



# Point Lonsdale Civic Association Inc.

PO Box 28 Point Lonsdale VIC 3225

Reg. No. A0017883S

[plcasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:plcasecretary@gmail.com)

[www.plca.org.au](http://www.plca.org.au)

*Representing Point Lonsdale Residents since 1910*

12/6/2020

To. Planning Implementation DEWLP ([planning.implementation@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning.implementation@delwp.vic.gov.au))

CC: Kim P. McGough - DEWLP

CC. Michael Everett – DEWLP

CC. Mia Davison - DEWLP

CC. The Hon. Lisa Neville MP – State Member for Bellarine;

CC. BoQ Mayor – Cr. Ross Ebbels;

CC. BoQ Councillors - Cr. Boyce Pizzey, Cr. Susan Salter, Cr. Rob Minty, Cr. Bob Merriman.

CC. CoGG Mayor - Stephanie Asher;

CC. CoGG Bellarine Ward Councillor - Jim Mason ;

CC. CoGG Bellarine Ward Councillor - Tim Sullivan ,

CC. Jess Hurse – Manager Strategic Planning & Growth CoGG;

CC. Jani Chambers – Senior Strategic Planner CoGG;

CC. Peter Smith – Coordinator Strategic Implementation CoGG;

CC. CoGG Councillor Support.

CC. Mr. Martin Gill - CEO BoQ;

CC. Phil Carruthers – BoQ General Manager Organisational Performance & Community Services;

CC. Johann Rajaratnam – BoQ General Manager Planning & Infrastructure;

## **BELLARINE DISTINCTIVE AREA LEGISLATION PHASE II PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUBMISSION.**

In response to your invitation to provide comments on the Bellarine Peninsula DAL Phase 2 Discussion Paper the Association provides the following ideas and suggestions for your consideration.

The Association believes a good starting point to describe the attributes of the area is The Point Lonsdale Structure Plan, which was developed jointly in 2006 by the Borough of Queenscliffe and City of Greater Geelong contains the following:

### **Community Vision**

A community vision for Point Lonsdale was created as part of preparation of the Bellarine Strategic Plan 2006-2016. This Plan was developed in consultation with the Point Lonsdale community irrespective of municipal boundary, and in conjunction with the Borough of Queenscliffe. It is therefore taken to be broadly representative of the views of the whole community:

Role of the Township

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Point Lonsdale is a small coastal settlement and tourism destination with a strong sense of community and identity. The town is located to the side of a through-route and retains a peaceful, “off the beaten track” feel due to its relative isolation and lack of regional retail or entertainment attractions, including no licensed hotel. The town’s residents value its relaxed pace and lifestyle opportunities.

The town’s role is primarily as a seaside resort and it experiences an influx of visitors during the peak holiday periods, and to a lesser extent on weekends. As such, tourism is the primary economic driver of the town. The large majority of the peak population stay in holiday homes, with only a minority in holiday/tourist accommodation. The services in the town include shopping, business, recreation and community facilities that are primarily used and supplied for the local population. The exception is Bellarine Community Health, which provides a regional service.

Point Lonsdale’s sensitive environmental and coastal setting provides natural boundaries to growth of the township, and the unique setting and character is highly valued by the community. The coastal location and features, including the Lighthouse Precinct and views to the “rip” entrance to Port Phillip Bay, are a drawcard for recreation and tourism.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 identifies Point Lonsdale as a coastal settlement with low growth capacity. “Low growth” is defined as “growth contained within existing urban or appropriate zoned land primarily through infill capacity and renewal within defined settlement boundaries.” It is imperative that planning for Point Lonsdale, including this Structure Plan, recognise the strengths and constraints that a small “coastal settlement” presents in establishing a framework for its future sustainability and extent of urban growth.

### **Broad Aims of the Structure Plan**

A coastal village location with reduced impact on the environment. A place of green vistas, unspoilt coastal views, negotiable by walking paths and not impacted by clustered development and traffic congestion.

- Create a sustainable community: environmentally, socially, and economically.
- Protect the village character of the township.
- Protect the natural assets and sensitive environment surrounding the township.
- Foster the community’s sense of ownership and pride in Point Lonsdale.
- Support the health and wellbeing of the Point Lonsdale community.
- Establish a sound policy basis to enable the township to respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Structure Plan identifies principles (objectives) and directions (strategies) relating to key planning themes of:

#### Study Area Framework

The Study Area Framework map shows the extent of the existing urban zoned land, the Point Lonsdale golf course, and non-urban land which forms the rural “green break” between Point Lonsdale and other settlements, in particular Ocean Grove.

Areas that are known to have environmental constraints through planning scheme controls or other studies are also delineated on the Framework map. These constraints may impose a variety of limitations on future development, although most are not definitive in prohibiting development and require individual and detailed investigation prior to consideration of any development.

### **Township Structure Plan**

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The Township Structure Plan focuses on the township and its immediate surrounds and shows, in map form, many of the Principles and Directions contained in the following sections of the Structure Plan report. (See map below)

- Township growth
- Activities
- Buildings
- Spaces
- Access
- Governance and Leadership

Since the 2006 Structure Plan was completed a number of changes have occurred in Point Lonsdale which include the following:

- The Moremac (formerly Stockland) canal development, to the west of the township, featuring some 600 housing lots is about half completed and the Knowles Group “Breeze” development featuring, some 175 retirement village units, is being built.
- ARCARE aged care facility is fully operational.
- Bellarine Community Health are redeveloping and renewing their health care facility in Point Lonsdale Road, Point Lonsdale.
- The Point Lonsdale Golf Club housing development is well advanced and the course is in the process of being redesigned following changes to the original plan.
- Eco-unit development has taken place on the high point of the Hanley land.
- Climate change emergency has been declared in the Borough of Queenscliffe. Erosion of the Headland rock cliffs and the primary dune along the Narrows in Lonsdale Bay is pronounced.
- Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Precinct has been heritage listed by Heritage Victoria and declared the Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct.
- The foreshore opposite Point Lonsdale’s main shopping has been redeveloped for community use.

Point Lonsdale continues to be valued for its unique coastal location at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, outstanding scenic vistas including its main street that looks out over Port Phillip Heads, its village atmosphere, surrounding wetlands and waterways, well used beaches, pre and post war history and surrounding unspoilt public reserves and moonah woodlands.

### **Developing a shared vision**

PLCA agree the with the 50 year vision but believe it needs to better highlight the increasing Climate Change Emergency and how we are going to deal with it. Coastal communities must have integrated plans going forward to deal with rising seas levels, changing weather patterns, flooding and coastal erosion. One of the very important issues that concern Bellarine residents is the rapid spread of urban development and the need to establish strict town boundaries to protect the region’s landscape and coastal values. These need to be incorporated into the draft Planning Statement.

### **Landscapes**

PLCA generally agree and support the strategic directions provided by DELWP, however the Association believes the SPP should further protect and enhance the Bellarine Peninsula’s Landscapes by more prescriptive measures along the following lines:

- Urban sprawl and housing development should not be allowed to encroach on coastal spaces beyond existing town boundaries. Setting limits on development is the only way of ensuring the survival of these important open spaces, especially along the coast.
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- Development will be a particular problem on elevated plateau's such as farmland east of Banks Road, which, if developed will spoil the landscape values of coastal areas and the lower lying hinterland.
- That Government (Commonwealth, State and Local) be discouraged from selling or transferring coastal crown land for private development. This has been an ongoing problem in the Borough of Queenscliffe.
- Seascapes and sea vistas, which are a very important feature of coastal townships at the southern end of Port Phillip Bay, should also be protected.
- Building heights on the Bellarine should be limited to 2 storeys or 8.5 metres maximum.

### **Biodiversity and Environmental Values**

PLCA generally support the strategic directions provided by DELWP and suggest the following additions:

- Retention of the remaining wild areas on the Bellarine particularly the coastal space between Ocean Grove/Point Lonsdale
- Maintaining town boundaries to further reduce the spread of housing subdivision
- Better protect all the wetland reserves on the Bellarine by combining them under one state reserve
- Coastal crown land and reserves should all be PCRZ (conservation zoning)
- Discourage any further sale and large scale development of coastal crown land

### **Heritage**

PLCA generally support the strategic directions provided by DELWP and suggest the following additions:

- Strengthen local heritage controls in planning schemes
- Maintain our maritime heritage townships, foreshores/reserves, Botanic Parks and Avenue of Honours
- Review and update Urban Conservation Plans and Coastal Management Plans
- Promote 3 Headlands (Pt Nepean, Point Lonsdale and Shortland's Bluff/Queenscliff Fort) for Federal and World Heritage listing
- Discourage unsympathetic development on important coastal heritage sites – this has been a particular problem in the Borough of Queenscliffe with the transfer of heritage listed lighthouse reserves from State to Local Government.

### **Economy and Infrastructure**

PLCA generally support the strategic directions provided by DELWP and suggest the following additions:

- Improve the eco-tourism offerings on the Bellarine
- Reinvigorate assets such as Queenscliff Fort as a sustainable education and knowledge centre
- Climate Change research centre on the Bellarine
- Federal and UNESCO listing for Military bases at southern end of Port Phillip Bay (refer - recent Prof Garden report)

### **Environmental Risk and Resilience**

PLCA generally support the strategic directions provided by DELWP and suggest the following additions:

- Adopt Climate Emergency Plan/Protocol and begin integrated climate planning especially for the coastline
  - Expand the Port Phillip Heads National Marine Park including incorporating Lakers Cutting into Swan Bay
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- Discourage canal developments that impact adjoining wetlands and sensitive waterways
- Discourage further subterranean bores as a future water resource for the Bellarine
- Adopt stricter planning controls around sensitive waterways and RAMSAR areas
- Encourage greater solar energy usage
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### **Settlements**

PLCA support the strategic directions provided by DELWP and suggest the following additions:

- **Bellarine 'Coastal Village' - definition to be incorporated in the Statement of Planning Purpose – see below:**
- Adopt exiting town boundaries and strict controls on housing subdivisions
- Discourage further urban sprawl especially on important agricultural land
- Maintain exiting coastal spaces and farmland between townships
- Adopt mandated block sizes, rural zonings and reduced building heights to match 8.5 metres height limit in Queenscliffe
- Retain foreshore reserves and green open space/woodland between Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale/Springs and Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove.
- Rezone all publicly owned coastal land and reserves to PCRZ (conservation zone) and discourage any further sale or development of coastal crown land
- Preserve heritage listed townships like Queenscliff with improved urban conservation planning and adopt neighbourhood residential zoning across the Borough.

Thank you for allowing further comment on this important initiative for the Bellarine. We look forward to the next stage in the DAL process.

Yours sincerely

David Kenwood – President PLCA of behalf of Members and Committee of Management.

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Addendum: Coastal Villages definition statement.

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Bellarine 'Coastal Village' - amenity, character, and a definition to be incorporated in the Statement of Planning Purpose:

A Bellarine township's coastal village identity and sense of place should be strengthened through appropriately managed growth and appropriately designed public and private spaces – via the Bellarine SPP.

We propose a 'Coastal Village' Character Definition Statement for the villages of the Bellarine enshrined in the Bellarine Distinctive Area Statement, and Final subsequent Statement of Planning Policy.

The coastal Village is not and should not be part of Melbourne, and therefore its definition, purpose, and setting, should be unique. In addition the Bellarine should not be taken as part of a 'one size fits all' planning methodology as part of the Bellarine DALs.

In relation to what we would define as true Bellarine Coastal Villages we propose the following elements:

Definition 'Bellarine Coastal Village'.

Bellarine Coastal villages like Barwon Heads, Portarlington, St Leonards, Indented Head, & Point Lonsdale primarily cater for Tourism, and low impact local industry like Aquaculture & Hospitality.

The Villages have a strong connection to the natural coastal environment to which they belong.

They mainly consist of holiday homes, and permanent dwellings, and have small permanent populations. They are much smaller than 'Bellarine Coastal Towns'.

The main Village Centre will have higher built form and commercial/retail buildings, but generally they just support local population activity, but with the ability to increase output and capacity to cater for holiday makers over holiday periods.



The Villages have many Historic elements that make them what they are; including Maritime, Indigenous, Cultural, and Environmental.

Residential building have consistent setbacks, many with no boundary fencing, and some with adjacent access roadways not clearly defined.

Built zones, and natural environments, 'merge' in the Coastal Village, and is encouraged by LGA's and residents alike.

Some Coastal Village public spaces are 'ad-hoc' and not officially defined, or even named (save for local nomenclature), but are highly valued by locals for recreation or for their vista.

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They have a strong sense of connection to the coastline by their physical location close to, or alongside the Sea, Dunes, Headlands, or Estuary.

The Bellarine Coastal Village has a strong connection to Indigenous, or Maritime Heritage (or both), that has set in place many decades of consistent distinctive landscape form, and defines the coastal village in many ways.

The buildings are low-set and modest in scale, and tightly defined, within their respective natural landscapes. Existing dwellings are almost all low rise and single storey.

The Village embraces an informal nature of streetscapes, and the vegetation that dominates many vistas. The low scale of buildings is seen to be intrinsic to the low-key nature of the Village, and many of the buildings that retain traditional holiday house style and materials are valued. The unmade kerbs, building setbacks and space for vegetation in the Village is highly prized and guarded, and all cited as part of creating the Bellarine Village's identity.

Plantings are largely informal, made in the main of indigenous and introduced species.

Local Streets are primarily 2-lane, and in some cases single lane for streets that are fed from larger 2-lane streets. The streets also have very little 'street furniture' and/or markings, defined kerbs and even driveways.



Paths and walkways in the Villages meander, and follow the natural ecology, whether that be dunes, coast, estuary or green spaces.

Residential street edges vary from grassed verge with drainage swales (like parts of Point Lonsdale, Indented Head, and Barwon Heads, for example) to formed kerb and gutter with grassed verges and concrete pedestrian footpaths. Vegetation is not ordered as may be seen in larger towns, but consistent with the character of the Village. In many instances, the street is made up of inconsistent edge treatments that add to the informal 'Coastal Character'



The Villages, typically, do not have the large scale linear development along the coast that has occurred in other parts of Melbourne.

Built form is in the main modest in scale, and does not impact the natural environment.

Bellarine Villages have a strong connection with peri-rural areas that surround them, and are valued for the buffer that these zones provide.

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They offer panoramic views, and have generous undefined open spaces that enhance them and add to the coastal character.



What is needed to enhance and protect Bellarine Coastal Villages:

- Areas between settlements must be preserved for non-urban uses such as conservation and farming.
  - Height limits should be no more than of 8.5M OR 2-storeys. (9.5M in commercial zones).
  - Buildings being sited and scaled so that they appear to be set low in the landscape.
  - Site coverage maximum of 40%, and permeable surface area minimum of 30%
  - The Villages must have Consistent Vegetation protection overlays, particularly for those areas on the Bellarine that do not have them.
  - Legislative protections that strengthen the Bellarine Village sense of amenity, and designates the township as low growth.
  - Retain the small township character, and rural landscape setting.
  - Separation from the larger 'Coastal Townships'.
  - Green vistas, rural landscapes, and peri-urban places surrounding Villages are not threatened or eroded, or altered, in their use in any way.
  - Designate and protect the Village as low growth.
  - Establish stronger protection for existing significant trees & vegetation in the Village.
  - Preserve existing streetscapes and seascapes, informal street layouts, unmade footpaths, and verges and trees, laneways, foreshore green belts, beaches, & Lighthouse Reserves.
  - Retention of coastal space/boundary issues which are very important.
  - Village Boundaries to remain where they are presently.
  - These Villages would not have any future linear broad development external to their current Town Boundaries.
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Figure 1: Point Lonsdale Structure Plan Study Area



-  Landscape Context Setting
-  Core Study Area
-  Municipal Boundary between City of Greater Geelong and Borough of Queenscliffe