



# Point Lonsdale Civic Association Inc.

PO Box 28 Point Lonsdale VIC 3225      Reg. No. A0017883S

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

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

*Representing Point Lonsdale Residents since 1910*

## September 2023 Newsletter.

### 2023 Annual Subscription Payment and Donations – NOW OVERDUE

The annual subscription payment for 2023 is due by the date of the AGM, being 6 January 2023 – and for those who have not re-subscribed – now is overdue. The subscription amount for 2020 is \$10 per person. Donations are welcome and appreciated, 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 – however as we have lost Bendigo Bank facilities in Queenscliff, EFT payment, rather than cheque (which we have to bank in Ocean Grove) are preferred.

We thank all those members that have subscribed already.

[Online Membership Renewal Form](#) (Renewal)

[Online Application for Membership](#) (New Members)

Please click the **Online Membership Renewal Form** from link above. You will be directed to a Google Form, complete it, then hit 'Submit' – and you'll receive further instructions on EFT bank details, to complete your EFT payment:

Alternatively, use PDF form below; print and scan and email to us, or deliver at a meeting, or post.

[Print out Membership Renewal Form](#)

The PLCA bank account details are:

Account Name: Point Lonsdale Civic Association  
Bank: Bendigo and Adelaide Bank  
BSB: 633108

Account Number: 131346017  
Description: Surname and Initials of the member must be shown

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.**

**New Members:** Click link above, **Online Application for Membership**, and fill in online and hit 'submit' - and you'll receive further instructions on EFT bank details, to complete your EFT payment.

Or, use PDF form below; print and scan and email in to us, or deliver at meeting, or post.

[Print out Application for Membership Form](#)

### New Committee Member

The Association welcomes our newest Committee member, Mr. Trevor Mason. Trevor has long ties with the Point Lonsdale Committee and various groups in 3225 like The Men's Shed and Probus. We know Trevor will make valuable contributions in all areas that the Association deals with.

### Active Transport Strategy (ATS)

At its Council meeting on the 23rd of August Councillors voted 3 to 1 to defer the Infrastructure and Environment Officer's recommendation "That Council adopts the Active Transport Strategy 2023-2031 as

presented.” This followed another volley of public questions about aspects of the plan including continuing references to speed limits of 30 km/h despite the Borough’s CEO indicating these had been deleted from the Strategy. It’s thought most Councillors wanted more time to deliberate on certain aspects of the controversial 10-year, \$1.65 million strategy after continuing public concerns.

Council also held a meeting with interested parties on 22nd of August at the Town Hall (advertised on face book only) to primarily discuss resident complaints about the 30km/h issue and related ATS matters including: who pays for upgraded pathways, lack of planning processes, poor communication of strategy, green spines in streets, impacts on heritage values, zebra crossings, raised road platforms, Murray Road options and the general look of the town.

### **Latest Victorian Climate Change Report – Properties in the Borough at High Risk**

As widely reported in the media a recent technical study commissioned by The Victorian Marine and Coastal Council and Life Saving Victoria (Kompas Report) indicates that of the 30 Victorian suburbs and towns with the most high-risk properties due to coastal inundation by 2040, Point Lonsdale is rated Number 5 and Queenscliff Number 13. The study is based on research from the University of Melbourne and consulting firm Climate Risk. These findings, up from 600 properties being identified some years ago, could have implications for many property holders in the Borough.

### **New Greenlight On-Line Planning Approval System**

In response to some recent problems the Association has had accessing current on-line planning applications the Borough has indicated the following:

*All planning applications are available online via the Application Register ([greenlightopm.com](https://greenlightopm.com)). We are also going to make this link available on the Planning Permits pages on the Council website link. This will make it more visible. If you want to access the register now – when you are on the Planning permits page, click Planning Register and you will see the tab that takes you to the register.*

### **Update - Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy.**

The Association has been notified that the final Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) was gazetted on Thursday 10 August 2023 by the Minister for Planning The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP for the area of the Bellarine Peninsula that had previously been declared a ‘distinctive area and landscape’ in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The policy locks in settlement boundaries for townships in the declared area and details a 50-year vision for the protection of the identified values of the declared area including aboriginal cultural heritage, the natural environment, state and regionally significant landscapes, heritage, tourism, agriculture and natural resources. The policy also seeks to address key risks to the protection of these values.

Next, The Minister for Planning must now prepare and approve an amendment to incorporate the SPP into the Queenscliffe Planning Scheme and the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, for respective councils to implement.

Councils, and other responsible public entities, are now required to consider the SPP when preparing strategic plans or making decisions in a declared area, in accordance with section 7(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 and sections 46AZK and 46AZKL of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

### **Murray Road Bicycle Link to Bellarine Rail Trail – What Are The Options**

Following a few previous attempts, the Association understands that Queenscliffe Council has developed various options that will allow for a bike path to be installed along Murray Road effectively providing the

missing link between the Queenscliff Narrows Bike Path with the Bellarine Rail Trail. At the time of writing these options, designed primarily to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, have not been released for community consultation. A Murray Road bike path connection is a key plank of Council's pending Active Transport Strategy.

We have included a reply to various Association questions about the Murray Road Bicycle link from the Borough CEO, Mr. Martin Gill: *(Thanks to CEO, Mr. Gill for providing the Association with these answers.)*

Murray Road- Rail trail

*1. Could you please provide the Association with information in respect of the latest options being considered by Queenscliffe Council?*

*A: Council officers have prepared four options which have been presented to Council.*

*Council has provided advice to the officers that they would like to take all options through a community consultation process.*

*2. Can you please provide the timelines for any potential solution(s) to be implemented?*

*A: The proposed consultation will take place in early 2024, during the summer holiday period.*

*3. Can you please also indicate where funding will be sourced from to implement a preferred solution?*

*A: Not at this stage, because we do not know what the preferred solution is and what funding options may be available to Council.*

*4. Will there be a further public engagement process to enable residents to provide their comments?*

*A: Yes.*

*3. We note that the Murray Road connection is a key objective in the upcoming Active Transport Plan.*

*A: The draft Active Transport Strategy includes the Murray Road Rail Trail connection as a key objective.*

**Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct** *(Thanks to Mr. A Sutherland – Association member on the project Control Group for providing this information)*

The \$1m State Government grant for works around the Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct has finally commenced, having been announced by the former Member for Bellarine, Lisa Neville, around 18 months ago.

It is timely to recall the huge people-power effort between 2015 and 2017 to protect this wonderful area from inappropriate commercial development proposed by the Council. Following the massive community backlash, culminating in a petition to State Parliament, in 2017-18, the Council ran a Community Reference Group to provide advice on master planning the Lighthouse precinct. The Reference Group met for 18 months and unanimously agreed a detailed design which covered heritage restoration, pathways, parking, signage, visitor management, toilets and other public facilities.

Councillors rejected the Group's recommendations and instead passed a motion to demolish most of the buildings and construct a costly zig-zag pathway to the lighthouse. No budget was allocated to fund the restoration of the deteriorating heritage infrastructure. The negative community reaction to this decision resulted in Heritage Victoria greatly increasing the area of the Point Lonsdale headland included in the

Victorian Heritage Register. Previously, the citation only covered a few individual structures and no land, but the revised listing was expanded to include all heritage structures and land (14.5 hectares). This decision effectively blocked the Council's demolition plans. After the 2019 resignation of the Council's CEO and a change in Councillors in 2020, the previous Council's motion was rescinded and a \$500,000 State Government grant was obtained to restore the WW2 Army huts (as a quid pro quo for the Council being encouraged to sell a block of land to the Surf Life Saving Club for \$1).

No progress was made on the restoration of the buildings for two years and it was only in December 2022 work started. In the interim, construction costs increased so much only the outside of the buildings could be upgraded. The Council needed to allocate a further \$250,000 to complete the work. All buildings remain unoccupiable and without electricity.

In late-2021, community members again approached the local member, Lisa Neville MP, with a prioritized list of works based on the recommendations of the Reference Group. In response, Ms Neville was successful in securing a \$1m grant (announced in March 2022). The budget was allocated to the Queenscliffe Council then established a project delivery group comprising two Councillors, a representative from DEECA, a representative from the Council and two community representatives.

Unfortunately, the Council did not accept the offer of PLCA Committee representation on the project group despite our organization's long involvement in the area.

The Council has not publicised what is in the \$1m scope of works but the PLCA understands, while two WW1 heritage emplacements will be restored, the newly re-clad buildings will stay as shells only. Apparently, Councillors did not want any works done to these buildings (even though it was a priority for the Reference Group).

By the end of this current project, over \$1.75m will have been spent on the precinct in the last few years (excluding Council staff time). The PLCA is regularly asked what is the future of the precinct and the buildings. In 2022, at the Association AGM, then Mayor Cr. Ross Ebbels stated *"We have not decided, P1 huts have been used for lots of different illegal uses over the years. Current funding is really for re-clad of huts, and landscaping, get rid of fences, and then look at what we will do with them – we have not really decided.."* (Editor's Note: From Transcript/Minutes of Mayor's Q&A at 2022 PLCA AGM; 7/1/2022)

In January 2023, Mayor Cr. Isabelle Tolhurst wrote the Council would commit to firstly, starting an Expression of Interest process for the buildings on the Reserve (including evaluating lease options) by the end of 2023, and secondly, spending on site improvements in the 2023/24 budget. To date neither of these have happened and, other than the State Government grant, there is no new expenditure planned for this area (noting the repair of the toilet block was initially included in the 2022-23 budget after its roof blew off in October 2021).

As an observation, the substantial improvements around the much-loved Point Lonsdale headland have originated from successful community lobbying. The PLCA would like to see the Council actively progress the adaptive re-use of the buildings and undertake regular maintenance expenditure on this iconic site.

### **Bike Park in the Narrows**

In response to the Association's query about progress on the Narrows Bike Park, the Borough CEO has indicated the following:

- Council has included \$16,000 in the 2023- 24 budget to progress the bike park design.
- Council has secured in-principal support from the Department of Transport and Planning to use the redundant road reserve adjacent to the Skate Park in Point Lonsdale as the location for the Bike Park.
- Using input from a group of local youth about the design of the Bike Park Council is preparing a tender document to take to market for a design and construct project.

- Council is using this contract model because of the specialist nature of the work and the fact that practitioners in the market package their services as design and construct.
- Council are planning to go out to public tender later this year.

### **City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) Update:**

The City has a new Councillor, Sarah Hathway has been elected following a count-back conducted by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) on the 28/6/23. This was due to the extraordinary vacancy in the Windermere Ward which arose due to the resignation of Cr. Kylie Grzybek on 29 May 2023.

This follows the resignation of Cr. Stephanie Asher (Bellarine Ward) earlier in June, who was replaced by Cr. Elise Wilkinson elected following a count-back conducted by the VEC.

### **New CEO/Resignation of Acting CEO**

The City announced in late June, the appointment of Ali Wastie as the City of Greater Geelong's new Chief Executive Officer. She comes from the Bass Coast as the former CEO. The Combined Bellarine Community Associations (CBCA) hope to meet with her soon.

Meanwhile, Ms. Kaarina Phyland who took over the reigns as Acting CEO when Mr. Martin Cutter resigned in 2022, has also resigned after she reassumed the role of Executive Director Strategy, Governance and Corporate. Ms Phyland's departure comes just over a week after she revealed her thoughts on The City's financial position on her second-last day as acting CEO, comparing it to "an organisation heading into insolvency" in a post on LinkedIn.

### **Single Councillor Wards.**

As part of the Local Government Act 2020 the City of Greater Geelong Council must adopt a single-councillor ward structure. To achieve this structure, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) panel will consider:

- the appropriate number of councillors and wards for the council;
- the location of ward boundaries;
- the name of each ward.

The proposal from the VEC seeks to distribute population equally amongst all 11 Wards (Option 1 & 2); or 12 Wards (Option 3).

The proposed models (3) are on the VEC website:

<https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/electoral-boundaries/council-reviews/electoral-structure-reviews/geelong>

The Association recently wrote to the Minister for Local Government – The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, and Member for Bellarine – Ms. Alison Marchant, regarding our concerns with the proposed Single-Councillor Ward structure for the City.

The Association submitted to both Ms. Horne and Ms. Marchant that the current arrangement, whereby CoGG Point Lonsdale is served by 3 Councillors in the Bellarine Ward, works satisfactorily. Additionally, the Bellarine Ward Councillors have been very accessible to the Point Lonsdale community and most importantly have a good working relationship with the Borough of Queenscliff, which is very important with some of the issues in Point Lonsdale that affect both LGA's.

In respect of the 3 models presented for comment by the VEC, the Association submitted that all the models result in CoGG Point Lonsdale being hived off from Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads. We also noted that the 2016 VEC CoGG review stated that a Multi-Councillor ward structure was recommended, as did the Citizens Review process that took place after the Geelong Council was sacked in 2016. In conclusion, the

Association cannot see any benefit in moving to a Single-Councillor Ward system currently being pursued by the VEC.

### **Victoria Park Planting Plan and Revised Camping Policy**

Following Council's recent deferral of their proposed Victoria Park Policy and Planting Plan, Friends of Victoria Park (FoVP) made a 9-page submission and met with Councillors on the 16th of August to talk through some park issues. At their August Council meeting Councillors resolved to amend their policy which included many of the suggestions made by FoVP.

Amongst the recommended changes were an extension of the perimeter vegetation reserve, a revised parkland map, changes to the proposed camping times in the "protected camping area" to allow for annual tourist events and changes to the policy review period from 1 year to 3 years. Since early 2022 FoVP have held community events, undertaken around 400 new plantings in the Council designated vegetation zones and held at least 6 working bees, including a recent mulching day with Swan Bay Environment Association members.

Funding for the restoration work came from a successful joint FoVP and Council application for a Commonwealth Tree Planting Grant. The Association has previously supported the restoration of the heritage parkland first established by the Borough Council in 1868 including the re-planting of moonah reserves.

### **Update on Borough Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP) and Open Space Management Plan (OSMP)**

Following an earlier draft, public submissions, and a Council initiated meeting on 17th of March with local civic and environmental groups the next draft CMMP being undertaken by Council officers and a consultant project manager is expected to be presented to Council's Steering Committee in October this year. As part of a process that was started over 2 years ago, we understand that some consultation with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners will be required and that a coastal audit/assessment is also to be undertaken for the project.

The Borough have indicated that Coastal lands that are exempt from the CMMP (some coastal reserves under Council control and other Council freehold land) will now be included in Council's Open Space Management Plan (OSMP) 2018. The plan, which is currently being reviewed by Council Officers to ensure that it's up to date and consistent with the CMMP, will be ready by February 2024. The Borough has indicated that although to 2 plans have different purposes, the OSMP will complement and reference the principles for land management which are informing the development of the CMMP. The Association and other groups will have an opportunity to provide input into both documents through the next stages of development.

The Association believes the Borough's CMMP (and OSMP) must above all aim to:

- Protect our fragile coastal assets and keep our coastal reserves available to all.
- Be consistent with other CMMP's especially those recently completed for the Barwon Coast and South Bellarine coastlines and include any plans other government land managers have for our coastline.
- Include the relevant policy domains from the recently approved Bellarine Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) and consider the latest State Government Climate Change findings.

### **Member Meetings Commence 27 October**

The Association has organised some interesting Guest Speakers for our Friday 27 October Member meeting. We will be having an Emergency Services Panel including Vic Pol, SES, Ambulance Victoria, and the Borough of Queenscliffe.

There is no November Meeting due to QMF weekend in the Borough

In December (15/12/23) we will have Prof. Lawrence St.Ledger to speak on the established links and research between Nature and Well-Being – which was an argument strongly used by the Combined Bellarine Community Groups at the recent Bellarine DAL Planning Panel Hearings.

Please note in your diary, our upcoming AGM on the 5/1/24. Details of Guest speakers TBA.

### **The Voice Forum.**

In the previous month PLCA supported Council in the set up and promotion of the Voice conversation on August 13th.

Whilst perceived as a controversial decision by some, PLCA stands by our commitment to assist Council in promoting this just like other events – as we do every Australia Day with Council’s Australia Day Celebrations (which may upset some in the community) to ensure that information is shared more broadly in 3225 and not just with residents in the BOQ.

### **Golightly Caravan Park – Update.**

We have included a reply to various Association questions about Golightly Park from the Borough CEO, Mr. Martin Gill: *(Thanks to CEO, Mr. Gill for providing the Association with these answers.)*

1. *What is the current status of Council plans for the Park and have consultants been engaged?*

*A: Council officers are working through several return-on-investment scenarios. The next step is to supplement this work with advice from Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA), the focus of the latter consultation to get a better understanding of how DEECAs maturing approach to the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Policy and supporting Strategy will be applied to sites like Golightly.*

*A consultant was engaged to provide industry insight for return-on-investment analysis.*

2. *Have Council developed a Business Plan for the park redevelopment and if so could a copy be provided?*

*A: The business case is still under development.*

3. *If community engagement discussions are planned could the Association be part of these conversations?*

*A: Yes*

4. *Has there been any recent consultation with Golightly Caravan Park users about the future of the Park?*

*A: Representations have been made to individual Councillors on behalf of Golightly Park 12-month permit holders in recent months. A group that calls itself the Golightly Residents Association Inc has asked to meet with Council.*

5. *Will any planning for the site consider the recently enacted Bellarine DAL Statement of Planning Policy including Lonsdale Bay landscape values which are deemed to be part of a State significant coastline?*

*A: Yes*

6. *We understand that the site is co-owned by Queenscliffe Council and State Government with the Council owned lower portion zoned Residential and the upper portion zoned PPRZ can you confirm if this is correct ?*

A: I have attached a diagram showing the two land parcels that make up the footprint of Golightly Park. (See below). The zoning and ownership are as described in the question.

Golightly Park Crown Land.



Spring has sprung, it's warm already! We hope that you enjoy the upcoming warmer weather. We also hope that you consider supporting local businesses in 3225 when you shop for goods or services.

In Ocean Grove, we note, sadly the the National Australia Bank will shut it's doors in November – leaving no NAB branches on the Bellarine. (the closest will be Bellarine Village in Newcomb).

So, please, make use of what you have locally!

Yours Sincerely,

David Kenwood – President PLCA.