as part of an history focussed master plan

Motion from meeting:

“The PLCA requests that the 4 original reference group members [A. Sutherland; M. Jaensch; D. Kenwood, & L. Hunt] from the PLCA, be appointed to the new Reference Group for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve”

Motion passed Unanimously.

(Photo's Below are of the recent fire on the weekend of the 11/12 March of one of the Toc-H Sheds that was set alight)





Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve: accommodation plans - update

[Editor's note: Some of this information has been sourced from the Queenscliff Community Association]

There is community disquiet emerging about the Council's proposal to build 6 two-storey tourist units on the Crown Land parcel adjacent to the Queenscliff White Lighthouse. The Council has obtained partial funding for Stage 1 of a \$6.99M project which, amongst a range of works, will provide tourist accommodation for 'high end' visitors. The Council wants to eventually build 10 such units. Council considers the property development is needed to increase tourism in the Borough which it states has been in decline for many years with a negative impact on economic activity and employment opportunities. The project also includes the construction of a pedestrian and bikeway around the Fort wall; a lighting array to illuminate the Fort wall; street landscaping to Hesse Street (south of King St); and, an upgrade of Queenscliff sporting facilities and the adjoining caravan park utilities.

Many of the details of the Council's Business Case have only been made available following an FOI application by the Queenscliff Community Association. This has in turn led to a greater understanding of the statements and conclusions made in the Council's submission relating to the need for new accommodation, such as:

- The Council implies there was community consultation and support given to the development. This is not supported by the 2014 Council survey results in which around 80% of the 320 responses selected either 'no change' or 'landscaping' as their first or second preferences.
- The Council implies there is business support for the development yet in recent open letters to the Queenscliff Herald and The Rip magazine, 10 (unnamed) accommodation providers strongly object to the Council's plans. Their objection is based on issues including:

- Deeming the new development will operate in direct competition with existing providers, especially during off season.
- Lack of evidence of an inadequate supply of quality accommodation in the borough
- Lack of evidence that previous top-price accommodation (e.g. Mietta's) actually resulted in additional tourism visitation or overnight stays that benefited other businesses
- Lack of evidence that visitors staying in this new development would not simply be people who would otherwise have stayed with an existing accommodation provider
- Unfair competition as the Council: does not pay land tax; does not pay council rates; received the land for free; can offer water views not available to the private sector; is effectively underwritten by ratepayers; does not need to repay the loan from the State Government.
- The project does not address the "summer boom, winter gloom" cycle now experienced by tourist-related businesses. Budget should only be allocated once there is an agreed strategy which benefits existing businesses in both Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale (the project's budget is spent only in Queenscliff).

Victorian Coastal Strategy and Government policies

Further analysis of the proposed development indicates some potential issues with aspects of the Victorian Coastal Strategy. This State Government policy directs that new development, reuse and redevelopment on the coast must have a demonstrated need to be on the coast and protect culturally significant places. The Council's business case does not explain why additional accommodation actually needs to be located on the Lighthouse Reserves when there are alternatives available such as adaptive re-use of the Queenscliff Fort. No other accommodation options were considered in the business case.

The proposal is also at odds with another Victorian Government strategy position about the enjoyment of open space. The applicable Coastal Management Fact Sheet notes how public open space on foreshores adjoining coastal towns provides community and visitors with a range of environmental, social and economic benefits. Interestingly the Victorian Coastal Council nominates uncrowded and undeveloped coastal landscapes as being highly valued by the Victorian community, noting "Foreshores at locations including Portarlington, Queenscliff, Torquay, Anglesea and Apollo Bay are fortunate to still have large areas of open space that connects us to nature and each other whilst providing access to the coast."

The Council's position is that the development will be progressing and no response to the open letter from the accommodation providers will be provided as the letter was not sent direct to the Council and nor do they have access to the signatories of the letters.

The Council states since the winding back of Commonwealth operations in the Fort there is a need to expand tourism as it will stimulate the local economy and boost employment. Statistics do not support this view with tourism only accounting for 17% of the Borough's economic activity and unemployment is 2.7%. The Council estimates the project will generate 59 full time construction jobs and 19 full time ongoing jobs. The business case does not detail how the 6 new two-storey buildings (averaging 66% occupancy per year), plus the other works around the Fort, sports area and caravan park, would generate these jobs. It is relevant to note February's Council minutes confirmed several sites in the Queenscliff caravan park will shortly be lost due to safety compliance works.

(See: <https://tinyurl.com/havqvgc> or:

http://www.queenscliffe.vic.gov.au/images/Minutes_Ordinary_Meeting_of_Council_23_February_2017.pdf - Unconfirmed BoQ Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, February 2017, P128)

Queenscliff Harbour Update/ Stingray Feeding

Community members recently held a meeting with Parks Victoria to discuss deteriorating infrastructure in Queenscliff harbour and what can be done to rectify it. Parks Victoria indicated that: -

Queenscliff Harbour Pty Ltd (QHPL) is responsible under their lease to rebuild Fishermans Wharf and repair existing piers. Government has now unbundled some \$2.4 million funding but it is up to the QHPL to undertake repair work at Fishermans Wharf. There are no timelines for repairs as long as QHPL progress the planning and push forward with the project. Agreement will need to be reached between Parks Victoria, QHPL and Queenscliffe Council on the final design for the project to proceed. Parks Victoria are responsible for maintaining everything north of Queenscliff Cut including the sea wall and the small boating area next to the Swan Island Bridge, everything south of Queenscliff Cut is QHPL's responsibility including repairs to the ageing public piers between the The Cut and the marina basin. Following significant community concern over a long period of time the Stingray Feeding Stadium has been shelved and the first meeting of the Harbour's new Community Reference Group will occur on the 9th of March to discuss a revised heritage project.

Have Your Say - Council Plan YES Question Without Notice not so much

"Fake News" , accusations against the press and hiding behind one way conversations. No this is not another shot at Donald Trump, these are actions of council during question time at the last Council meeting.

It was an astounded gallery that heard the media and some letter writers taken to task by the Mayor, on behalf of council, for scaremongering and not reporting in a fair and responsible manner and yes the term "fake news" was used.

Public Question time is important and residents are becoming concerned that their voices are not being heard. All residents really want is to help shape THEIR community, even if their viewpoint is at odds with council. The Question without Notice process developed by Council risks locking the community out from their basic right of questioning government in an open forum without fear or favour.

Remember Questions must be submitted before 3pmon the day of a council meeting and are a maximum of 75 words and cannot have dot points - rules set by council. This process ensures that councillors and council staff have time to read and draft responses to be delivered, often verbatim at council meetings.

Our newly elected Councillors said they were going to be different and they were elected on their PROMISE of new open processes of communication. It seems Council has slipped back into past practice with a Trump-like twist and we don't know why.

We want and expect our representatives to work with us and if they don't want to they have to tell us why. Surely it can't be because they always know best and that we should unquestioningly do what we are told - that could be construed as arrogant in the extreme!

It is time council threw the doors open and embraced the talent in the borough and shared the vision it has for the future with us all.

Proposed Councillor & Mayoral Allowances Increase

The PLCA notes that at Council's last meeting (Feb 23rd) the BoQ Councillors moved unanimously to increase the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances at the maximum prescribed sums. This particular motion at the February meeting of council meeting has certainly been a topic of conversation within the community

The PLCA would question these increases, on the following grounds:

1. The community has an expectation of shared burden of costs, etc.. The increase is well outside the community expectation of Government Rate Capping and Budgeted " living within our means ".
2. The BoQ has applied for exemption to Rate Capping in the coming Rate Budget. It is a fundamental failure of community spirit that an excessive Councillor Allowance increase may be included as a justification to a Rate Capping Exemption.
3. To pay the full increase of Cost Allowances, the BoQ Budget will be required to divert funds away from other community outlays and programs to offset this cost of Governance Budget increase. Thus overall community programs will lose.

The PLCA advises this Councillor (and Mayoral) Allowances is open to BoQ Community Submissions – closing Thursday 27h March, 2017, 4.00 pm and encourages concerned residents and community members to make submission regards this Price of Governance.

Submitters to heard at a Public Meeting – BoQ Town Hall, 6.30pm Thursday 30/3/17 Council final decision – Ordinary Meeting 7pm Thursday, 27th April, 2017.

Mayoral/Councillor Allowance PLCA member meeting 10 March.

At the PLCA member meeting on the 10 March 2017, a discussion was also held around the Proposed Mayoral/Councillor Allowance increase – and the direction the Committee of management should take:

The Following was put forward by members present:

- Smallest Borough, Smallest population & not a complex Local Council area (as compared to say CoGG, or others of a small size) – does that constitute an increase?
- Work value case needs to be done.
- Positions are Honorary and present allowances are felt to be reasonable.
- Why not review it after 12 months' time, when councillors have been able to prove themselves?
- Are we getting delivered what was promised pre election?
- Mayor/Councillors do not have to accept the increase and we do understand the motion is a standard process undertaken when a new council takes office.
- Not a great example of leadership.

Motion from meeting:

"The PLCA requests that decision to grant an increase in allowances to the Mayor/Councillors be held off & reviewed after 12 months"

Motion passed Unanimously.

Kindergarten Services in 3225.

Council have expressed concern about the status of the National Partnership Agreement between Commonwealth and respective State and Territory Governments regarding the funding for kindergarten services in Borough and state-wide. The MAV and the Local Government Association have alerted all Councils that the Federal Government is yet to renew the National Partnership Agreement with the States that provides shared funding for 15 hours per week for four-year-old kinder.

All Councils have been asked to consider advocating to their local federal member of parliament stressing the importance of this funding agreement. Currently the Federal Government is contributing \$100m per annum towards kindergarten services in Victoria. If this partnership agreement did not continue and kindergartens determined to replace these funds with an increase in attendance fees this would equate to \$2000 per annum per family.

Council have resolved to contact The Federal Member for Corangamite, Sarah Henderson MP, and the Victorian Senators, seeking the immediate commitment of the Federal Government to continue the Federal/State National Partnership agreement enabling joint Government involvement in the funding of 15 hours per week for children at Kindergartens.

[Extract from last Council Meeting]

Cr Merriman Question to the CEO:

Can the CEO provide Council with information regarding the status of the National Partnership Agreement between Commonwealth and respective State and Territory Governments regarding the funding for kindergarten services?

Answer:

The Municipal Association of Victoria and the Australian Local Government Association have communicated with all Councils in Australia to alert them that the Federal Government is yet to renew the National Partnership Agreement between the Federal and State and Territory Governments that provides shared funding for a guaranteed 15 hours per week for four-year-old kinder. All Councils have been asked to consider advocating to their local federal member of parliament stressing the importance of this funding agreement. Currently the Federal Government is contributing \$100m per annum towards kindergarten services in Victoria. If this partnership agreement did not continue and kindergartens determined to replace these funds with an increase in attendance fees this would equate to \$2000 per annum per family.

Councillors Merriman / Salter:

REMINDERS:

Please remember to seek further information about any of these, or other important matters on the Borough of Queenscliffe's website.

Also the PLCA has just launched its Facebook Page; (still a work in Progress)

<https://www.facebook.com/PointLonsdaleCivicAssociation/>

Fay Agterhuis

President, Point Lonsdale Civic Association.