



Point Lonsdale Civic Association Inc.

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Representing Point Lonsdale Residents since 1910

28/1/21

To: BoQ Mayor – Cr. Ross Ebbels;
BoQ Councillors - Cr. Fleur Hewitt, Cr. Susan Salter, Cr. Micheal Grout, Cr. Donnie Grigau.

CC. Mr. Martin Gill - CEO BoQ;
CC. Phil Carruthers - General Manager Organisational Performance & Community Services;
CC. Johann Rajaratnam - General Manager Planning & Infrastructure;

PLCA COASTAL & MARINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Dear Mayor, Councillors, & CEO & Officers;

Please find below, our Association's submission on this important document that council will use as a road-map for our precious coastline in the Borough.

Background

The Borough of Queenscliffe area is about 11square kilometres on the eastern tip of the Bellarine Peninsula with some 17 kilometres of coastline. The Borough, which is surrounded on 3 sides by water, comprises two townships - Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale plus Swan Island. Both townships are characterised by superb beaches and waterways (Santa Casa beach in Queenscliff is often recognised as having the cleanest water of any beach on the Bellarine by the EPA) and both towns have a coastal green belt of vegetation (parks and reserves) separating the beaches from the urban environment. Queenscliff's main street has views of both Port Phillip and Swan Bays whist Point Lonsdale with its Rip facing main street has spectacular views of the Port Phillip Bay and the Heads.

Coastal Values

Queenscliff

- Stunning beaches and pristine waters largely used for passive recreation. These beaches have strong tourist appeal.
 - Large expanses of parkland in Queenscliff including Citizens Park, Princes Park and Lower Princes Park.
 - Shortland's Bluff and Queenscliff Fort historic precincts. Queenscliff Fort is an 1860's A listed heritage walled military complex containing many of the earliest buildings in the township.
 - Historic lighthouses (white and black) and historic octagonal Signal Station.
 - Ocean View Car Park - which allows panoramic views of the southern end of Port Phillip Bay and ship watching.
 - Lovers Walk – woodland walk starting in Queenscliff and extending around Lonsdale Bay.
 - Scenic Swan Bay including walking and cycling trails.
 - Swan Bay wetland is an area of local and international importance and is listed under the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands of International importance.
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- The Narrows is a largely untouched strip of woodland extending around Lonsdale Bay including significant clusters of moonahs, and importantly a green coastal space separating the twin townships. It also forms the impressive entrance into the township and includes the Avenue of Honour and sweeping views of Swan Bay.

- Former Queenscliff High School site provides a green open space and gateway to Queenscliff.
- Victoria Park – township’s long forgotten Botanic Park
- Boat Ramp, Marina/Safe Harbour/Ferry Terminal/Queenscliff Pier

Point Lonsdale

- Front beach near the main street and a popular surf beach along the back beach largely used for swimming and surfing, these areas have strong tourist appeal.

- Large expanses of important foreshore woodland extending from Bunny Wood to Buckley Park.
- Rip View Car Park allows spectacular views of Port Phillip Heads and ship watching.
- Heritage listed Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct including the Lonsdale Lighthouse, various coastal WW1 and 2 military installations and stunning coastal views.
- Point Lonsdale Pier and sand stone cliffs.
- Lake Victoria and wetlands to the west of the township.
- Lonsdale Bay beaches and coastal walks.
- Lonsdale Wall and shipwrecks (popular with divers).
- Extensive military and maritime installations around the Rip area.
- Pockets of rare/threatened significant flora in dune eco-systems around Point Lonsdale.
- Untouched tertiary dune systems in coastal Point Lonsdale.
- Iconic Pier Structure near Port Phillip Heads and Marine National Park.

Swan Island (and other islands)

- Historic Fort – part of an early fortification system at the southern end of Port Phillip Bay.
- Important wetland lagoon system for bird life.
- Army installation and small dock facility largely isolated from the mainland – Swan Island Bridge provides vehicle access.
- Adjoins Swan Bay RAMSAR area and protected fish nursery.
- Part of the island is a golf course open to the public.
- Also includes a Yacht Club adjoining Sand Island (sometimes called Duchy’s Island).

Issues for the Coast

- New CMMP should focus on looking after the land - 2006 and earlier coastal plans for Queenscliff were mostly about development of the coastline in terms of Queenscliff harbour/ferry terminal, lighthouse reserves, and former high school site.

- Need for real community consultation and planning around significant 3225 coastal projects, for instance the ongoing rebuild of the ferry terminal, approved in 2013, will be a large shoreline development with little public scrutiny or input.

- Need to move away from proposals to sell/privatise coastal crown land, for example former Queenscliff High school site (upper portion sold) and recent Murray Road and Golightly Caravan Park sale proposals. Other crown land sales included Crows Nest by the Commonwealth and the privatisation of the entire Queenscliff harbour (60 + years) by State Government.

- The transfer of 2 Lighthouse Reserves to Local Government in 2012 and attempts to make commercial ventures from both of them - 3 attempts in Shortland’s Bluff and one attempt at Point

Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve – all of which failed despite the parties working hard to come to an agreement.

- Coastal managers in our tiny Borough include: DELWP, Parks Victoria, Commonwealth (Swan Island) Borough of Queenscliff, Vic Track, the Harbour (QHPL) and the Ferry Terminal – it could be argued there are too many coastal managers resulting in different objectives, overlapping responsibilities and less cohesiveness with other larger coastal managers such as Bellarine Bayside and City of Greater Geelong.

- Lack of recognition of the heritage values of our coast e.g. Point Lonsdale and Queenscliff Lighthouse reserves have caused individual citizens to successfully apply for and secure heritage listings (Heritage Victoria) over these important sites.

- Demographic changes – more retired folk are coming to the coast wanting to escape the hectic city life. Most don't want to see every thing developed - they like what they have.

- Coastal Erosion Problems and Climate Change – Swan Bay and Queenscliff have been identified as climate change hot spots in Port Phillip Bay in a recent State Government Coastal and Marine report. Rising sea levels, coastal erosion and changing weather patterns will create significant problems for the Borough.

- Also local man-made erosion, for example damage to the moonah woodland in Bunny Woods could have been avoided.

Coastal Management

With the central 3 pillars in mind (1) Population Growth (2) Asset Renewal (3) Climate Change the following recommendations are made for various sections of the coastline:

Ferry Terminal to Queenscliff Pier

- Selective removal of pest plant infestation and replant along foreshore.
- Climate Change challenge – coastal erosion problem will need expert action.
- Continued public access to the beach from the Ferry Terminal and boardwalks required.
- No further expansion of Special Use Zone and Ferry car parking along the foreshore.
- Retention of public open space/park land/historic building in Lower Princes Park.
- Continue to retain beach and foreshore for public use.
- Encourage Parks Victoria to maintain historic Queenscliff Pier.
- Improve foreshore toilet facilities.

Queenscliff Pier to Shortland's Bluff

- Selective removal of pest plant infestation and replant along foreshore.
- Climate Change challenge – coastal erosion problem – maintain masonry seawall.
- Further Tree Plantings (stone pines) in Princes Park.
- Retention of public open space/park land/historic building (Waiting Shed).
- Continue weeding and replanting program along Thwaites Walk.
- Continue to retain beach and foreshore for public use.
- Improve steps from Thwaites Walk to Tobin Drive.

Shortland's Bluff and Fort Queenscliff

- Retain as important heritage precinct – encourage Commonwealth to maintain 1860’s Fort/lighthouse/early buildings in good working order.

- Retain Shortland’s Bluff, Lighthouse Reserve and the Bull Ring as an historic and commemorative areas.

- Resurface Ocean View Car Park and retain in its present configuration.

- Provide public toilets in renewed “Raj” amenities block.

- Removal of pest plant infestation at the rear Ocean View Car Park and Lighthouse Reserve and replant with original species.

- Refurbish the two WW1 and 2 Search Light installations.

- Improve access from the Ocean View Car Park to the Back Beach.

- Landscape the glaxis and provide picnic areas.

- Landscape and make a feature of the moat subject to Commonwealth consent.

Recreation Reserve and Victoria Park

- Increased plantings in Recreation Reserve to soften the impact of buildings/communications tower/asphalt car park.

- Abolish plans for boom gates in Recreation Reserve.

- Maintain public access to the Recreation Reserve and Queenscliff back beach.

- Improve the public walking track that extends to Maytone between the Recreation Reserve and the beach.

- Improve the kiosk building and car parking.

- Retain Victoria Park as Queenscliff’s Botanic Park.

- Return Victoria Park to season camping and caravanning only.

- Replant Victoria Park with different species and retain unmade roads.

- Abolish plans for boom gates in Victoria Park.

- Retain and improve trees, moonah clusters, vegetation buffers and bird habitat along the King Street and Mercer Street frontages.

- Retain Victoria Park as a public reserve rather than a trailer park.

Former High School Site and The Narrows

- Further careful consideration of other sites for a proposed Mountain Bike Track including those that may be in Point Lonsdale, or COGG controlled Point Lonsdale which maybe more appropriate, or closer to proposed user demographic.

- Retain former high school site as public open space and green entrance to Queenscliff township. Retain this outstanding space for general public use and views of Swan Bay.

- Keep existing trees, increase plantings and revegetation of the former high school site.

- Develop a proper master plan with community input for the site instead of ad-hoc planning proposals.

- Continue maintaining and replanting the Avenue of Honour through the Narrows as a priority.

- Encourage VicRoads to retain existing highway through the Narrows as a single carriageway each way.

- Removal of pest plants and conduct replanting though Lovers Walk and surrounds.

- Protection of important moonah clusters near YMCA camp.

- Maintain strict building height limits through the Narrows.

- Retain the foreshore reserve and woodland through The Narrows as an important coastal space between the townships.

- Recognise and protect aboriginal middens along the Narrows and other coastal reserves.

- Retain green wall of cypress trees along The Springs.

Lonsdale Bay Cliff Erosion near the Tank Trap

Recent storms and high seas has led to a rapidly deteriorating condition on the south-east facing dune system in Lonsdale Bay extending some 300 metres east (Queenscliff side) of the existing rock seawall. The unprotected dune system in Lonsdale Bay has recently experienced undercutting and severe slippage resulting in much of the adjoining headland disappearing, the cliff face retreating and woodland trees collapsing toward the beach. The Association is unsure if this latest erosion event is due to rising sea levels resulting from changing weather patterns, recent channel deepening at Port Phillip Heads or a combination of both. We appreciate this part of the coastline is very dynamic with sand coming and going on a regular basis, however these recent impacts are alarming when you consider the entire dune, woodland and foreshore reserve forms “the Narrows” a relative narrow strip of land leading into township of Queenscliff. Some urgent coastal investigations are needed to determine the cause of beach and dune erosion in Lonsdale Bay and what remedies might be available to save our precious coastline from further damage.

Murray Road Council Land and Lakers Cutting

- Following the sale of Council land (13 lots) – prepare a strategic plan for the remaining freehold land bounded by Bellarine Highway, Fellows Road and Murray Road.
- Retain the swales and wetland along Murray Road and abandon plan for an elevated bike path.
- Beautify and re-wild public land deemed unsuitable for further development.
- Continue to advocate for Lakers Cutting to become part of the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park.
- Monitor water quality in Lakers Cutting and Swan Bay to ensure pollution from upstream uses does not occur.
- Ensure that CoGG adheres to any Environmental regulations as far as water discharge from developments into Lakers Cutting is concerned.

Skate Park to Point Lonsdale Primary School

- Improve toilets and access to the site.
- Develop new bike track for bike users on former State Rivers and Water Supply depot site and incorporate a remediated or new skate park.

• Improve vegetation and existing coastal tracks.

Dog Beach /Logs Car Park to Lawrence Road Car Park

- Improve road entrance and car parking configuration at Logs Car Park.
- Continue to maintain rock seawall and stairs to the beach.
- Provide water taps and signage.
- Improve vegetation and remove pest plants along Lovers Walk track.
- Improve stairs leading from Lovers Walk to coastal walkway.
- Improve infrastructure at Golightly Caravan Park for park users.
- Abandon plans to sell Golightly Caravan Park for housing lots.
- Consider public toilets at Lawrence Road Car Park/Royal Park.

Promenade (entire length)

- Maintain blue stone retaining walls/ocean side.
- Asphalted walking path.
- Improve signage and seating.
- Continue to improve vegetation along entire length of promenade.

Royal Park

- Retain and repair oval fencing.
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- Improve toilets including public toilets.
- Retain existing shed for community/camping use.
- Improve moonah clusters and coastal vegetation.
- Discourage additional foreshore buildings along this part of the coast.
- Continue with seasonal camping only.
- Retain green wall and buffer to Point Lonsdale Road and built environment.
- No extension further extension of Royal Park camping into Bunny Woods.

Bunny Woods

- Retain open space and green areas for recreational use.
- Discourage parking along reserve and remove barrier logs.
- Protect moonah woodland.
- Improve trees and vegetation and close tracks to bike users.
- Continue to repair damage done by bike users.
- Maintain walking paths and ocean viewing points.
- Encourage passive recreational use.
- Remove dead/dying trees and vegetation.
- Stabilise cliffs where required.

Parkland to BBQ Station Playground (inclusive)

- Improve Infrastructure including picnic furniture.
- Maintain BBQ Shelter.
- Improve Children's Playground and seating.
- Improve bins, water and signage.
- Access nodes and signage/placement.
- Protect moonah woodland and parkland.
- Discourage roadside parking and limited roadside barrier fencing.

Foreshore Parkland to Bowls Club (including Bowls Club Car Park) Promenade

- Improve vegetation and plantings along foreshore.
 - Obtain DELWP advice on Point Lonsdale Front Beach (i.e. proper investigation of additional rock groynes to mitigate sand erosion at front beach).
- Maintain and strength existing masonry seawall.
 - Consider using former tennis club area for public car parking in summer if required (area currently under short term licence to Bowls Club).
 - Consider formalising verge car parking along Admans Street to Simpson Street and in front of the Bowls Club near approach to Rip View Car Park.

Bowls Club to Rip View Lookout

- Consider improved pedestrian track to shopping centre to encourage use of Rip View for overspill car parking.
 - Protect and fence Rip View woodland as an important area for rare plants.
 - Retain Bowls Club on existing site.
 - Maintain coastal track to Rip View Car Park and beyond.
 - Improve native vegetation and remove pest species.
 - Maintain stairs from Rip View Car Park to beach.
 - If considered appropriate investigate toilets and coffee outlet for Rip View Car Park.
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Rip View Lookout to Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct

- Maintain and improve existing tracks and coastal vegetation.
- Improve existing public toilet at PLMDP.
 - In conjunction with community and Heritage Victoria develop a Master Plan for the PLMDP including a cultural heritage plan.
- Improve former military P1 huts (replicate original structures).
- Improve and possibly extend informal coastal track.
- Remove and underground existing power lines along access road.
 - Restore historic rocket shed and upgrade existing WW1 and 2 military structures with heritage grants. Restoration and protection of historic military emplacements is important for the future of the precinct.
- Maintain and improve fog horn shed.
- Improve car parking and public access to the lighthouse.
- Improve trees and vegetation on site especially near the lighthouse ramp.
- Encourage Port of Melbourne Authority to continue manning the Lonsdale lighthouse.
- Clean out overgrown water hole to provide fresh water for bird life.

Stoneham Reserve to Buckley Park

- Improve parking and safety along Ocean Road.
- Re-instate fence along Ocean Road.
- Extend informal coastal track to Winterley Road alignment to link with military installation.
- Improve back beach access points.
- Remove pest species and replant with native vegetation.
- Careful management of rare flora and fauna areas and the dune system.
- Improve/rebuild surf life saving club foreshore facility including improved public toilets.
- Improve the dune lookout at the top of big baldie.
- Encourage the protection of Buckley Park coastal reserve (last wild coastal area on the Bellarine).

Ganes Reserve

- Maintain and improve as parkland and open space.
- Improve tennis clubrooms and car parking area.
- Undertake more flood resistant plantings around pondage area.
- Improve toilet facilities and playground facilities.
- Improve car parking along road frontage.
- Retain laneways, walkways and bird habitat.

Marine National Park and Point Lonsdale Pier

- Encourage Parks Victoria to keep Point Lonsdale Pier in good working order.
- Discourage further deepening of Port Phillip Heads.
- Longer-term consider expansion of Port Phillip Heads National Marine Park at Point Lonsdale.
- World Heritage Vision for southern end of Port Phillip Bay including National Marine Park, PLMDP + lighthouse, Fort Queenscliff and Shortland's Bluff (2 lighthouses) and Swan Island and Swan Bay RAMSAR area.

In closing the Association feels that proper, well thought out Master plans should be developed for all the nominated precincts. These should be compiled using the **community's input** along with relevant

departmental expertise. This will ensure any future development that occurs is sympathetic to the fragile coastal eco-systems and we don't lose anymore of what makes this part of the Bellarine special and unique.

Furthermore, the Association is happy, and willing, to use the expertise of it's members in any capacity to help generate this important document for our coastline.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely – David Kenwood

PLCA President

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