



Appendix Q

Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan 2006

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**



Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan



September 2006



Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan

Prepared for Borough of Queenscliffe by:

- Robin Crocker & Associates
A Division of Crocker-Jones Consulting Pty Ltd
Robin Crocker (Project Manager)
☎ 9830 2242
- EDGe Environmental Design Pty Ltd
David Abbott
☎ 9329 7512
- NRM Services Pty Ltd
Nick Wimbush
☎ 9816 9694

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September 2006

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the support and valuable comments and advice provided by members of the project steering committee (page 4), local organisations, interested residents, other committees, government agencies, and Councillors, managers and staff of the Borough of Queenscliffe.

The financial support for the project provided by the Department of Sustainability and Environment is also gratefully acknowledged.]

Photographs: Robin Crocker

Cover photos: Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale foreshores

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Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan

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Steering committee members

Councillors

Cr. Chris Player & Cr Pat Semmens

Officer

Ms Natalie Walker – Manager Planning & Development

Ms Cindy Doyle – Development and Policy Planner

Community Members

Ms. Jill Warneke , Mr. Roel Wasterval & Mr Ralph Roob

Ms. Felicity Thyer – Swan Bay Environment Association

Ms. Sue Longmore / Mr. Steve Smithyman - SBICMC

Mr Steve McPhee / Ms. Sally Chandler-Ford – Parks Victoria

Ms. Madeline Glynn – Dept. Sustainability & Environment

Ms. Dianne Moore – Dept. Sustainability & Environment

Mr Reg Abrahams, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative

Mr Rupert Capper – Bellarine Peninsula Railways

Consultant Team

Mr Robin Crocker, Mr Nick Wimbush, Mr David Abbott

Summary

A good deal of planning has been undertaken in the Borough of Queenscliffe in recent years, much of it related to the foreshore. While many issues and opportunities have been reviewed, there have not been sufficient resources to implement most of the actions identified. The Borough has few ratepayers but many visitors to cater for and large areas of foreshore to manage.

This Coastal Management Plan was commissioned by the Borough to review all past planning, assess current conditions, determine future directions, develop an action program, and, most importantly, identify how the Plan can be implemented. A consultant team prepared the Plan, working closely with the local community, Council staff and Councillors, and other agencies and organisations. The community was involved through workshops, informal discussions, newsletters and responses to a draft version of the plan.

The review found that the Borough has considerable responsibility for coastal management, with foreshore reserves managed by Council taking up about 8% of the municipality, probably the highest proportion of any municipality in Victoria. While the foreshore has very high landscape, heritage and recreational values, management of vegetation, erosion and recreational facilities was found to be inadequate in most areas. Many opportunities were identified to improve management.



Based on principles set out in the Victorian Coastal Strategy and other relevant strategies, a vision, key goals and an action program were then developed to provide a framework for future management by Council.

Vision

The Queenscliff-Pt Lonsdale foreshore continues to be popular with local people and visitors who recognise it as one of the most attractive and varied on the Victorian coast, rich in history, and with easy access and many recreation opportunities.

Facilities are attractive, well maintained and suited to the coastal environment, with an emphasis on walking, relaxing, socialising, sightseeing, beachgoing and boating. Low-set quality accommodation and sensitively designed, affordable caravan/camping facilities at several sites provides for sustainable use, and revenue for coastal management. The well-used coastal walking path from Point Lonsdale lighthouse to Queenscliff and Swan Bay provides excellent access to the coast and fine views across the Rip and Bay from numerous viewing points.

Major design improvements at key sites, particularly the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area, Rip View carpark, Ocean View carpark/Shortlands Bluff and Princess/Citizens parks have made these areas popular destinations for residents and visitors, widely recognised as tourism icons on the Bellarine Peninsula.

The natural values of the foreshore are widely appreciated and local community groups have adopted sections of the coast, working closely with the Council and other agencies to continue to remove weeds and enhance indigenous vegetation. The future survival of stands of Coastal Moonah Woodland and other indigenous vegetation communities is now assured.

The Council has adopted a strong custodial role for the foreshore, and has forged partnerships with adjacent coastal managers, state government agencies and the community to make the coast one of the best managed in Victoria. A community-based Foreshore Advisory Committee helps to ensure adequate funding and sound management of the coast, supporting Council's full-time foreshore manager.

Goals

The key goals are:

1. *Build skills, resources, partnerships and sustainable practices to implement the Plan.*
2. *Develop a continuous coastal path.*
3. *Protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage values*
4. *Manage and improve recreation facilities and accommodation and ensure public safety*
5. *Rationalise access paths and minimise soil erosion*
6. *Facilitate an upgrade of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area*
7. *Plan and implement an upgrade of the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff area*
8. *Progressively improve other areas*

Priorities and actions

The Plan focussed on identifying the highest priority tasks which can make a real difference to the coast by conserving important natural and Aboriginal and other cultural values, and provide improved recreation opportunities to meet changing community needs. Key actions include:

- *Employ a foreshore manager to develop and establish appropriate financial and management systems for the whole foreshore and oversee the implementation of the management plan.*
- *Establish a Foreshore Advisory Committee to involve the community and assist the Borough in implementing the management plan.*
- *Ensure revenue from caravan parks and camping areas is available for use on Crown land foreshores throughout the Borough, and increase Council and grant funding for coastal management.*
- *Initiate transfer of management of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Shortlands Bluff Reserve to the Borough, and consider transfer of VicTrack land on Swan Bay.*
- *Undertake urgent works to improve safety at key locations.*
- *Support urgent remedial erosion control works at Dog Beach (the Narrows Beach).*
- *Join up existing coastal paths and upgrade existing sections to create a continuous walking path from Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse to Queenscliff Pier.*
- *Commence a systematic weed control program by initially establishing three demonstration areas at key conservation sites near Camp Wyuna, Pt Lonsdale lighthouse, and Swan Bay.*
- *Upgrade key paths and recreation facilities and settings at the Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club lookout, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach, Golightly Park Crown land and Princess/Citizens parks as models for future upgrading of other popular recreation sites.*
- *Revise caravan park layouts to improve amenity, increase the diversity of sites including cabins, and increase the proportion of short-term sites, while retaining overall site numbers.*
- *Undertake major upgrading of the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area and Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff area.*

1 Introduction and purpose

1.1 Introduction

Coastal planning in Victoria

Coastal planning and management has received considerable attention in Victoria in the last decade. The *Coastal Management Act 1995* and the subsequent *Victorian Coastal Strategy* (VCS) 2002 provide a valuable basis for decision making on coastal issues. The new format local government Planning Schemes also provide a strong basis for coastal planning at the municipal level.

A lot of planning has been undertaken: Apart from management plans for national, state and coastal parks, 14 *Coastal Action Plans* and 68 *Foreshore Management Plans* have been developed for specific areas and uses (The Coastal Report, VCC 2004). This Plan is one of a series of Coastal Management Plans.

A recent review of the VCS (VCC 2004) identified a number of issues currently requiring additional attention. These include:

- The increasing gap between funding requirements for maintenance/repairs of infrastructure, eg piers, seawalls and steps, and funding available
- Active rehabilitation of natural systems is needed.
- Urbanisation pressures, eg additional housing in the Greater Geelong City Council area adjacent to Pt Lonsdale.
- Confusion regarding application of the VCS to private development near the coast
- Funding is short-term, often delivered via annual grants.
- Overall revenue and expenditure is unclear.

These and other issues identified for Queenscliffe will be considered during the planning process.

Successful implementation

Coastal planning is part science, part judgement and part politics. It involves identifying community needs and perceptions, providing professional input on issues, options and actions and ensuring that decisions on priorities and resources are acceptable to coastal managers. Successful planning also involves one or more local 'champions' to drive implementation of the plan, and adequate skills and resources. For this plan, strong commitment by Councillors and staff is an essential ingredient of success.

Community needs

Numerous surveys and consultation programs have been undertaken in recent years across Victoria (including Queenscliffe) to assess community use, expectations and preferences for recreation, sport and open space. Many of these findings are relevant to foreshore areas. They include preferences for safe access, walking paths and links, trees/shade and good quality facilities (appendix 2).

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Plan, as set out in the project brief, is to be a sound framework for integrated management of the Pt Lonsdale/Queenscliff foreshore. It assesses current values and condition of the coast, threats to its values, and opportunities to improve management and protection.

The Plan will provide clear guidelines and specific actions and priorities to assist Council to manage the coast effectively for both conservation and recreation. It will be based on statewide policies and build on previous planning undertaken for Council including studies on land use, urban character, stormwater, disability, coastal processes, caravan parks, Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse reserve and Queenscliff harbour.

1.3 The study area

The Plan covers all publicly owned coastal and marine areas in the Borough including Council owned land and Crown land. Other open space and paths in the Borough, and access to the coastal reserve will also be considered where relevant to coastal use and management.

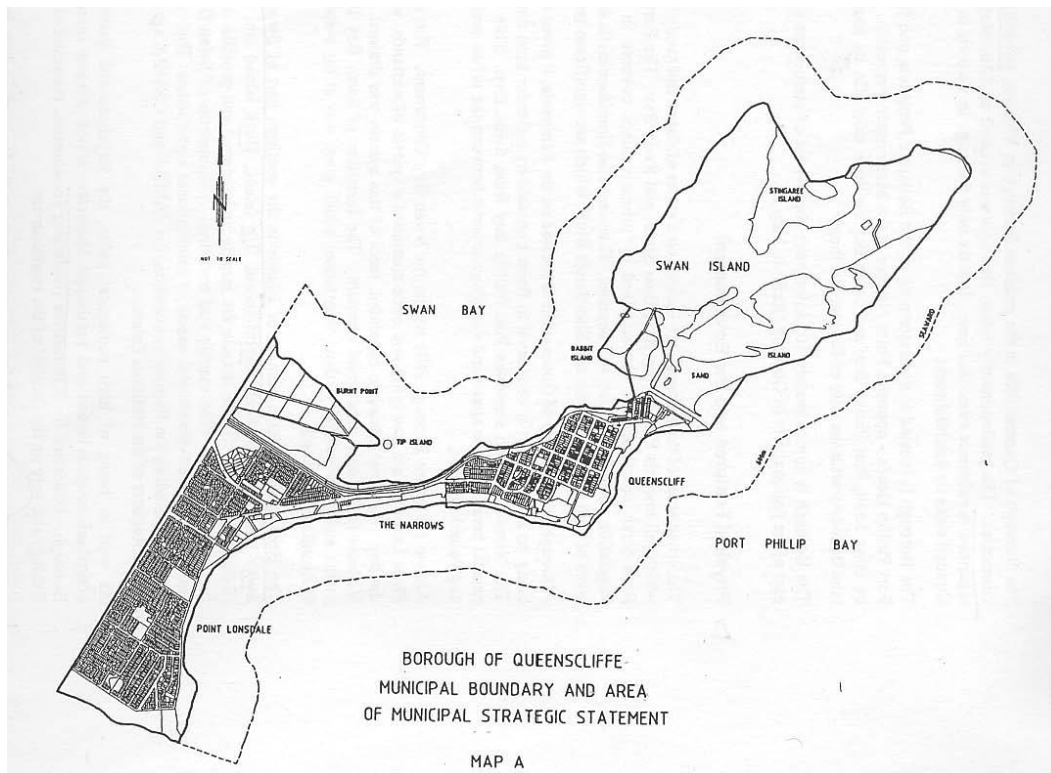


Figure 1: Borough of Queenscliffe map (from Planning Scheme)

Council manages most of the coast but Parks Victoria, VicTrack, the Commonwealth Government and Lighthouse Reserve committees also have responsibility for specific areas. These areas vary widely in their values, uses and management standards. Some areas are leased to user groups, including, for example, the Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club, and Camp Wyuna.

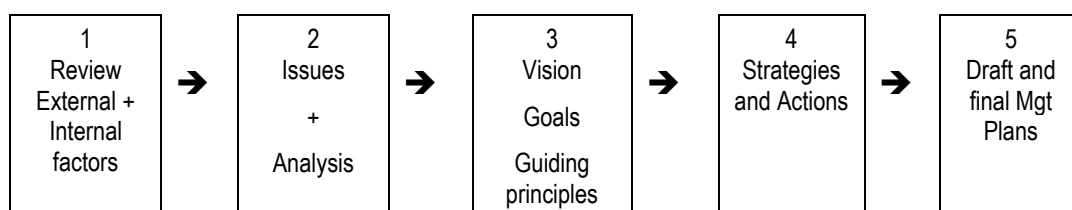
The 11 sections of coast identified in the 1997 Draft Land Use Plan were used as preliminary management units in the study. These were subsequently reduced to three main precincts - Pt Lonsdale, The Narrows and Queenscliff. Smaller management units were also used in developing site-specific actions (section 5).

Important issues facing each area are discussed in sections 2 and 5.

1.4 The planning process and approval

Plan preparation commenced in July 2005 and was undertaken by a consultant team working closely with Council, the Borough community and other stakeholders. The project was overseen by a steering committee and managed in accordance with the Council brief and consultant's proposal.

The approach followed had five steps:



A detailed review was undertaken of relevant external and internal (municipal) factors, on-site assessments were undertaken, issues discussed and analysed and a *Background and analysis report* prepared for the steering committee. In some areas, particularly the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse precinct, detailed recent planning was reviewed and most of the key recommendations adopted in this Plan.

Consultation included interviews with numerous stakeholders, including other coastal managers, and two community workshops (section 2.5).

A vision, goals, management principles and strategies were then developed and an action program prepared. A five-year business plan tied to the actions is also included to assist in targeting available resources.

A draft version of this plan was made available for community comment and all responses considered before preparing this final plan which was approved by the Borough of Queenscliffe. Statutory approval of the final plan by the Minister for Environment is also required under the *Coastal Management Act 1995*.

1.5 State-wide and regional planning context

A wide range of documents was reviewed – see appendix 1 for additional information. The Victorian Coastal Strategy is the most important overall document guiding this Plan, with several major principles identified (section 3.1).

The Strategy includes action to discourage exclusive occupancy of caravan/camping sites for more than 12 months. It also identifies Queenscliff as a safe harbour, and the Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coast as Coastal Recreation Zone (not to be confused with zones in the local municipal Planning Scheme).

1.6 Open space/foreshore trends

Open space, foreshore and recreation planning, development and management have received considerable attention in Victoria in the last 10-20 years. Relevant open space and leisure trends identified in recent studies are listed below. Many of these apply to the Borough of Queenscliffe.

Recreation/use trends

- Shared pathways linked to other recreation and community facilities/destinations (schools, shops, work) and to residential areas are increasingly important.
- There continues to be significant growth in non-competitive active pursuits including cycling, walking and other outdoor activities.
- With the overall ageing of the community, an increasing number of people want pleasant, quiet, attractive and well maintained open space with provision for walking, socialising, relaxing and play. There is strong support for settings with shady trees and seats.
- People are increasingly seeking a wide range of experiences which reflect the nature of local communities. These include markets, festivals, events and dining in a coastal setting.
- A diverse range of settings is important to cater for differing needs in the community and the community is increasingly seeking destinations where a range of these is provided together – whether they are at indoor sports or cultural venues, outdoor sports venues or beaches or informal parklands.
- Interpretation and education are increasingly seen as important ways of increasing community understanding and support for sound management of natural and Aboriginal and European cultural sites
- Participation in some of the more traditional sports has declined (e.g. lawn bowls, tennis, Australian Rules Football) while others have shown some growth. In particular, junior sports and masters and veterans activities have had dramatic increases.
- Greater emphasis is being placed on access for people of all cultures and abilities, user safety and risk management.

Environment and heritage trends

- Increased interest in natural and Aboriginal and European cultural values and commitment to protection, ecologically sustainable development, water conservation etc.
- Growing recognition of the key importance of protecting remnant vegetation, weed control and re-vegetation, although many existing maintenance programs focus largely on grass mowing and spot spraying for amenity purposes.
- Increased interest in water quality management, conservation, recycling and sensitive design of associated infrastructure, considering the key role of coastal land in stormwater transmission, and the intense use and development of coastal open space and waterways”.
- Increasing recognition of the possible impacts of climate change, including impacts on coastal areas.

Resource and management trends

- Need for clear responsibilities for planning, managing and developing open space/foreshores (within and between management agencies).
- Limits to Council and other agency resources.
- Funding often provided for capital works initiatives but little for ongoing maintenance.
- Often a reliance on external grants/funding to undertake significant works
- Local government budgeting frequently fails to accurately identify open space/coastal expenditure.
- Need to review/revise relative resource allocation for sporting facilities and informal settings.
- Important contribution of volunteers, where active.

1.7 Benefits of open space/foreshores

The benefits of open space are considerable and have been well documented. The state government's *Active for Life* initiative (SRV 2000) recognises the benefits of open space use and promotes increased physical activity, particularly sport and outdoor recreation, with more bicycle facilities, improved access to open space and improved pedestrian safety. The current 'Healthy Parks, Healthy People' program developed by Parks Victoria and widespread publicity on lack of exercise and obesity have also helped focus on the opportunities to expand open space networks and increase active recreational activities including walking and recreational cycling.

Important benefits of open space identified include:

- Improved health and wellbeing.
- Providing settings for recreation, relaxing, children's play, socialising with family, friends and groups, and community and sporting programs and events.
- Conserving natural and Aboriginal and European values and providing wildlife corridors.
- Providing safe off-road access between residential areas, open space and community facilities.
- Enhancing a municipality's community identity and visual amenity, particularly foreshores, parks, reserves, bushland and attractive roadsides, and contributing to civic pride and reducing vandalism

2 The current situation in Queenscliffe

Existing documents and policies were reviewed, Council staff and other stakeholders interviewed and a SWOT analysis undertaken to help identify issues. Detailed site inspections of the foreshore were also made, uses, values, threats and other issues identified, current management assessed, and coastal planning and management in nearby coastal municipalities reviewed.

2.1 Existing Borough of Queenscliffe policies and documents

Existing documents provide important background relevant to the open space strategy. These include

- BoQ Planning Scheme / MSS, 2002
- BoQ Draft Land Use Strategy Plan, Fisher Stewart 1997
- Lonsdale Bight: Coastal Process Investigation, Vantree et al for DSE, 1998
- Queenscliff Draft Coastal Action Plan, CCB and BoQ, 1999
- Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse and Foreshore Reserve Draft Management Plan, NRE, 2000
- Queenscliff Harbour Feasibility Investigation, Egis/Parks Victoria, 2002
- Future Strategies for Camp Wyuna and Golightly Caravan Park, Hansen Partnership, 2003
- Coastal Risk and Safety Signage Report, Pt Lonsdale and Queenscliff, Nicola Waldron, Life Saving Victoria, 2004

Key points in these and other documents are summarised in appendix 1. Many of the issues identified are relevant to this Plan.

Zones and overlays

Under the Planning scheme, Foreshore land in the Borough is generally zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone, or Public Park and Recreation Zone, depending on its suitability for use. The Queenscliff Harbour is zoned Special Use.

Overlays protecting parts of the foreshore include Environmental Significance, Landscape Significance, Heritage and Vegetation Protection.

2.2 Foreshore areas and responsibilities

A very high proportion of land in the Borough is set aside in foreshore reserves including the islands (see below). This is thought to be the highest proportion of land in foreshore reserves in any municipality in Victoria.

Estimates of land areas in the Borough are as follows.

Land category	Approximate area (ha)	Approx. %
Residential and commercial	430	33
Islands (largely managed by Department of Defence)	400	31
Foreshore managed by Borough	100	8
Foreshore managed by VicTrack, DSE, Parks Victoria	100	8
Remainder (marine areas?)	270	21
TOTAL AREA	1300	100

There are also several small open space reserves away from the foreshore, eg on Williams Rd, Pt Lonsdale and Flinders St, Queenscliff. Most residents of the Borough have good access to open space although most houses near Fellows Rd are more than 500 m from the foreshore.

The Borough is the major agency with management responsibility, but other organisations also have a role and several areas are leased out to user groups. The major management areas are listed below.

Organisation	Area/responsibility
Borough of Queenscliffe	Most coastal land except areas listed below
Parks Victoria	Queenscliff Harbour area, Sand Island (QCYC managed under lease from DSE), Rabbit Island, foreshore from Ferry Terminal to Queenscliff Pier, Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale piers, Marine National Parks, recreational boating on Port Phillip Bay
Dept Sustainability and Environment	Committee of Management for Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse precinct, and various small areas, eg houses near Fort Queenscliff
VicTrack	Railway storage area at Queenscliff, coastal land along Swan Bay and easement along railway west of town
Various committees/ organisations	Includes Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club, Queenscliff sports area, some Surf Lifesaving areas, Camp Wyuna
Department of Defence	Swan Island (Golf Course managed under lease from Dept of Defence)

The case for rationalisation of management responsibility is discussed in section 5.

2.3 Foreshore values and facilities

A series of studies provide information on the main values of the coastline in the Borough. The Pt Lonsdale area is documented in the NRE Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse and Foreshore Reserve Draft Management Plan (2000) and the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park Management Plan (PV 2005), Queenscliff in the Draft Coastal Action Plan (1999) and Swan Bay in the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) & Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan (DSE 2003), Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park Management Plan (2005) and Swan Bay Catchment Action Plan (SBICMC 2002). Useful additional studies include botanical surveys by Trengove (1992, 2001). See also appendix 1.

Flora and fauna

Most of the native vegetation on the Bellarine Peninsula has been cleared for agriculture and settlement. While much of the foreshore in the Borough has not been cleared, it has suffered from disturbance and extensive weed invasion. There are, however, some relatively undisturbed sites with high values including sites on the islands providing habitat for the Orange Bellied Parrot, Swamp Skink and Rare Bitterbush (see Map E in Planning Scheme). Swan Bay is protected under international agreements (Ramsar, CAMBA and JAMBA).

Several plant communities occur along the foreshore with two main Ecological Vegetation Classes ('EVC's) mapped. These are *Coastal Dune/Coastal Dune Grassland Mosaic*, which extends along much of the coast from Pt Lonsdale Back beach to Shortlands Bluff, and *Coastal Alkaline Scrub*, which occurs mainly inland from the Dune community and north of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse (DSE website, Biodiversity Interactive Map 'MapShare').

Another plant community – *Coastal Moonah Woodland* – is listed for protection under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. A substantial area of this community extends west from Camp Wyuna (Trengove 2001). There are also important areas of saltmarsh vegetation associated with Swan Bay (DSE 2003).

Most faunal species in the area are relatively common in Port Phillip Bay. Only 1 native mammal, 21 native birds, 1 frog and 1 reptile have been recorded (NRE 2000). The Hooded Plover – listed on Schedule of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* - is also known to breed on the ocean beach and dune areas. An Australian Elephant Seal (known as Henry) was a regular user of the front beach in 2005 and previous years.

The flora and fauna of the Borough provided an important resource to the Aboriginal people of the region and the abundance of middens on the foreshore attests to its regular use and productivity.

Marine

The marine areas adjacent to the foreshore reserves carry diverse marine life and a key section around Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse is now part of Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park. This extends from near the SLSC Back Beach Base to Clarkes Beacon, but excluding a 50 m strip along the Pt Lonsdale Pier. Swan Bay is also included in the Park except for the area south of Burnt Point. Fishing and collecting marine organisms are not permitted in the park (PV 2003). In addition to these restrictions, all invertebrates (with the exception of designated bait species) are protected within the intertidal zone of the Borough.

The management plan (PV 2005) provides details on the park's values, uses and management.

Geomorphology and landscape

The coastal reserve is dominated by aeolian calcarenite on the headlands, and aeolian sands, particularly along Pt Lonsdale back beach. These are subject to erosion, presenting a hazard along some coastal cliffs (DSE 2000).

Considerable sand movement occurs along the coast, resulting in loss from Pt Lonsdale front beach and gain at the Queenscliff front beach and harbour (Vantree 1998). Ongoing dredging is required at the harbour mouth. Groynes have been moderately successful at retaining sand at Pt Lonsdale but rapid erosion is occurring at 'Dog Beach' near Murray Road, damaging vegetation and presenting a hazard to visitors. An investigation of this issue is scheduled to start in late 2005/early 2006.

Cliff erosion at both Point Lonsdale and Shortlands Bluff is characterised by toppling of slabs and bluffs, and gully, sea (wave) and wind erosion. These patterns present considerable risk management challenges both to visitors on cliff top paths and on beaches beneath cliffs, and to existing infrastructure on cliff tops. These natural processes may have been accelerated by human management interference, but little practical scope exists to minimise erosion through management intervention.

Climate change and sea level rise associated with global warming are also predicted to increase vulnerability of all coastal landform features to erosion and associated patterns, however no specific projections have been prepared for the Plan area. Significant public expenditure has been directed in the distant and recent past to coastal protection works. Even if climate change effects have no appreciable affect on coastal landforms in this locality in the short to medium term, these patterns can be anticipated to increase demand on statewide allocations for such works in the future. Management of coastal erosion should plan to incorporate less costly and less interventionist strategies.

The entrance to Port Phillip is of State geological and geomorphological interest (Rosengren, see NRE 2000 p 9). Less than 10,000 years ago, when sea levels were substantially lower, the Yarra River flowed past Queenscliff through the present day Heads.

A major study of the Victorian coast identified Pt Nepean, Pt Lonsdale and Queenscliff as of outstanding scenic quality (VCC 1998). A 'Coastal Spaces' study of the Bellarine area found that Pt Lonsdale and the Lighthouse were culturally important and highly visible landscape elements. Both the Queenscliff landscape and Pt Lonsdale headland/views were valued by the community. Large-scale development and excessive development on dunes were identified as threats (Planisphere 2005). A subsequent report, *Coastal Spaces Recommendations* (DSE 2006a), identified the Heads at Point Lonsdale as of State significance with "... a dramatic and iconic landform at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay."

The diversity of landscape settings and viewing points in such a short section of coast is rare – ranging from the rugged back beach to historic lighthouses, sheltered Bay beaches, traditional gardens, the Harbour and peaceful Swan Bay.

Indigenous cultural heritage

The intertidal rock shelves and other sheltered sites along the coast would have provided abundant food for the local Aboriginal people, attested to by numerous shell middens in coastal dunes. The areas managed by the Borough remain important to Indigenous people, represented today by the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd. These sites have suffered from natural erosion and damage by visitors to the area, but are now protected by state and

commonwealth legislation. The well-known story of escaped convict William Buckley's life with local Aboriginal people over 32 years has provided some insight into their way of life prior to European settlement.

Legislation now provides for the protection of all Aboriginal sites and the Aboriginal community needs to be involved in the management and interpretation of these sites.

The new *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic) has been passed by the Parliament of Victoria and is anticipated to commence operation in early 2007. It will replace the dual State / Commonwealth system currently in operation. The Act provides blanket protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage and it will be an offence to disturb Aboriginal cultural heritage without obtaining a Cultural Heritage Permit. Changes that may affect coastal managers include a requirement to undertake Cultural Heritage Management Plans prior to undertaking certain activities and changes in the structure of Aboriginal representation.

Native title must be considered when undertaking work on Crown land or waters that may affect native title. There are currently no native title claims within the study area, although future claims are possible. Information about native title can be obtained from the National Native Title Tribunal (www.nntt.gov.au).

Non-Indigenous cultural heritage

Maritime, defence and early recreation activities have created dramatic features along the coast with lighthouses, fortifications, piers, boating facilities and traditional gardens creating strong visual elements and associated heritage values. The area provides many opportunities for interpretation of heritage themes. A proposed Heritage Study will provide a valuable basis for developing management and interpretation strategies for historic features along the foreshore. The Borough's Heritage Policy and Overlay provisions in the Planning Scheme also assist in protecting heritage values.

A series of sites in or adjacent to foreshore reserve are on Victoria's Heritage Register or Heritage Inventory, and hence are protected by the Heritage Act.

Key sites on the Register are Queenscliff Pier and Lifeboat Shed (H1515), Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse (H1517), Queenscliff Railway Station (H1586), H.M.V.S. Lonsdale (VHR S425), Fisherman's Shed, Weeroona Pde (H2074) and Wreck Bell, Princess Park (H2070). There is also a series of fort, defence, railway and recreation sites at Queenscliff on the Inventory (www.heritage.vic.gov.au).

As with other important heritage sites in Victoria, additional resources would enhance conservation of these sites. Most of the sites are not the responsibility of the Borough. Parks Victoria is currently considering works required at Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale piers.

Recreation

The area has good access by car, and ferry from Sorrento, but limited public transport. Most of the foreshore is readily accessible for public use except for land managed by the Department of Defence, and Fort Queenscliff with access limited to guided tours. While Parks Victoria manages Sand Island and Rabbit Island, public access to these sites are controlled by the Department of Defence through the gatehouse at the end of Bridge St. The Queenscliff Harbour and Jordan Reserve boat ramp provide good access for boating and there are two private yacht clubs. The Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale piers are popular access points for fishing.

The foreshore provides for a wide range of informal recreation opportunities including walking, cycling, sightseeing, relaxing, beachgoing, swimming, surfing, fishing, picnicking, golf, caravanning, camping and children's play. The foreshore is also an important and popular recreation area for people with dogs. Sporting activities include bowls, tennis, cricket and football and there is a skate park at The Narrows.

The Point Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club operates bases at two beaches: Point Lonsdale Back Beach and Santa Casa.

The Council manages four caravan parks with sites for short-term and long-term use.

Special events (and markets) are also a popular feature of foreshore use in Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale (see *Your Guide to Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale*).

The Bellarine Peninsula Railway provides a significant tourism attraction in the area providing train rides and special event tours to Drysdale in historic rolling stock.

The proportion of local residents and visitors participating varies widely between activities and at different times of the year.

Facilities and design standards

Sporting facilities along the coast are generally in good condition, particularly for bowls and tennis. The Recreation Reserve at Queenscliff combines several uses which are not entirely compatible and the siting of structures, particularly the Monahan Centre, ignores the attractive coastal location. A skate park is located on Crown land near the Bellarine Highway, Pt Lonsdale Road intersection.

The quality of facilities along the foreshore is generally low with numerous styles of seats, tables, fences, bollards, signs etc, many in poor condition. These give much of the foreshore a run-down appearance, with notable exceptions such as the recent play facilities at Pt Lonsdale. Parking areas and toilets are also of variable quality, with some in poor condition and others lacking shade and shelter.

Numerous rubbish and dog faeces bins spread along the foreshore provide a service, but also detract from the amenity of the area.

Education and interpretation

School groups undertake a range of environmental activities along the foreshore, particularly associated with marine values. The DPI Marine Discovery Centre at Queenscliff provides extensive interpretive programs related to marine life and its conservation.

Interpretive programs, guided tours, publications and signs, and several museums in Queenscliff, help explain the area's rich history. The quality and distribution of interpretive material is variable, with most emphasis on Queenscliff. There is a variety of styles and messages and some interpretive signs have poor legibility, eg at Ocean View Carpark and Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area.

Economic values

Recreation, events and accommodation associated with the foreshore provide major economic benefits for the Borough, with significant income generated particularly in the summer holiday period. The Sorrento-Queenscliff Car/Passenger Ferry and commercial fishing fleet and tour operators located within the Queenscliff boat Harbour also provide important benefits.

2.4 Management resources and performance

The Borough of Queenscliffe is in a difficult position, with substantial areas of foreshore to manage and only a small rate base, and limited skills and resources. Apart from grass mowing, tree trimming and responding to resident requests regarding facilities, very little is done to manage vegetation, regulate access or maintain facilities. Maintenance is undertaken by a City of Greater Geelong crew working from Queenscliff, overseen by Earth Tech staff in Geelong.

Significant revenue raised in caravan parks and boat launching – about \$1 million pa – is currently all spent on-site. Other coastal managers use a significant proportion of caravan park revenue to manage adjacent coastal land. Additionally, user groups, eg Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club pay very little in fees for use of coastal land.

The Council also has no staff position with responsibility for coastal/land management and there has been little active management of natural areas along the coast, except small sites where community-based groups have undertaken weed removal and revegetation work.

2.5 Users and community views

Users

Many local people frequently use the foreshore for a range of informal and sporting recreational uses (see above). Schools and visiting groups also use the foreshore for recreation and conservation-based activities.

Visitors to the area in 2003 numbered approximately 780,000 including 70% day trippers. 70% of visitors came in the high season from November to April. Growth of 1% pa is predicted (source: Essential Economics report 2004).

Council manages four caravan parks with a mix of short-term and 'permanent' bookings. No cabins or other built accommodation is available in these parks.

Community views

Some information on community views about the coast was documented in earlier studies:

BoQ Draft Land Use Strategy Plan: The community saw regulating access to the foreshore and planting indigenous vegetation as important. Shared and multi-use recreation facilities and greater use of existing facilities were also important.

BoQ Urban Character Study: Extensive community consultation found that people liked the ambience and tranquillity of the area, coastal location, lifestyle and sense of community. For Pt Lonsdale, vegetation and natural coastal character were important; for Queenscliff, heritage values were most significant. The two key development issues related to building height and native vegetation retention.

Workshops

Two community workshops held at Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale in September 2005 identified a range of views. Priority issues included improving access and expanding walking opportunities, managing weeds and erosion, improving facilities, signs and parking, upgrading/redeveloping the Toc H area and Golightly caravan park, and generally managing the coast more effectively (appendix 5).

Other stakeholders provided a range of views with many supporting more active management of the coast to protect natural values and improve walking access and other recreation facilities. Many also saw the need to upgrade the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse precinct and Queenscliffe Recreation Reserve / Ocean View carpark area.

A group of community members participated in an inspection of vegetation communities at Swan Bay and Queenscliff and helped to identify issues and opportunities to improve vegetation management.

2.6 Demographic trends

The BoQ permanent population has declined marginally in the last 10 years to about 3450, but there was overall increase of 410 over 7 years if housing west of Fellows Road in the City of Greater Geelong is included. The population of the area was projected to increase by 3.8% pa from 2003-2010 to 5900 permanent residents, but this estimate is now likely to be reduced (source: Essential Economics report 2004). There is an additional population of about 2930 temporary residents who own property and holiday or live part-time in the Borough.

Key characteristics for BoQ include (source: Social Atlas, Barwon Care Forum, 2004):

- 30% of the population is 65 yrs and over (cf Victoria 13%)
- 55% of the population is female (cf Victoria 51%)
- 34% are living alone (cf Victoria 24%)
- 27% of households have incomes <\$400/wk (cf Victoria 20%)
- Significant number of people without access to a motor vehicle
- Generally higher education level, but lack of disposable economic resources

This information indicates the need to cater for older people, eg by providing easy access to foreshore areas and facilities, well graded and surfaced paths, seats at viewing and rest areas and shade and shelter.

2.7 Key issues and opportunities

A wide range of issues were identified and reviewed during the planning process. This commenced with a 'SWOT' analysis and was followed by review of all relevant existing reports, extensive field inspections and detailed discussions with a wide range of individuals and organisations.

SWOT analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints) analysis was undertaken at the first project meeting – see appendix 3 for details.

- Strengths included the unique diversity of natural and heritage features, the coast and informal lifestyle, ready access to the coast and views.
- Weaknesses included lack of resources and coordination to manage the coast effectively, unregulated access, variable amenities, stormwater impacts and a limited path network.
- Opportunities included establishment of clear priorities, improving sites, facilities and paths, improving vegetation management and reviewing/identifying compatible future developments.
- Threats/constraints included lack of resources, uncoordinated responsibility for the foreshore, threats to natural values, and, in the longer-term, possible impacts of climate change.

Issues and opportunities

A more detailed list of issues was then developed for discussion with the steering committee and subsequently revised further (appendix 4).

Some of the key issues are illustrated on the following page. These issues were considered in developing the goals and actions set out later in this plan.

Key issues include: (left to right, top to bottom): protecting natural and heritage values, determining priorities for vegetation management and path rationalisation, improving walking opportunities, upgrading facilities, dealing with erosion, determining the future of caravan parks and redeveloping major sites at Pt Lonsdale and Queenscliff



3 Basis for the Plan

New legislation has been introduced and extensive consultation and planning undertaken for coastal areas in Victoria and interstate over the last 10-20 years. This provides a strong basis for developing this Plan.

This section outlines policies, planning principles and community preferences relevant to coastal management in Queenscliffe. Supporting information on foreshore trends and demographic change is provided in sections 1 and 2.

3.1 Legislation, policies and strategies

Victoria's *Coastal Management Act 1995* and Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 provide clear directions for coastal planning and management, directly relevant to this Management Plan (section 1). These emphasise long-term sustainable use and management of the coast. Other relevant Acts include the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and *Heritage Act 1985*.

A Coastal Management Plan is prepared under Section 30 of the Coastal Management Act 1995. The act stipulates that a Coastal Management Plan must:

- set out the land management requirements for the area; and
- include a 3 year business plan describing proposed works for the area.

The act also requires that the Coastal Management Plan must be consistent with and give effect to the Victorian Coastal Strategy, any Coastal Action plan applying to the area and any relevant Land Conservation Council recommendations.

The Borough of Queenscliffe's Planning Scheme and Corporate Plan 2003-2006 support the protection of natural and heritage values and provide direction on environmental and recreation and foreshore issues (appendix 1). In particular, Clause 15.08 of the State Planning Policy Framework in the Planning Scheme reinforces the need for consistency with the Victorian Coastal Strategy and other coastal planning tools.

A series of specific Council plans and strategies provide additional information and guidance on coastal planning (appendix 1).

3.2 Planning and management principles

The Victorian Coastal Strategy sets out principles in considerable detail (pp 17-21). Priorities are to:

1. Protect significant environmental (and cultural) features
2. Ensure sustainable use of natural resources
3. Plan and provide direction for the future (taking a long view and considering environmental, social and economic implications)
4. When the above are met, facilitate suitable development in modified environments (which increases public benefit, is well designed and sited, minimises risk and facilitates multiple-use).

The detailed principles in the VCS were used in reviewing issues and options and developing actions in this Plan.

3.3 Community needs and preferences

Extensive community consultation related to a range of coastal and other open space areas in Victoria has identified strong support for protection of natural, cultural, historic and landscape values, provision of equitable but regulated access, and good quality and safe facilities (appendix 2).

Consultation in Queenscliffe has identified support for these principles (section 2.5) and specific priorities such as additional walking paths, controlling weeds, dealing with erosion and improving sites such as Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse precinct, Ocean View carpark, Golightly Caravan Park and the Queenscliff railway area.

4 Future directions: vision and goals

The Queenscliffe coast has been popular for a long time and continues to be well used by local residents and visitors. Much needs to be done, however, to ensure a sustainable future in which compatible recreational use can go hand in hand with the protection and appreciation of the area's natural, cultural and historic values.

The following 'vision' builds on community consultation, field observations and foreshore management trends to provide a positive picture of the foreshore in 15-20 years time. Key goals were also developed to help achieve the vision in a systematic way.

4.1 Vision for 2020

The Queenscliff-Pt Lonsdale foreshore continues to be popular with local people and visitors who recognise it as one of the most attractive and varied on the Victorian coast, rich in history, and with easy access and many recreation opportunities.

Facilities are attractive, well maintained and suited to the coastal environment, with an emphasis on walking, relaxing, socialising, sightseeing, beachgoing and boating. Low-set quality accommodation and sensitively designed, affordable caravan/camping facilities at several sites provides for sustainable use, and revenue for coastal management. The well-used coastal walking path from Point Lonsdale lighthouse to Queenscliff and Swan Bay provides excellent access to the coast and fine views across the Rip and Bay from numerous viewing points.

Major design improvements at key sites, particularly the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area, Rip View carpark, Ocean View carpark/Shortlands Bluff and Princess/Citizens parks have made these areas popular destinations for residents and visitors, widely recognised as tourism icons on the Bellarine Peninsula.

The natural values of the foreshore are widely appreciated and local community groups have adopted sections of the coast, working closely with the Council and other agencies to continue to remove weeds and enhance indigenous vegetation. The future survival of stands of Coastal Moonah Woodland and other indigenous vegetation communities is now assured.

The Council has adopted a strong custodial role for the foreshore, and has forged partnerships with adjacent coastal managers, state government agencies and the community to make the coast one of the best managed in Victoria. A community-based Foreshore Advisory Committee helps to ensure adequate funding and sound management of the coast, supporting Council's full-time foreshore manager.



4.2 Key goals

A series of goals was developed in response to the vision and the major issues identified for the plan.

Goal 1: Build skills, resources, partnerships and sustainable practices to implement the Plan

Goal 2: Develop a continuous coastal path

Goal 3: Protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage values

Goal 4: Manage and improve accommodation and recreation facilities and ensure public safety

Goal 5: Rationalise access paths and minimise soil erosion

Goal 6: Facilitate upgrade of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area

Goal 7: Plan and implement an upgrade of the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff area

Goal 8: Progressively improve other areas:

- **Pt Lonsdale Back Beach**
- **Pt Lonsdale Front Beach**
- **Lawrence Rd – Camp Wyuna**
- **Queenscliff Back Beach**
- **Queenscliff Front Beach**
- **Harbour and Boat Ramp**
- **Swan Bay Foreshore**
- **Murray Rd and Burnt Point**
- **Swan Bay and Islands**

5 Actions to achieve the goals

This section provides additional information on important issues and lists the major actions required to achieve the key goals. An overall implementation program is set out in Section 6. This includes a table listing all actions identified in this section.

5.1 Goal 1: Build skills, resources, partnerships and sustainable practices to implement the Plan

This Plan has already identified that while the foundations of the Queenscliff – Pt Lonsdale Foreshore are strong (spectacular coastline, strong heritage values, active and involved community) there are a number of areas requiring significant investment (natural resource management, recreational infrastructure).

The key to securing this investment and distributing it effectively is based on three complementary action areas:

- Developing and implementing an integrated foreshore management model.
- Capacity building for foreshore management.
- Maximising the role of the community in foreshore use, development and management.

Integrated management model

Management of the Queenscliff – Pt Lonsdale Foreshore is currently problematic in two key areas: the number of managers involved and the lack of resources for management actions.

The major foreshore managers are Parks Victoria (Harbour, Marine National Park, Sand Island, Rabbit Island, Queenscliff foreshore and Piers), the Department of Sustainability and Environment (Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and small reserve at Shortlands Bluff), VicTrack (land between the Bellarine Peninsula Railway and Swan Bay and the rail line reserve itself) the Borough of Queenscliff (the balance of the area containing the majority of the foreshore reserves) and the Department of Defence (Swan Island). While within the Borough, the Department of Defence land is Commonwealth land and thus subject to its own environmental management regime outside the scope of the state Coastal Management Act.

There is a strong argument to be made that the Borough should take over management of key coastal reserve areas currently under DSE control, and areas of VicTrack land adjacent to rail infrastructure. This would be consistent with foreshore management arrangements currently in place for the vast majority of Port Phillip foreshores, where the municipality is the delegated manager.

The Borough has particular issues with foreshore management, namely that its small size (geographically and financially) means it is more difficult to develop and sustain the capacity for 'professional' coastal management. This leads to the second main issue, that of the lack of resources for coastal management. Having said that, the Borough is willing to contribute funds in the short-term to the foreshore for priority projects, particularly with a recreational focus.

In addition the Borough contains a number of caravan parks and camping grounds that raise revenue. Some of the parks need substantial investment and, more particularly, further opportunities for increasing the yield from parks needs to be explored such as placing cabins in strategic areas to provide more accommodation options and extend the season. This must be done sensitively to ensure the needs of long term campers and caravan site users are accommodated as much as possible (section 5.4.2).

It has been suggested during the development of the Plan that there is currently no legal avenue whereby caravan park revenue can be spent outside of the particular reserve where the park is located. This is in contrast to standard practise at other Crown land caravan parks where the revenue is used for coastal management across the foreshore management unit (obviously only on Crown/Council land). Legislation and the Victorian Coastal Strategy indicate that the Borough can use caravan and boat launching revenue for coastal management:

Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978: See section 15: *A committee of management of any land appointed under Section 14 – (e) may expend any revenue from the land or any other moneys for any of the purposes mentioned in this section; and section 15 (f).*

Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002: 2: Sustainable use of natural coastal resources. *Revenue generated from coastal Crown land will be directed to coastal management, protection and the development or maintenance of appropriate infrastructure as determined by the relevant coastal manager.*

The nearby Barwon Coast Committee generates over \$3 million pa from camping and caravan parks and foreshore leases. While maintenance and investment back into parks is significant, over half a million dollars pa is available for expenditure on works on foreshore reserves outside of caravan parks. This is an appointed committee rather than a Local Government committee but the principle is the same. Much of the work is undertaken by an 8-person specialist team.

The recently formed Great Ocean Road Committee, (which manages foreshores from Torquay to Lorne) has a gross income of \$3.5 million pa, and spends \$1.4 million pa of this on coastal reserve management.

The facilities at Queenscliff – Pt Lonsdale are in poorer condition and the range and amount of accommodation is less, but there is no reason why sound business management of the foreshore in its entirety, rather than as caravan parks and 'other' should not result, over time, in the generation of significant surpluses for wider foreshore management.

Part of this management model must include the effective management of foreshore leases. Ensuring leases are current and include conditions for appropriate environmental management and appropriate lease fees is an important component of sound foreshore management.

Grants for capital works and projects will also play an important role in overall foreshore management.

The business plan in section 6 of this report should be used as the starting point for detailed budgeting for the foreshore as a whole, including caravan parks. This can be done with the foreshore as a stand-alone business unit of Council or more closely integrated within Council's overall financial management systems. The former is preferred as it enables clear demonstration that funds raised on Crown land are being spent on Crown land.

Capacity building

The Borough currently lacks in-house capacity in foreshore management. As a small Council the Borough is unlikely to ever have specialist knowledge in, for example, environmental management in-house and this knowledge will have to be drawn in from community knowledge or contracted from the private or not for profit sector.

However, a more urgent need is to build capacity in the systems of foreshore management within the Borough. To this end it is recommended that a foreshore manager be employed on a full time basis. The role of this position in close co-operation with other Council staff will be to:

- Establish appropriate financial and management systems for the overall foreshore.
- Co-ordinate implementation of the approved management plan.
- Progress priority projects and ensure their timely delivery.
- Oversee day to day project management of foreshore works.

The position should be funded within the revenue and expenditure arrangements of the foreshore. The consultant team strongly recommends that to assist with co-ordination the position be filled by an individual who will be on Council staff, rather than contracting out the individual elements above.

Council has recently employed a caravan park manager and this position, with an expanded role, may be appropriate for the above tasks.

It is important to remember that foreshore management is not a new field, and within an hour's drive of Queenscliff there is a wealth of foreshore management experience at Barwon

Coast, the Great Ocean Road Committee, Parks Victoria, the Bellarine Bayside Committee the City of Greater Geelong and, by ferry, the Mornington Peninsula Shire. Advice from these committees should be sought on the practicalities of effective foreshore management.

Community partnerships – Foreshore Advisory Committee

The Borough community have many important roles to play in relation to the foreshore. These range from the general community who use the foreshore for recreation to special interest groups that have particular requirements for use and access.

Interaction between the community as users and the Borough as foreshore manager occurs constantly around particular issues and projects and more strategically such as in input to this plan. Community input includes amongst other things generating new ideas, commenting on proposals, lobbying for grants and works and providing a labour force for environmental and other volunteer projects.

To formalise these partnerships between the community and Council, and perhaps even more importantly, between the community groups and members themselves, it is recommended that a Foreshore Advisory Committee (FAC) be established. The FAC would not replace the existing informal and network interactions that occur, but rather provide a forum where different stakeholders can discuss issues together and advise the Borough accordingly. The FAC could be formed as a Committee of Council under Section 86 of the *Local Government Act* 1989 which can include Councillors, staff and community members.

The FAC could potentially be quite a large group with representation from the following sectors (not exclusive):

- Councillors (including Chair)
- Council Foreshore Manager
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Sports Clubs
- Recreational Clubs
- Environment Groups
- Heritage Groups
- Representatives from Agencies.

The FAC would not be a decision making body as that responsibility rests with the Borough as Committee of Management but rather an advisory body to assist Council in the implementation of the plan.

Detailed terms of reference for the FAC will need to be developed but roles could include:

- Oversight (advisory only) and input to the implementation of the management plan.
- Provision of expert and non-expert advice to Council on coastal and foreshore issues.
- Communication of important interest group and general community issues to Council for discussion with other foreshore stakeholders.
- Conduit for marshalling community work resources.

The FAC would not be an operational committee meeting on a frequent basis as the structure and number of stakeholders would make it unwieldy. Rather it would meet perhaps 2-3 times a year for a longer time and include review of management plan implementation as a key agenda item.

FACs operate successfully in other areas such as the Mornington Peninsula Shire and this experience should be drawn on when establishing the Committee.

Sustainable management

Long-term protection of coastal values will require a concerted effort by all coastal managers. As a major manager of caravan parks and intensively used day visitor areas, the Borough has an important role to play, with management and recreational use of its areas involving significant use of energy, potable water and non-recyclable materials.

A broad state-wide overview of sustainable management is provided in *Our Environment Our Future* (DSE 2005). Many municipalities and agencies have developed local strategies which are relevant to the Borough.

Sustainable water use issues and opportunities are discussed in the *Draft Sustainable Water Strategy: Central Region* (DSE 2006b). Opportunities relevant to the Borough include reduced water use in visitor facilities, particularly showers, toilets and laundries, and increased collection and use of rainwater.

Climate change

Recognition of the likely impacts of climate change is increasing rapidly. See for example reports on www.greenhouse.gov.au, and papers at the *Coast to Coast 2006* Conference (www.vcc.vic.gov.au). Probable impacts over time include increased storm events, tidal surges, rising sea levels, increasing temperatures and reduced rainfall.

A recent study for the far west coast of Victoria rated waterways and wetlands as extremely vulnerable, water resources and biodiversity as highly vulnerable, and coasts and infrastructure as of low vulnerability to 2030. The study proposed further assessments, reducing demand for water, and community engagement (SKM 2005).

These results are likely to be broadly applicable to the Queenscliff-Point Lonsdale foreshore but local investigations are needed to identify probable impacts in more detail.

Management strategies – goal 1

- 1. Employ a foreshore manager, funded at least in part from foreshore revenue, to develop and establish appropriate financial and management systems for the whole foreshore and oversee the implementation of the management plan.**
- 2. Establish a Foreshore Advisory Committee with appropriate terms of reference to assist the Borough as Committee of Management in implementing the management plan.**
- 3. Change budget arrangements to ensure revenue from caravan parks and other foreshore activities is available for use on Crown land foreshores throughout the Borough for implementing this management plan.**
- 4. Initiate the transfer of management responsibility for the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Shortlands Bluff Reserve from DSE to the Borough. Investigate possible Council management of VicTrack land on Swan Bay adjacent to the rail alignment (subject to resolution of a management agreement and funding arrangements).**
- 5. Promote sustainable practices in the community by developing and interpreting sustainable practices in caravan parks and recreational areas.**
- 6. In conjunction with the Central Coastal Board and other coastal agencies, support studies into the potential impacts of climate change on biodiversity and infrastructure on the coast.**

5.2 Goal 2: Develop a continuous coastal path

Background information

Community consultation for this project found that there was strong support for improved walking access and opportunities, particularly a continuous coastal walking path. This finding is in line with major strategies prepared by or for Parks Victoria – *Liking People and Spaces* (2002), and the *Victorian Trails Strategy* (2001), which propose numerous trails linking community facilities and providing for walking, cycling and informal recreation.



Popular Surf Coast Walk near Jan Juc

Existing paths along the Pt Lonsdale to Queenscliff coast are of variable quality and there are several gaps near Queenscliff. There are very few signs along the existing paths and sections such as Lovers Walk near Dog Beach are almost impassable due to wind blown sand.

Proposed path

Sections of the proposed path requiring construction, upgrading or fencing have been identified. The proposed route of the path is shown on figure 2-4. The precise location of the path needs to provide for the protection of biodiversity values.

Additional management actions, including improved access, for areas adjacent to the proposed route are discussed under Goals 5 and 8. The short-term aim is to provide a continuous off-road walking path from Pt Lonsdale to Queenscliff. In the longer-term some sections of the path may be converted to a shared pathway, providing for a wider range of uses. Detailed planning for the path should involve consultation with users on their specific needs for facilities, alignments, separation of joggers, dog walkers and cyclists etc.

Name and signs

The walk needs an agreed name, to be used on signs and in publicity, and signs at key entry points and junctions. Possible names are Rip View Scenic Walk, or Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff Coastal Walk

A coloured marker or symbol sign should be used to mark the route, with information on times, distances and main destination names provided at key points.

Facilities

Seats need to be provided at viewing and rest points and combined rubbish/dog waste bins at key locations. Drinking taps are also desirable where potable water is available nearby. Small shade structures should be considered at heavily used viewing points. Additional or upgraded toilets are not proposed in the short-term but should be considered later.

Information/interpretation

All interpretive signs along the walk need to be reviewed and rationalised, with clear themes and messages developed for the route. A simple walk leaflet may be worthwhile and the walk should be promoted in local and tourist media and on Council's website.

Standards

Some sections can function as a shared pathway for walkers and cyclist, while other sections, particularly in sandy areas, would be too narrow for shared use, and suitable for walkers only, at least in the short-term. Symbol signs/barriers will be needed to regulate bicycle access.

Proposed widths and surfaces for nominated sections of the path are as follows (figures 2-4):

- Primary: shared path 2.5 m wide, sealed surface
- Secondary: walking path, 900-1200 mm wide, compacted gravel surface

- Local: minor walking path, 700-900 sand or shell grit surface

The route

At Pt Lonsdale, the logical starting/end point is adjacent to the lighthouse, with a major sign/entry point promoting the path. An additional short loop walk to the west would provide scenic coastal views and a return along the beach.

The path would then pass the Pt Lonsdale Pier and follow an alignment next to Rip View carpark and the Bowling Club to the front beach where it would follow the existing sealed path past Royal and Golightly parks. A section of path and viewing point would be provided on elevated land at Golightly to provide public access to the panoramic views available from this area. The path would follow Lovers Walk from a point south of Dog Beach and continue to Henry Street, with action taken to provide adequate access through areas of loose sand. A new section of path would be required from this point to the Ocean View carpark, passing The Esplanade and Queenscliff Recreation Reserve.

In the short-term the path would head north along Hesse St and then follow around the north wall of the Fort and pick up the existing Thwaites Walk in Citizens Park. In the longer term, a path/boardwalk around the seaward side of the Fort would provide very good views and access at all tides.

This path would then be extended down through Princess Park to Queenscliff Pier as proposed in the redevelopment report for the parks (Gerner 1985).

Existing and proposed paths would provide links from the Pier to the town, Ferry Terminal and Harbour. A separate off-road link would also be developed to link the Pier to the Swan Bay shared path near the Railway Station, effectively providing an off-road path along most of the coast in the Borough.

Staging

The path could be developed to a basic standard in the short term and progressively upgraded as additional funds become available. Closing and revegetating adjacent private access tracks is a priority task (section 5).

Maintenance

Council will need to implement a regular monitoring/maintenance program for the path to provide for safe use. There may also be opportunities for local community groups to adopt sections of the path and assist with maintenance.

Management strategies – goal 2

- 7. Prepare a detailed design and schedule of works for a Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coastal walk and undertake sufficient works for the path to be opened as a safe and accessible route.**
- 8. Continue to fund (through Council's Crown land revenue or grants) upgrading of the path, with additional sections built to shared path standard.**
- 9. Liaise with the Fort's manager regarding a possible route on the seaward side of the Fort.**

5.3 Goal 3: Protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage values

Background information

The foreshore includes areas with important biodiversity values. Weeds were identified as the major management issue affecting biodiversity and this plan focuses largely on this threat. Additional information on biodiversity is desirable, and more detailed investigations are important to provide a sound basis for future management.

As outlined in section 2.3, the foreshore retains a range of indigenous vegetation communities but these have been adversely affected by highly invasive weeds which are out-competing most indigenous species. The most serious weeds include Myrtle-leaf Milkwort (or Bellarine Pea) *Polygala myrtofolia*, Italian Buckthorn *Rhamnus alaternus*, Dolichos *Dipogon lignosis*, Bridal Creeper *Asparagus asparagoides*, and African Boxthorn *Lycium ferocissimum*. The indigenous Coast Tea Tree *Leptospermum laevigatum* has also invaded sections of the coast.



Weed infested understorey, near Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club

Unless concerted action is taken, many local species could be lost and even Moonah may struggle to survive in the long-term – a possibility that should be completely unacceptable to the community. Weeds are thought to have taken over much of the understorey since about 1960 (Tregrove 2001). The protection of native vegetation is a very high priority in Victoria and the Borough is obliged to actively manage foreshore vegetation to maximise the survival of indigenous species.

Focussing action

It is unrealistic to attempt weed control along the whole foreshore in the immediate future and a targeted approach is essential to success, with resources initially focussed on small areas of at least 2 ha each. Ongoing physical weed removal and/or appropriate herbicide application will be needed for extended periods to exhaust seed resources in the soil and to deal with germination by seeds spread by birds and wind. Biological control of weeds such as Bridal Creeper shows some promise, and should be encouraged, but is unlikely to provide dramatic results in the short-term.

Factors considered in selecting target weed control sites include:

- Biodiversity values/significance of vegetation
- Vegetation community represented
- Quality of existing vegetation
- Accessibility
- Strength of community support
- Visibility of area for promotion of conservation work

The three main areas proposed are a section of Coastal Moonah Woodland (dominated by Moonah *Melaleuca lanceolata*) west of Camp Wyuna on The Narrows, coastal dune vegetation near Pt Lonsdale lighthouse, and Moonah and saltmarsh vegetation on Swan Bay (building on recent weed control work). The Coastal Moonah Woodland area was identified by Tregrove (2001) as probably the most intact community between Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale. He found two taxa of State significance – Coast Wirilda *Acacia retinodes* var. *uncifolia* and Creeping Coast Tussock-grass *Poa poiformis* var. *ramifa* – and 20 taxa of regional significance.

Education groups staying at Camp Wyuna should be actively involved in a program of weed removal and revegetation with appropriate indigenous species next to the camp, with the control area progressively extending around the camp and across the coastal path to the Bay, providing opportunities for community education and promotion of volunteer work.

The area north east of Pt Lonsdale lighthouse is highly visible and provides excellent opportunities to protect biodiversity values and provide for community education/promotion.

A detailed plan will need to be developed for each area with an ongoing weed control component. Control methods for most species are well known and documented (Tregove 2001, pp 11, 12). These include hand removal of small plants, cutting off at ground level (Polygala), and cutting of woody weeds and painting the stump with low-hazard herbicide. Additional information on weeds and vegetation management in the region is provided in the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee's *Environment and Land Management Plan* (in preparation).

Selective planting of locally indigenous species may also be necessary following weed removal, where natural regeneration is unsatisfactory. Expert advice will be needed to ensure that planting densities and species are appropriate for the relevant Ecological Vegetation Class.

Volunteers (individuals and groups or organisations) will need training and supervision to ensure that only weeds are removed. A local 'champion' for each site could provide leadership, work closely with the Envirofund program, seek grants and build community support. There are opportunities to involve Green Corp and Conservation Volunteers to undertake works, and TAFE Natural Resource Management students in works and training.

Ongoing weed control in areas where weeds have previously been controlled is also important to help indigenous species to re-establish.

Other areas

There are relatively intact areas of Coastal Moonah Woodland on Swan Island north of the Golf Club (Tregove 2001) and ongoing weed control is highly desirable to protect biodiversity values.

The local community has been actively involved in vegetation management around Swan Bay and this work should be supported.

A small natural spring behind the dunes and adjacent to Pt Lonsdale Back Beach Road (opposite Lonsdale St) feeds a small pond. This is surrounded by weedy vegetation, providing an opportunity to reinstate the original vegetation and create an interesting natural feature beside the existing picnic area.

Garden escapes such as Agapanthus and English Ivy are invading coastal areas near some residential areas, degrading natural values. Removal of these species is recommended and landowners educated about environmental weeds.

Fauna

Most fauna species occurring in the area are common except for the Orange Bellied Parrot, and the Hooded Plover which breeds locally, with three pairs reported between Pt Lonsdale and Ocean Grove (section 2.3). Action has been taken to educate residents and visitors about Hooded Plovers and an ongoing program is worthy of support.

A range of introduced animals, including foxes and domestic dogs and cats, adversely affect indigenous fauna. Ongoing feral animal control programs are desirable, in partnership with neighbouring landowners.

Cultural heritage

Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage values were not studied in detail in the plan (section 2.3) and additional investigation and liaison is desirable where values may be threatened. The Borough should routinely inform the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative in advance of any works that may involve ground disturbance. The Borough's Heritage Advisor should be consulted regarding non-indigenous cultural heritage values.

Detailed information on Indigenous heritage in the region is provided in the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee's *Environment and Land Management Plan* (in preparation).

Management strategies – goal 3

- 10. Develop and implement an ongoing program to establish three weed control areas at The Narrows, near Pt Lonsdale lighthouse and on Swan Bay, and progressively extend into adjacent areas. Ensure careful planning, strong leadership, adequate resourcing and extensive volunteer education and involvement.**
- 11. Encourage the Department of Defence to undertake ongoing weed control in Coastal Moonah Woodland on Swan Island, and community groups to assist in other areas of relatively intact indigenous vegetation and where weeds have been removed in the past.**
- 12. Support more detailed assessment of biodiversity values to guide future management. Continue efforts to protect Hooded Plover breeding sites, and undertake pest animal control programs with adjacent landowners.**
- 13. Liaise with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative prior to undertaking any works involving ground disturbance, and with the Borough's Heritage Advisor regarding actions affecting non-Indigenous cultural heritage places.**

5.4 Goal 4: Manage and improve recreation facilities and accommodation and ensure public safety

5.4.1 Recreational facilities

Background information

Informal facilities

The Borough foreshore provides a significant range of informal recreational facilities and settings although many of these are in fair to poor condition (section 2.3). Numerous opportunities were identified during the preparation of this plan to upgrade the quality and condition of parking areas, park furniture, paths, signs, bollards, fences, toilets and other facilities. This work will need to be staged as resources become available and short-term action should be focussed on a small number of selected sites to provide models for future works.

A style guide with standard designs needs to be established for furniture, signs, fences etc and used consistently along the foreshore. Actions identified are discussed in sections 6-8 and shown on figures 2-4. Priority sites are the lookout area near the Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach, and Princess/Citizens parks.

Sporting facilities

A number of sporting facilities exist on Crown land on the foreshore: the Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club, the Royal Park Recreation Reserve, the Skate Park at the Narrows, the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve, and the sporting clubs adjacent to Victoria Park in Queenscliff. It is worth observing that a high proportion of the Borough's public recreational facilities are located on the foreshore.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy supports an approach that strives to remove structures that are not coastally dependent from Crown land foreshores. This is reflected in the Strategy on page 38 where it states:

'Where appropriate, existing structures should be consolidated, redesigned, resited or landscaped where this minimises visual and ecological impacts.'

More specifically Section 5.3.4 on page 40 states:

'Priorities for improvement, removal or relocation of infrastructure to less physically and visually sensitive inland sites should be determined on an ongoing basis as the opportunity arises and through management plans.'

This statement clearly identifies the management plan as an appropriate process to address these issues. These facilities are discussed individually below.

• Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club (PLBC)

The PLBC has been on the Pt Lonsdale Foreshore since 1930 and it currently operates on a 21-year lease which expires in 2008. The club is clearly not dependent on the coastal environment and its current location is a legacy from the past.

The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse and Foreshore Reserve Management Plan noted that the PLBC site is adjacent to actively eroding cliffs and the cliff top path (section 2.3). It identified the need to increase setbacks for both the path and bowls infrastructure from the actively eroding cliffs, to ensure public safety in response to future (medium to long term) collapse events. The plan also identified the potential benefit of relocating the PLBC's recreational facilities in a location removed from this environmental risk, and the considerable practical and financial challenges in achieving such an outcome. It recommended monitoring cliff erosion, to maintain a safe setback for the cliff top path and liaison with the Club to explore future needs and long term relocation options.

No feasible relocation site has been identified. The PLBC argues that it should remain on the site for a number of reasons including:

- The PLBC provides an important recreational and social focus for older citizens in an area with a high proportion of older residents by State standards.
- The PLBC is active with a very busy bowling program year round with 170 bowling members and 25 social members, the majority of whom are Pt Lonsdale residents.
- The PLBC buildings have a high level of use for both bowlers and other community and corporate organisations that use the facilities for meetings and seminars.

It can also be argued that the PLBC being located adjacent to the town centre adds to the urban fabric and sense of vitality in Pt Lonsdale.

The PLBC currently pays rates and rental to the Borough, the latter of which is effectively reimbursed through the Borough's sporting programs. While the PLBC is a community use, it is also an incorporated club and there is a strong argument that it should contribute to the management of the broader foreshore by paying an appropriate lease fee for use of the prime coastal site.

Relocating the PLBC raises a number of practical issues in the context of the management plan. Firstly, identification of an alternative site is problematic as it would need to include adequate room for greens, facilities and parking and it would need to be accessible to Pt Lonsdale residents. Freehold land and Crown land sites of suitable size are extremely limited in the area. Possible sites at Ganes reserve, land off Bowen Road and at the Lonsdale Golf Club were suggested during the management plan development. Each of these sites has significant limitations to a successful relocation of PLBC.

Where other recreational facilities have been relocated, consolidated or reconfigured prompted by environmental conflicts or other parallel influences, considerable practical and financial commitment has been required and secured from the Clubs themselves, community and commercial interests, Local and State Government. This has required the formation of focussed partnerships for the imperatives of the particular case, and maintenance of those partnerships over extended periods. Whilst the safe life expectancy of the northern green at Point Lonsdale cannot be predicted accurately, it is appropriate to pre-plan for this eventuality.

In the interim, in the absence of a financial or practical model for achieving such a relocation including any identified feasible relocation site, any new lease for PLBC, for the period after 2008, should be tied to the formation and maintenance of a 'Relocation Pre-planning Partnership'. This Partnership should comprise representatives of at least the PLBC, Local and State Governments and the community. Its aims would be to solicit relocation opportunities and support, and ensure that as and if opportunities arise they can be actively considered rather than missed. Its roles would include:

- receiving updates on cliff erosion monitoring (by the Borough)
- monitoring potential land sites within the Point Lonsdale area (both within the Borough and the City of Greater Geelong)
- soliciting and maintaining community and political support for the needs of the PLBC when relocation is warranted, including through publicity and appeals
- maintaining readiness to respond to land, financial or practical opportunities as they arise
- updating Local and State Government on the status of the Partnership and the levels of support which are available and which may be needed.

While relocation is likely to remain a medium or long term initiative, future use of the land should still be considered. Possible options include:

- Bushland regeneration
- Informal recreational facilities (extended playground, picnic facilities, toilet, viewing point, interpretation)
- Venue for community events and activities
- Commercial activities, eg café or restaurant
- Parking

Bushland regeneration would respond to Victorian Coastal Strategy aims to reverse past fragmentation of indigenous vegetation on Victoria's coast, and to secure a net gain in the quality of the public coastal land estate

Picnic and other facilities could be established, and the existing toilet relocated away from the busy playground area, expanding community open space associated with the shopping area and beach.

Replacing the PLBC with either parking or commercial activity (eg a restaurant) would appear to be at odds with the rationale for removing the Club in the first place and would likely cause considerable angst in the Pt Lonsdale community.

A combination of revegetation and open space facilities provision appears to show the greatest promise, especially given past and projected increases in use of this popular foreshore location.

Any future lease negotiations should consider:

- Lease term (indicatively 8-12 years given site environmental risks mitigate against significant redevelopments warranting longer term, and termination when relocation is prompted by cliff erosion, or is achievable through the availability of a suitable site).
- Absence of currently available relocation site, or practical or financial model to relocate.
- An appropriate lease fee that can be applied toward foreshore management, possibly phased in to allow for budgeting and financial adjustment.
- Development of a detailed strategy for managing the cliff recession adjacent to the Club in conjunction with the Borough, noting the significant limitations to this prospect for ensuring long term protection of the PLBC's assets.
- Aesthetic improvements to the PLBC (some of which have recently been undertaken) to improve the integration of the Club with the foreshore and provide more opportunities for people passing by to enjoy views across the greens.
- Parking arrangements at the PLBC and the possibility of the car park in the south east corner of the site being made available to the broader community on a controlled basis (access possibly off Rip View Lookout Road).
- Increased opportunities for community use of Club facilities.
- The establishment and continuing operation of a 'Relocation Pre-planning Partnership' as described above.

- **Skate Park**

The skate park has been developed on Crown land near the intersection of Bellarine Highway and Point Lonsdale Road. This location was initially accepted for short-term use by DSE on the basis that the Borough develops an overall recreation plan for the municipality including other sports as appropriate.

The site does not appear to meet many of the checklist criteria for this type of facility in the '*Skate Facility Guide*' booklet prepared by Sport and Recreation Victoria, particularly related to:

- Location near where young people congregate.
- Near a 'major community hub or central area'.
- Co-located with other sporting and recreation or shopping facilities.

While adjacent to the main road (also to be discouraged in the guide) in many ways the site is isolated.

Despite these apparent shortcomings, the site is heavily used and popular. It is also centrally located between Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale, thus catering for both townships with one facility.

The use is not coastally dependent but obviously fulfils a need for a section of the community that is often not well catered for in terms of recreational facilities. Skate facilities have been approved on some coastal Crown land sites, in some cases complementing picnic areas and

playground equipment to support broad family use. Elsewhere they have been approved at higher intensity urban locations. There are also opportunities to link the site more closely to Pt Lonsdale Primary School, which is planning to expand, by revegetating some of the intervening foreshore reserve area.

Relocating the skate park to the old high school site has been suggested but, to some degree, would take away the benefit of having the facility centrally located. Given the successful operation of the skate park to date, and for the reasons above, retention of the skate park on the current location is supported..

- **Boating and fishing activities**

As noted in section 2.3, boating, yachting and fishing are popular activities and increased opportunities will be provided by the harbour redevelopment at Queenscliff (section 5.8.6).

- **Recreation reserves and playgrounds**

Royal Park is discussed in section 5.4.2; Queenscliff Recreation Reserve is discussed in section 5.7.

The 15 existing playgrounds in the Borough were reviewed in the Playground Development Plan, 2002. The study identified Princess Park playground as regional, plus three district sites and nine local sites. No further audit was undertaken for this Plan and priority tasks identified are generally supported. Upgrading of the Pt Lonsdale front beach playground in 2005 has been highly successful.

Management strategies – goal 4

- 14. Develop and use a style guide with appropriate designs for seats, tables, fences, signs, bollards and other foreshore design elements.**
- 15. Upgrade key recreation sites at Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club lookout, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach and Princess/Citizens parks as models for future coastal management.**
- 16. Retain the Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club in the medium term on its current site and develop an appropriate lease that includes lease fees and term and addresses the issues raised in this plan.**
- 17. Confirm the skate park at its current location and link the area between the skate park and the Pt Lonsdale Primary School including revegetating with indigenous species.**

5.4.2 Accommodation on Crown and Council land

Background information

Section 3.6 of the Victorian Coastal Strategy identifies a number of principles related to improving management and standards of accommodation on coastal Crown land. These include:

- Coastal managers to undertake planning and works to improve amenity and reduce environmental impact; and
- Discouraging long term exclusive occupancy for greater than 12 months to ensure sites and facilities are accessible to all prospective users.

In general the Strategy strongly supports the retention and possible expansion of accommodation on coastal Crown land with a range of types and price points. These include cabins and cottages where appropriate. This issue was further reviewed by a State Government taskforce which supported these general principles (DSE 2006c). The taskforce recommended the development of a balanced mix of accommodation options, and development of best practice guidelines for coastal Crown land caravan and camping parks.

Recent research has found that the majority of caravan and camping travellers in Australia prefer to stay in cabins and villas, while seniors still prefer vacant sites. The research also found an increase in caravan park revenue of 24% from 2000 to 2003, apparently resulting from the provision of more high-yielding forms of accommodation such as cabins, flats, units, villas and on-site vans. This was coupled with a shift toward short-term leasing of sites. More travellers appear to prefer to travel without a caravan and stay in fixed-site accommodation – a trend likely to continue with high petrol prices. There was a fall of 6.3% in sites permanently reserved in Australia from 2000 to 2003 (Tourism Australia).



Popular cabins at Barwon Heads Caravan Park

Many caravan park and camping sites on coastal Crown land in Victoria (and Queenscliff is no different) have long family associations going back several generations, and some have associated permanent structures ('built in' caravans and annexes).

These people have provided significant input to the vitality of coastal towns over a long period of time both socially and economically (particularly over summer). The permanent occupation of sites by caravans however does restrict the ability of caravan park managers to plan efficiently and provide alternative accommodation types (eg cabins) which are needed to develop a more sustainable economic base for management of the whole foreshore.

Long-term exclusive occupancy also raised equity concerns as other members of the community are excluded from the enjoyment of coastal holiday. The Borough, as Committee of Management, will need to explore opportunities for redeveloping caravan parks and camping areas while accommodating the needs of long-term occupants.

This can be done by a range of measures over a period of time including disallowing the sale or bequeathing of sites from the current occupant to other parties, or moving long term occupants within parks to retain their use but allow for better planning within a park.

Parity pricing with private sector caravan parks and other Crown land foreshore areas on the coast should also be pursued to ensure appropriate returns for foreshore caravan parks and foreshore management is generated.

Other aspects of caravan park management that need to be considered include impacts on natural values, and adverse visual impacts on surrounding areas for example at Golightly Park, the Recreation Reserve at Queenscliff, and Victoria Park. Structures such as fences and amenity blocks should follow good design principles for the coast.

This Plan provides for the removal of some existing sites to improve coastal management, and replacement with alternative sites, with a mix of on-site facilities such as cabins. The aim is to achieve no net loss in the total number of accommodation sites on Crown land.

Detailed master plans are proposed for each caravan park to consider relevant factors in detail including economic return, design layout and appearance, year round accommodation opportunities, accommodation types, improved facilities, indigenous planting, an Emergency Management Plan and management practices and policies (including pricing, selling, site allocation etc). The plans should be developed progressively in the next two years.

There are currently 418 sites in Borough caravan parks, with 246 casual sites and 172 'permanent' sites. Existing caravan/camping areas are as follows.

- **Royal Park** (98 sites)

Royal Park provides a pleasant setting for caravan and camping use over the summer holiday period. For the remainder of the year, the area provides for walking and other informal uses.

Opportunities exist to provide cabins on part of the site, possibly on cleared land to the south of existing van sites, and extend the period of camping in response to increasing demand.

- **Golightly Caravan Park** (61 sites)

The Golightly Caravan Park occupies a strip of Crown land overlooking the beach, and Council-owned land fronting Bowen Road. Use of the strip of Crown land for camping or caravans is not an authorised use. The land to the north of the Park is owned by the Department of Education and Training for the Pt Lonsdale Primary School.

The Park provides an opportunity to improve public access to the area, better manage natural values and upgrade accommodation, or, alternatively, to sell the Council-owned section for sensitive residential development.

Coastal management principles (section 3.2) support the removal of caravan and camping sites from Crown land on sensitive coastal dunes. As an example, comparable sites on dunes at Tidal River were revegetated over 40 years ago. The Golightly dune area is currently one of the most unsightly in the Borough (see photo following section 2.7) and in urgent need of restoration. The dunes provide panoramic views across the Bay and are suited to construction of a carefully sited walking track and lookout point, linked to the proposed coastal walk (section 5.2).

The caravan sites on Council-owned land could be retained, preferably with more opportunities for short-term bookings, some sites could be converted to cabins or cottages in response to changing demand, or the land could be sold to raise revenue for Council, with specific constraints on building height, form etc to ensure that any development did not intrude on the coast.

Some current users of the park (Golightly Caravan Park Residents Association) have argued for retention of existing site arrangements (submission to the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment, 3 April 2003).

A study by Hansen (2003) recommended that Council or DSE should manage the Crown land area for natural values and the remaining Council land could be sold for residential use if no other public use is identified. Caravan sites were to be phased out. This position remains valid, and is supported in this Plan. Sale for residential use is proposed unless development of a combination of high-return accommodation, eg cottages and cabins, provides a high return. If income projections do not indicate an adequate return to Council, the area should be sold for residential development with zoning controls and planning policies controlling building height, bulk etc.

- **Queenscliffe Recreation Reserve and Victoria Park** (135 and 124 sites)

See section 5.7.

Management strategies – goal 4

- 18. Progressively prepare detailed master plans for caravan parks with the aim of revising caravan park layouts to improve amenity, increase the diversity of sites (including cabins), and increase the proportion of short-term sites.**
- 19. Introduce cabins at Royal Park and extend the camping season if cost-effective.**
- 20. Add the Crown land section of Golightly Park to the coastal reserve, enhance natural values and provide public access. Sell the Council land for residential use unless development of a combination of high-return accommodation, eg cottages and cabins, provides an economic return.**

5.4.3 Public safety

Background information

Safety and security are important to foreshore users. Hazards include water-based recreational activities, steep slopes and cliffs (eg at Dog Beach, section 5.5), uneven

surfaces, fallen trees, damaged infrastructure, unfenced old defence structures, and fire. Actions taken to deal with safety issues often include development of a risk management strategy with appropriate actions to deal with major risks.

Life Saving Victoria has undertaken a detailed assessment of coastal risk and safety signage in the Borough (Waldron 2004). This report makes specific recommendations to deal with safety issues and is endorsed in this management plan. The highest priority actions should be implemented as a very high priority. Funding may be available from DSE through an annual grant program.

The 2000 Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse foreshore plan (page 23, 24) also identified safety issues and remedial actions. Most of these are included in the 2004 report.

Other safety reports prepared for Council include an Arborist's report on caravan parks and a cliff safety assessment. These reports should be reviewed as part of a risk management strategy for the foreshore.

Council can also adopt a design framework that follows 'Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design' principles, to increase feelings of security, improve access to open space and reduce opportunities for crime. These principles are set out in the State Government's *Safer Design Guidelines – Planning to reduce crime and improve safety in streets and public places*, Crime Prevention Victoria, 2000.

Some playgrounds may not meet current standards and action should be taken to deal with safety issues. This Plan did not include an assessment of compliance with Australian Standards.

The issue of fire protection and fire safety is dealt with in other Council documents.

Management strategies – goal 4

21. Develop and implement a risk management strategy to identify and rapidly deal with safety issues. Include high priority actions from relevant reviews including the Life Saving Victoria report (2004), and arborist and cliff safety reports.

5.4.4 Community use and appreciation

Background information

- **Increasing use and enjoyment**

A sustainable increase in use of the foreshore by residents (and visitors) is desirable to enhance health and wellbeing. Ongoing promotion can increase awareness of recreation opportunities and help people identify sites that meet their needs. Suggested media include Council bulletins and web site, local papers, information shelters, and leaflets with maps of paths and interpretive information.

Information shelters at key visitor sites are a very useful way of providing orientation, information on things to see and do, and messages on conservation. Proposed locations are on the Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coastal walk near Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse, Ocean View carpark and Queenscliffe Pier.

A range of events and special activities are currently held in foreshore areas and these uses could expand where compatible with conservation goals.

- **Increasing community involvement**

A range of community groups and service clubs provide valuable assistance with the management of the foreshore and many volunteers have participated in weed removal, planting days and other activities.

Council does not have the resources to maintain all areas to a high standard and increased community support is desirable. This could include Friends and similar groups, supported by the Council, and encouragement of increased interest by schools in foreshore projects. Workshops on environmental management and monitoring could assist in increasing skills and involvement in the management of vegetation.

Working bees and planting days could be promoted in association with events such as World Environment Day and Plant a Tree Day, and schools encouraged to adopt a section of foreshore.

Public art can make open space more attractive to local residents and visitors and there are opportunities to support art projects, particularly where these build on local natural and historic values.

- **Increasing appreciation**

Appreciation of the foreshore can be enhanced by providing additional interpretive signs and display, involving educational groups in activities and investigations, and providing more educational materials and activities.

Interpretive signs are of limited value in areas that attract mostly repeat visitors and should be located primarily at heavily visited tourist sites. There are currently numerous interpretive signs in Queenscliff and future signs should focus on Pt Lonsdale and The Narrows. Well-researched themes and messages, eg related to conservation, and Aboriginal, maritime and defence history, need to be developed. Alternatives include holiday programs and incorporation of interpretive material on the Council web site.

Management strategies – goal 4

- 22. Install and maintain information shelters on the Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coastal walk near Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse, Ocean View carpark and Queenscliffe Pier.**
- 23. Promote healthy recreational use of the foreshore through community activities and events, campaigns, information outlets, publications, web sites and other information sources.**
- 24. Encourage school and community environmental activities and on-site interpretive services to enhance appreciation and support for protection of the foreshore.**
- 25. Provide ongoing support and basic training for community groups. Include regular meetings to develop skills and coordinate agreed works programs.**

5.4.5 Dogs

Dog walking is popular along much of the foreshore and Council has provided dog faeces bins at numerous sites. Some people have raised concerns about dog owners not collecting and disposing of waste. Experience in urban areas have led a number of councils to run education programs and introduce an on-the-spot fine if owners fail to have a way of removing dog waste (eg, carry a plastic bag). This is more cost-effective and efficient than providing disposable bags in open space areas. Provided bins are installed at intervals along the foreshore there should not be a need for separate bins for dog waste.

Standard dog regulations apply to the foreshore and enforcement is desirable to minimise impacts of dogs on other users. Dogs are required to be leashed at all times within the municipality, unless being exercised at the designated 'Narrows Beach' (also known as 'Dog Beach') where they may be off lead but must be under effective voice control. No change to these arrangements is proposed.

Management strategies – goal 4

26. Ensure appropriate penalties and enforcement under local laws and an associated education program on disposal of dog waste. Provide litter bins at key locations for disposal of waste bags.

5.5 Goal 5: Rationalise access and minimise soil erosion

Background information

Access to the foreshore

There has been a high reliance on access to the foreshore area by private vehicles. Footpaths or shared pathways leading to the beach are lacking in many residential areas and free long-term parking has encouraged people to drive and park close to the water. There are opportunities to improve walking access and encourage more people to walk or cycle and reduce use of vehicles.

Many residents support the retention of vegetation along roadsides but sensitive pruning may be needed to provide for safer pedestrian access, particularly along roads leading to the foreshore.

Any new housing developments, eg west of Fellows Road, should include strategies to maximise walking/cycling access to the foreshore.

Foreshore paths

The foreshore is criss-crossed with numerous walking paths and there are two sections of shared pathway – north from Pt Lonsdale Front Beach to Dog Beach, and from Lawrence Road to Queenscliff Railway Station (figure 4). There are also unfenced sections of coast where people push through coastal vegetation to get to the beach, particularly in summer.

The majority of paths have been sited to provide access to the beach, or to provide linear access along the coast. Some residents and campers have created unauthorised tracks to provide easy beach access, often leading to erosion and damage to vegetation.

Access for people with disabilities is variable with some uneven surfaces, steep paths, and sections of soft sand.

*Steep path to Pt Lonsdale Back Beach
subject to erosion*



The condition of walking paths varies considerably. Some are fenced and have stable surfaces, some are unfenced leading to unregulated access through coastal vegetation, and some have eroded surfaces requiring remedial work or closure. Many fences need repair and broken posts and old signs need to be removed and/or replaced. Overall, paths and stairs in the foreshore reserve are poorly maintained and some are in urgent need of realignment or reconstruction, and fencing. Steep sections of path should be sealed, and drainage provided, particularly at Winterely Rd, to minimise runoff and erosion and provide safe access.

Given the popularity of walking, and the disturbed nature of much of the foreshore, an extensive network of well-sited and well-maintained paths is appropriate. Tracks created for private coastal access should generally be closed and rehabilitated. This would still leave a substantial number of paths providing beach access (shown on figures 2-4). The major beach access paths to sites such as Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach, Santa Casa and Queenscliffe Front Beach would be maintained. Fencing should continue to be used to limit access to areas of high conservation value, eg Coastal Moonah Woodland near Camp Wyuna and coastal dunes subject to trampling.

To minimise conflict and maximise safety, it is important to define paths for walking only, and shared cycling/walking (section 5.2).

Erosion and sand movement

The movement of sand along the coast has caused major changes leading to construction of groyne and the substantial rock wall north of Pt Lonsdale front beach to combat sand loss, and ongoing dredging at the Queenscliff Harbour to move excess sand. Boating use of

Harbour is dependent on regular dredging at The Cut, currently undertaken by Parks Victoria at a cost of about \$600,000 pa. A review of the sustainability of this activity is desirable.

This Plan does not include detailed review of coastal erosion and additional investigation is required, at least at Dog Beach. Sand loss was also evident along parts of the beach east of the Dog Beach scour.

Active erosion at Dog Beach is having a severe impact on the coast with active retreat of the coastline and the smothering of vegetation above the dunes by windblown sand. The Lovers Walk path is impassable by people with limited mobility. Unregulated access to the eroding dune areas is exacerbating the problem and steep slopes and loose sand are a hazard to users.

While the Vantree study (1998) suggested that no action was required in the area, erosion is now so active that urgent remedial work is needed to limit loss of soils and vegetation and provide for ongoing walking access. In the short-term, fencing and signs are required to limit risk to users and reduce impacts on the dune face.

Elsewhere along the coast soil erosion has occurred at several exposed sites including parts of Pt Lonsdale back beach. These appear to relate to unregulated access and indicate the need for adequate fencing and signs.

Erosion of headlands is ongoing, particularly at Pt Lonsdale where soft calcarenite rock and cemented sands are subject to sea erosion. Warning signs and a setback for walking paths of 5 m from the cliff edge has been recommended to minimise risk (NRE 2000).

Management strategies – goal 5

- 27. Progressively improve walking/cycling access to the foreshore (figures 2-4) and deter vehicle use by limiting parking times and/or introducing fees at heavily used locations.**
- 28. Retain paths shown on figures 2-4 and close, fence and revegetate surplus tracks created for private beach access. Construct fences to prevent unregulated access through coastal vegetation.**
- 29. Upgrade selected paths as models for future management, providing stable alignments, surfaces of appropriate width, fencing to regulate access, orientation signs and seating at key viewing and rest points. Include path west of Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse, path through Crown land at Golightly Park and extension of Thwaites Walk in Princess Park.**
- 30. Fence out the eroded sand cliff at Dog Beach (the Narrows Beach) and implement the findings of the proposed DSE erosion study.**
- 31. Support a broad study of coastal processes including sand movement and management options at Queenscliff Pier and The Cut.**

5.6 Goal 6: Facilitate an upgrade of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area

Background information

The area surrounding the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse complex is run down (see photo section 2.7) yet has the potential to become a focal point for residents and visitors, with walking and viewing opportunities, quality interpretation of heritage themes, high quality visitor facilities and sensitively designed accommodation. The site is a potential icon with impressive landscapes, heritage features, attractive beaches and numerous sightseeing and other recreation opportunities.

The Lighthouse complex is managed by the Port of Melbourne Authority and the surrounding area by a DSE committee.

There are many recent examples in Victoria and interstate of sensitive development of coastal sites which provide useful models for Pt Lonsdale, eg the recent architect-designed cabins and revegetation at Tidal River in Wilsons Promontory National Park. On the Bellarine Peninsula, recent conservation and development work at Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove shows what can be achieved with modest resources.

Successful combination of rental cottages and public open space at Barwon Heads



The principles guiding development on the coast are set out in the *Victorian Coastal Strategy* (2002) and *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast* (1998). These help ensure that development is sensitively sited and designed, enhances rehabilitation of the natural environment and improvement of the site, results in public benefit and facilitates multiple-use.

Issues noted for the lighthouse area include:

- The approach from the north is unattractive for such an important site, providing a poor arrival experience.
- Visitor circulation is not defined and paths are of variable standard.
- Visitor facilities including toilets, parking, signs and picnic facilities are mostly in poor condition, and vehicle movement is poorly regulated. There is an opportunity for a café or other outlet for refreshments in the area.
- There are large cleared areas with no significant indigenous vegetation. Weeds are growing aggressively in bushland areas.
- The area includes some important heritage features, including the pier, lighthouse and associated buildings, and a range of WW II defence structures.
- There are very good views of the lighthouse (and pier) from a range of sites and excellent views of the Rip from near the lighthouse, although the latter is marred by service vehicles parked next to the lighthouse.
- The Pt Lonsdale Pier is popular for fishing and sightseeing but is in need of a significant upgrade to improve its condition and ensure long term survival (Parks Victoria responsibility).
- The Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park is located at this precinct providing interpretation and education opportunities.
- The former PMA houses take up important public land, are designed for a suburban setting and detract from the site.
- The Toc H camp area is unused and deteriorating. The buildings range from modified World War II P1-type huts to basic service buildings. This area has the

potential for quality holiday cottages or similar accommodation and management as a sustainable unit.

- There are good opportunities to interpret bush tucker and other Aboriginal cultural heritage themes.
- Interpretation of maritime and defence heritage, and Buckley's Cave, could be improved.

The recent management plan for Pt Lonsdale (NRE 2000) identified the opportunity to upgrade the area, with substantial changes to access, facilities and layout. These proposals have not been implemented but were reviewed closely in the development of this new Plan (see figure 4 in NRE plan).

Several coastal and heritage experts consulted for this Plan supported the thrust of the 2000 plan, with additional support for an area of quality low-set accommodation in the Toc H and housing area, integrated with public open space (eg, Grant pers. com.). These views were taken into account in developing a new site concept drawing for the area which includes substantially upgraded visitor access and facilities, built accommodation and improved environmental management (figure 2).

A large area surrounding the lighthouse is on the Victorian Heritage Register, and any substantial works must protect significant values and be supported by Heritage Victoria. Catrice and Nelson, and Yttrup (quoted in NRE 2000, pp 35-37) have discussed the significance of the various structures and provided a basis for managing or removing them. They noted that the Toc H buildings are heavily modified but a minimum of three huts should be retained if possible. Nelson (pers. com.) has indicated that retention is not critical. The Victorian Heritage Register listing notes that 'The P1-type huts are of interest for their association with the [early user groups]', i.e. it is the association of the buildings with past users that is most important, not the structures themselves. Heritage Victoria supports the sustainable use of heritage structures and is likely to support modification of the P1-type huts for accommodation, or removal of some or all of the huts if this is not cost effective.

Substantial capital funding will be required to redevelop the area as proposed and an expression of interest process is suggested as the best way to identify opportunities for commercial involvement. Development should only proceed if there is a net economic benefit to the community (and social and environmental benefits) through a revenue stream to help fund coastal management.

In summary, the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area provides a great opportunity to develop a key part of the Victorian coast as a model of sensitive and sustainable coastal design, attracting many visitors and providing residents with enhanced opportunities to enjoy the coast.

Management strategies – goal 6

32. Adopt the future directions set out in figure 2 for the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area and, with DSE approval, undertake an expression of interest process for a cooperative Council/private development of the area. Ensure good public access, environmental protection, sensitive coastal design and significant revenue to help fund coastal management. When developed, promote the area as a key regional attraction.

33. Undertake major upgrade/conservation works to Pt Lonsdale Pier.

5.7 Goal 7: Plan and implement an upgrade of the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/ Shortlands Bluff area

Background information

After the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area, the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Victoria Park and adjacent Ocean View parking area and Shortlands Bluff offers the best opportunity to upgrade the quality of a key destination on the BoQ's coast and provide revenue for improved coastal management.

The area is managed by the Council except for Shortlands Bluff which is administered by a committee on behalf of DSE.

The area provides panoramic views over the Bay and access to swimming beaches and a range of heritage features including lighthouses and an Aboriginal midden.



The Recreation Reserve provides for football and cricket in addition to caravan sites but is not integrated in any way with adjacent coastal land and has problems with conflicting land uses – permanent van sites are lined up around part of the oval.



Seasonal camping in adjacent Victoria Park also leads to some conflicts with nearby residents and has impacts on park values.

Most facilities in the area do not take advantage of the coastal location and provide suburban-style settings for recreation. Some of the facilities do not require a coastal location (they are not 'coastal dependant') and would be better located away from the coast if land were available. The Monahan Centre at the Recreation Reserve turns its back on the coast and cuts the beach off from adjacent public land. A feasibility study has recommended the upgrading of sporting facilities at the Centre at a cost of \$1.9 million plus extras (Stratcorp 2005). Given the demographics of the Borough and the urgent nature of many works identified in this Plan, this development is considered to have a relatively low priority.

An eroded walking track links part of the Reserve to the beach and unattractive fences limit views and public access.

Caravan Park fees are significant but these are currently spent within reserve boundaries and no funding is made available for foreshore management (section 6.2.). Many van sites are booked on an essentially permanent basis, restricting access to others, and there are no cabins or other built accommodation to meet a growing demand.

Rental houses at Shortlands Bluff occupy valuable public land with income from the houses currently going into Consolidated Revenue.

A detailed master plan for the area would clearly specify future directions. Key principles for the master plan include:

- Follow approved principles for coastal development (section 5.6).
- Identify, manage and interpret important natural, cultural and landscape features.
- Encourage walking and cycling access and reduce the impacts of vehicles.

- Rationalise recreational use to relate to the coastal location and proposed coastal walk, provide equitable access to facilities and minimise conflicts between user groups and with residents.
- Improve the design and appearance of the Ocean View carpark and consider provision of a café integrated with improved facilities.
- Revise the layout of Recreation Reserve facilities to open up the area to the foreshore.
- Provide a range of accommodation types including cabins and cottages or other low-set facilities to meet changing demand. Rationalise sporting facilities, and reduce the number of permanent van sites close to the oval to improve access for sporting activities and improve the appearance of the area.
- Progressively replace rental housing at Shortlands Bluff with public open space and cottages or similar accommodation.

Management strategies – goal 7

34. Consolidate all land in the Shortlands Bluff/Recreation Reserve area under Council control.

35. Develop and progressively implement a master plan for the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff/Victoria Park area following principles set out in this Plan and the Victorian Coastal Strategy. Include provision for a range of accommodation.

5.8 Goal 8: Progressively improve other areas

This section provides more detail on site-specific issues and actions related to nine management units along the coast. Issues relating to the whole foreshore, eg weed control, facility standards and a coastal path are discussed in sections 5.1 to 5.5. The Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area and Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff area are discussed in sections 5.6 and 5.7. Most actions are illustrated in figures 2-4.

5.8.1 Pt Lonsdale Back Beach

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Need to protect sense of naturalness along beach
- Parking along Ocean Road not defined and inadequate pedestrian access
- Beach access paths steep and of variable quality
- Erosion along 'private' walking tracks, eg near Fellows Rd, and some unfenced areas
- Desirable to link management with adjacent Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve
- Lookout point above Surf Life Saving Club urgently needs improvement
- Back beach access ramp urgently needs improvement.
- Generally good facilities and pleasant setting in adjacent Ganes Reserve

The DSE draft foreshore management plan (2000) provides background information on this area and sets out detailed proposed actions. These were reviewed for the present Plan and most found to still be valid, with the main actions listed below.

The undeveloped nature of the area is its key strength and management activities should minimise impacts on natural features while providing for compatible recreation. Priority tasks include mitigating safety threats by improving tracks and facilities and regulating and improving visitor access. Ocean Road needs to be made 'pedestrian friendly'.

Management strategies – goal 8.1

- 36. At Pt Lonsdale back beach, progressively upgrade major walking tracks, beach access, fences, seats, lookouts and signs to improve and regulate access and protect natural values.**
- 37. At Pt Lonsdale back beach, provide safe pedestrian access along Ocean Road and define parking areas.**

5.8.2 Pt Lonsdale Front Beach

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Popular area close to shops with new playground, paths, good views and range of facilities (in variable condition)
- Three groyne have provided useable beach areas
- Bowling Club well utilised but not a coastal dependant use and occupies significant area on foreshore.
- Parking dominates roadsides near foreshore/shops; area lacks shade.
- Some Moonahs are dying, and large number of mown areas which have limited use
- Royal Park provides for caravanning; little used off-season

The Urban Design Framework for this area (Hansen 2002) discusses issues and sets out actions for the future. These were reviewed for the current Plan and are largely supported. Priority tasks include improving foreshore access, facilities and amenity, revegetation, removal of unhealthy cypresses and planting of groups of Moonahs along the roadside.

Management strategies – goal 8.2

38. Implement key actions in the Urban Design Framework for the Pt Lonsdale village and foreshore area particularly related to improving vegetation, access, and facilities, and providing shade and shelter.

39. Revegetate surplus open areas north of the main Pt Lonsdale beach in conjunction with path upgrades.

5.8.3 Lawrence Rd – Camp Wyuna

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- No useable beach next to rock wall, but adjacent path very popular. Groynes suggested by some residents to aid sand build up.
- Lawrence Road carpark poorly designed and maintained
- CFA building on coastal reserve west of Skate Park – DSE favours relocation to site away from coast when practicable
- Golightly Caravan Park inappropriately located (partly on exposed dunes) and visually intrusive. ‘Permanent’ sites do not meet equitable access principles. Opportunity to rehabilitate Crown land as part of foreshore reserve.
- Incomplete walking links behind dunes and paths poorly signposted
- Erosion at scour and along Lovers Walk a major issue (section 5.5).
- Camp Wyuna to be substantially upgraded by YMCA, and Council to take over management of adjacent bushland – opportunity for weed control program (section 5.3)

There are opportunities to upgrade visitor facilities in this unit, particularly paths, parking and viewing points. DSE does not support the construction of groynes in the area and reinstatement of the beach north of Dog Beach appears to be impractical.

The CFA satellite garaging facility was constructed in the mid 1990s. DSE’s approval of this use of the site was regarded as temporary, in the absence at the time of a suitable alternative site. The use does not respond to the Victorian Coastal Strategy principle which expects that uses of coastal Crown land should normally be those which require a coastal location. The facility was designed and constructed so it could be readily relocated to another site at minimal cost. The CFA has argued that the facility is important in this location as there are no other suitable sites in the vicinity and Point Lonsdale can not be adequately serviced in the required eight minute response time from the Queenscliff station. It also allows a response from the CFA from Pt Lonsdale members if there are traffic bottlenecks in the Narrows.

Relocation of the CFA facility to a non-coastal location is desirable in coastal management terms and the remainder of the former utility (Barwon water) site on which it was initially placed has been decommissioned and revegetated. Similar circumstances apply to progressing relocation of the station as at the PLBC, except for the presence of an identified environmental threat to existing assets. There is no pressing current imperative for the station to be relocated from the site prior to the identification of a suitable alternative site in the form of an alternative active use. However, decommissioning and revegetation as has occurred on the surrounding site, and is proposed for the adjoining Primary School site is supported.

The failure to identify a suitable alternative site to date should not be used to justify abandonment of the search. A parallel approach should be developed and applied to that described for the PLBC, whereby medium term tenure can be provided, tied to establishment and maintenance of a ‘Relocation Pre-planning Partnership’.

See section 5.4.2 regarding Golightly Caravan Park accommodation.

Management strategies – goal 8.3

40. Redevelop Lawrence Road carpark and upgrade informal recreation facilities and paths along the foreshore.

5.8.4 Queenscliff Back Beach

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Wide beach and attractive coastal views; important to preserve relatively natural feel
- Recent beach erosion, possibly seasonal
- Facilities variable in quality. High demand for parking in summer but limited provision.
- Unsightly abandoned discharge pipe across beach
- Neighbourhood House in Victoria Park could be retained for compatible use if the activities are transferred to the former high school site
- Some unregulated and poorly signed access tracks to beach - some tracks on loose sand very difficult for people with disabilities (section 5.5)
- Fort area, Ocean View carpark, rental houses reserve and Recreation Reserve not integrated (section 5.7)

More active management in this area would improve the quality of facilities such as parking areas, paths, seats and signs and improve management of natural values.

Management strategies – goal 8.4

41. Improve parking layouts and upgrade paths and informal recreation facilities at Queenscliff Back Beach.

42. Remove abandoned discharge pipe across Queenscliff Back Beach.

5.8.5 Queenscliff Front Beach

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Important to preserve attractive vistas to and along beach
- Princess Park and Citizens Park popular in summer including use by large groups; need policy on planting and replacement of old pines.
- Foreshore an important venue for picnics, markets and other events
- Variable facilities, beach access and parking in foreshore reserve.
- Some people concerned about seaweed on beach
- Former 'Harry's' cafe and toilet in poor condition; detracts from foreshore
- Proposals for development include café, tourist information centre and hot seabaths (Planning Scheme identifies possible café site at 'Harrys')
- The Pier has high heritage significance and is a tourist icon popular for fishing, sightseeing and photography.
- Ongoing build up of sand is adversely affecting the Pier which needs significant conservation works to improve its condition and ensure its long-term survival. Further research on coastal processes may assist in dealing with sand build up.

Foreshore setting and facilities

The foreshore area adjacent to the front beach is popular for walking, sightseeing, picnicking, fishing and community events and activities, although some facilities and settings need more active management. The foreshore is somewhat separated from the main shopping area and strong pedestrian links are desirable. Some areas have limited shade and shelter.

The Queenscliff foreshore remains an attractive area with fine views of the historic Pier and along the beach to the Fort. Improved walking access to the beach has been suggested for people with limited mobility. Seaweed along the beach south of the Pier has reduced use for swimming but the parks and remainder of the foreshore are popular with residents and visitors. Seaweed removal is favoured by some people, but the ongoing resources required, and impacts on biodiversity values, do not support this practice.

Enhancement of the present strengths of the area – the Pier, beach, parks and facilities – is a higher priority than introducing new high-cost facilities such as hot-sea baths.

Princess and Citizens parks

The tradition parks are a very important element at Queenscliff and a policy of replacement of major trees with similar species is appropriate (Hawker pers. comm.). Individual plants should be selected for their suitability for the site to minimise problems with long-term maintenance. Replacement should be staged to ensure that there are always some healthy mature trees in the parks. The original planting framework should be retained without the introduction of new elements such as decorative beds. The proposals for redevelopment described by Gerner Sanderson et al (1985) are still largely applicable, including construction of paths to provide access from Thwaites Walk to the Pier and associated fencing to prevent cliff access (section 5.2) and removal of 'Harrys' café/toilets.

If demand were demonstrated, a new café with views over the water would be a compatible addition to the foreshore. Successful models include the Ocean Grove Surf Life Saving Club cafe and Ricketts Point tearooms at Beaumaris.

The Port of Melbourne Corporation occupies an office located near the old sea wall below Princess Park. The building is used as an office, workshop and store, but little if any of the activity requires this waterfront location. The building is poorly integrated into foreshore open space, limiting vehicle access and visibility and adding little to the foreshore. Removal would be desirable if it becomes vacant. Alternatively, a community-based use may be found for the building.

Management strategies – goal 8.5

- 43. Generally adopt a tree replacement policy of 'like for like' for Princess and Citizens parks but explore opportunities to plant the native Oyster Bay Pines (*Callitris rhomboidea*). Continue to implement the main actions in the Gerner Sanderson report on parks redevelopment.**
- 44. Review demand for café facilities and a public toilet in the area, and improved walking access to beach. Consider removal of 'Harrys' café/toilet structure if redundant.**
- 45. Undertake major upgrade/conservation works to Queenscliff Pier.**

5.8.6 Harbour and Boat Ramp

Background information

This working harbour is an important base for commercial activities, boating, fishing and sightseeing. The approved redevelopment will substantially increase the number of berths and associated boating and recreation facilities, and provide improved vehicle and walking/cycling access linking the town and harbour. The ferry terminal will continue to be a major focal point and key arrival/departure point for visitors.

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Harbour redevelopment and the ferry operation have been approved by Government and are not being reviewed in this Plan
- Important to provide good walking/cycling access between town, harbour, ferry and Swan Bay shared path
- Parks Victoria is planning vegetation works along the foreshore from the Pier to the Ferry terminal to reduce visitor impacts and enhance vegetation quality.
- JL Jordan Reserve boat launching area provides revenue for Borough.
- Railway Station on Victorian Heritage Register but rail yards detract from appearance of foreshore: consider relocation of older stock
- Elderly Citizens and Sea Scouts buildings and surroundings on Symonds Street unattractive. Scout hall in need of maintenance and use of the Senior Citizens building has declined. Both uses could be located, eg in the proposed redevelopment of the former high school site.
- Access to nearby houses/garages across Crown land an issue

The appearance and value of this area will be enhanced by the landscape works associated with the harbour development, and vegetation restoration/protection works along the adjacent foreshore. A clean up of the railway area and planting in exposed areas, particularly near the Elderly Citizens and Sea Scouts buildings, would also assist.

The Borough should continue to manage the boat ramp if revenue exceeds expenditure and the surplus helps to fund foreshore management.

The provision of good walking and cycling links in the management unit will be important to encourage informal use.

More active management of VicTrack land would improve amenity and the protection of natural values. Direct management by the Borough or through a management agreement should be considered (section 5.1).

Management strategies – goal 8.6

- 46. Arrange for clean up of old rolling stock in the rail yards and planting south of the Railway Station.**
- 47. Undertake vegetation restoration/protection work along the foreshore in association with the harbour development.**
- 48. Consider relocation of Elderly Citizens and Sea Scouts activities and removal of buildings, and improve landscaping of area north of Symonds Street.**

5.8.7 Swan Bay Foreshore

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Important natural values along Swan Bay – including sections of relatively intact vegetation. Protection important.
- VicTrack is responsible for a large area of foreshore and easement along railway track, but this is inadequately managed (see above).
- Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park and Ramsar site in precinct
- The Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Committee has actively assisted in conservation works around Swan bay.
- Popular path along much of foreshore with several viewing points – important to retain/maintain.
- Queenscliff/Lonsdale Yacht Club site no longer provides for launching because of shallow water. Arrange removal of building if club relocates.

- Large area of grassed open space south of railway track near Yacht Club is under-utilised. May have potential for alternative recreation uses or stormwater treatment.
- Poor quality stormwater drainage to Swan Bay (ID&A 2002)
- DPI Centre/Marine Discovery Centre enhances area and provides key point of interest – attractive walks and vistas across Swan Bay

Management of this area to protect natural values and provide for low-key informal recreation, including walking, cycling and nature appreciation, is a priority.

Improved stormwater management proposals in the Stormwater Strategy include wetland filter systems at the end of Hesse St and Henry St (appendix 1). These may gain funding from the Federal Government's Water Grants program.

Management strategies – goal 8.7

- 49. Give high priority to protecting Swan Bay biodiversity values. Continue to work closely with the Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Committee on conservation programs.**
- 50. Support implementation of the 2002 Stormwater Strategy including wetlands near Swan Bay.**

5.8.8 Murray Rd and Burnt Point

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Relatively intact salt marsh vegetation – protection important
- Ramsar site in precinct
- Access limited to boardwalk which has protected vegetation
- The area is popular for recreational fishing although some people strongly believe Lakers Cutting should be part of the Marine National Park to protect natural values
- Housing a dominant feature along Murray Road
- Degradation of vegetation and damage to private land at Burnt Point. (DSE manages terrestrial area at Burnt Point.)
- Legal access to Point limited by lack of parking at east end of McDonald Rd, and obscure entrance.

Action is needed to minimise impacts of visitors on Burnt Point natural values, and on private land. Access should be restricted to the walking track from the end of McDonald Rd, and fencing and signs used to limited illegal access through private land. Educational signs should also be used to advise visitors of appropriate behaviour.

If damage continues, consideration should be given to closing the area to public access.

Addition of Lakers Cutting to the Marine National Park would help ensure protection of its high natural values.

Management strategies – goal 8.8

- 51. Install education/regulation signs at Burnt Point. Close area to public access if damage to natural values is not sustainable. Use fencing and signs to restrict illegal access through private land.**
- 52. In consultation with the local community, liaise with DSE regarding the addition of Lakers Cutting to the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park.**

5.8.9 Swan Bay and Islands

Background information

Issues and opportunities identified for this management unit included:

- Queenscliffe Golf Course leases part of Swan Island.
- Public access limited, with entry point at gatehouse at south end of bridge. Public access managed by Dept of Defence
- Very high natural values in most areas
- Ramsar site in precinct
- Limited user impacts
- Queenscliff Cruising Yacht Club leases land from DSE. Concerned that harbour development will reduce access (Parks Victoria responsibility).

Protection of natural values is the key land management priority.

Management strategies – goal 8.9

53. Encourage land managers to manage Swan Bay and islands to minimise impacts on natural values, including an ongoing weed control program.

6 Implementing and monitoring the Plan

This Section sets out an overall implementation program, discusses revenue and expenditure issues and lists measures for monitoring performance.

6.1 Action program

Very high priority and high priority strategies and actions are set out in Table 1. An indication of indicative cost, timing and responsibility is provided for very high and high priorities. These tasks should generally be undertaken before tasks in Table 2.

Medium, low and ongoing strategies and actions are set out in Table 2. Medium, low and (some) ongoing priorities may be addressed opportunistically and should be reviewed annually by the foreshore manager when developing operational plans.

The rate of implementation will be dependent on the availability of resources (see below). Responsibility for implementation will rest largely with the proposed foreshore manager (if appointed), under delegation from the CEO and Council.

Actions to be undertaken in the plan will still require specific approvals where relevant. These may include:

- Coastal Management Act consent.
- Planning permit.
- Parks Victoria works permit.
- European and Aboriginal cultural heritage approvals (including liaison with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative for ground disturbing activities).

Table 1: Priority action program A

Priority	Goal/ Action No.	Action	Approx. indicative cost	Approx timing	Respon'y
VERY HIGH ●●●●	1/1	<i>Employ a foreshore manager, funded at least in part from foreshore revenue, to develop and establish appropriate financial and management systems for the whole foreshore and oversee the implementation of the management plan.</i>	\$80,000 per annum	Yr 1	BoQ
	1/2	<i>Establish a Foreshore Advisory Committee with appropriate terms of reference to assist the Borough as Committee of Management in implementing the management plan.</i>	Admin costs only	Yr 1	BoQ
	1/3	<i>Change budget arrangements to ensure revenue from caravan parks and other foreshore activities is available for use on Crown land foreshores throughout the Borough for implementing this management plan.</i>	Admin costs only	Yr 1	BoQ
	1/4	<i>Initiate the transfer of management responsibility for the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Shortlands Bluff Reserve from DSE to the Borough. Investigate possible Council management of VicTrack land on Swan Bay adjacent to the rail alignment (subject to resolution of a management agreement and funding arrangements).</i>	Admin costs only	Yr 1	1. DSE 2. BOQ 3. VicTrack
	2/7	<i>Prepare a detailed design and schedule of works for a Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coastal walk and undertake sufficient works for the path to be opened as a safe and accessible route.</i>	\$130,000	Yrs 1-3	BoQ
	3/10	<i>Develop and implement an ongoing program to establish three weed control areas at The Narrows, near Pt Lonsdale lighthouse and on Swan Bay and progressively extend into adjacent areas. Ensure careful planning, strong leadership, adequate resourcing and extensive volunteer education and involvement. Consider a third site on Swan Bay after establishment of initial sites.</i>	\$40,000	Focus Yr 1 then ongoing	BoQ

Priority	Goal/ Action No.	Action	Approx. indicative cost	Approx timing	Respon'y
	4/14	Develop and use a style guide with appropriate designs for seats, tables, fences, signs, bollards and other foreshore design elements.	\$10,000	Yr 1	BoQ
	4/15	Upgrade key recreation sites at Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club lookout, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach and Princess/Citizens parks as models for future coastal management.	\$80,000	Yrs 1-3	BoQ
	4/18	Progressively prepare detailed master plans for caravan parks with the aim of revising caravan park layouts to improve amenity, increase the diversity of sites (including cabins), and increase the proportion of short-term sites.	M/plans \$45,000 Imp. Approx. \$1 million +	M/plans Yrs 1-2 Imp. Yrs 2-5	1. BoQ 2. DSE
	4/21	Develop and implement a risk management strategy to identify and rapidly deal with safety issues. Include high priority actions from relevant reviews including the Life Saving Victoria report (2004), and arborist and cliff safety reports.	\$10,000 per annum for emerging risks	Yr 1 then ongoing	BoQ
	5/28	Retain paths shown on figures 2-4 and close, fence and revegetate surplus tracks created for private beach access. Construct fences to prevent unregulated access through coastal vegetation. (Give highest priority to surplus track closures in areas of high biodiversity value.)	Part of Coastal Walk (see Action 2/5)	Priorities determin ed in coastal walk design	BoQ
	5/30	Fence out the eroded sand cliff at Dog Beach (the Narrows Beach) and implement the findings of the proposed DSE erosion study.	\$10,000	Yr 1	BoQ
HIGH ● ● ●	2/8	Continue to fund (through Council's Crown land revenue or grants) upgrading of the coastal path, with additional sections built to shared path standard.	Ongoing maint. Cost	Yr 4 – ongoing	BoQ
	3/12	Support more detailed assessment of biodiversity values to guide future management. Continue efforts to protect Hooded Plover breeding sites, and undertake pest animal control programs with adjacent landowners.	TBD	Yr 2-4	BoQ
	4/16	Retain the Pt Lonsdale Bowling Club in the medium term on its current site and develop an appropriate lease that includes lease fees and term and addresses the issues raised in this plan.	TBD	Yr 2	BoQ
	4/19	Introduce cabins at Royal Park and extend the camping season if cost-effective.	See Action 4/15		
	4/19	Add the Crown land section of Golightly Park to the coastal reserve, enhance natural values and provide public access. Sell the Council land for residential use unless development of a combination of high-return accommodation, eg cottages and cabins, provides an economic return.	Part of coastal walk	Timing depends on outcome of park decision	BoQ
	4/22	Install and maintain information shelters on the Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coastal walk near Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse, Ocean View carpark and Queenscliffe Pier.	Part of Coastal Walk (see Action 2/5)		
	5/29	Upgrade selected paths as models for future management, providing stable alignments, surfaces of appropriate width, fencing to regulate access, orientation signs and seating at key viewing and rest points. Include path west of Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse, path through Crown land at Golightly Park and extension of Thwaites Walk in Princess Park.	Part of Coastal Walk (see Action 2/5)	Priorities determin ed through coastal walk design	BoQ
	6/32	Adopt the future directions set out in figure 2 for the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area and, with DSE approval, undertake an expression of interest process for a cooperative Council/private development of the area. Ensure good public access, environmental protection, sensitive coastal design and significant revenue to help fund coastal management. When developed, promote the area as a key regional attraction.	\$50,000 financial case and design Imp. TBD but likely \$1 m +	Yr 2 – 5	1. BoQ 2. DSE

Priority	Goal/ Action No.	Action	Approx. indicative cost	Approx timing	Respon'y
	6/33	Undertake major upgrade/conservation works to Pt Lonsdale Pier.	TBD	TBD	PV
	7/34	Consolidate all land in the Shortlands Bluff/Recreation Reserve area under Council control.	Admin costs only	Initiate Yr 1	DSE 2. BoQ
	7/35	Develop and progressively implement a master plan for the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff/Victoria Park area following principles set out in this Plan and the Victorian Coastal Strategy. Include provision for a range of accommodation.	See Action 15		1. BoQ 2. DSE
	8.2/38	Implement key actions in the Urban Design Framework for the Pt Lonsdale village and foreshore area particularly related to improving vegetation, access, and facilities, and providing shade and shelter.	TBD	Ongoing	BoQ
	8.5/45	Undertake major upgrade/conservation works to Queenscliff Pier.	TBD	TBD	PV
	8.6/47	Undertake vegetation restoration/protection work along the foreshore in association with the harbour development.	TBD	TBD	PV
	8.8/51	Install education/regulation signs at Burnt Point. Close area to public access if damage to natural values is not sustainable. Use fencing and signs to restrict illegal access through private land.	TBD	Yr 1-2	DSE

Table 2: Priority action program B

Priority	Goal/ Action No.	Action	Approx. indicative cost	Approx timing	Respon'y
MEDIUM ● ●	4/17	Confirm the skate park at its current location and link the area between the skate park and the Pt Lonsdale Primary School including revegetating with indigenous species.			
	5/27	Progressively improve walking/cycling access to the foreshore (figures 2-4) and deter vehicle use by limiting parking times and/or introducing fees at heavily used locations.			
	5/31	Support a broad study of coastal processes including sand movement and management options at Queenscliff Pier and The Cut.			
	8.1/36	At Pt Lonsdale back beach, progressively upgrade major walking tracks, beach access, fences, seats, lookouts and signs to improve and regulate access and protect natural values.			
	8.1/37	At Pt Lonsdale back beach, provide safe pedestrian access along Ocean Road and define parking areas.			
	8.3/40	Redevelop Lawrence Road carpark and upgrade informal recreation facilities and paths along the foreshore.			
	8.4/41	Improve parking layouts and upgrade paths and informal recreation facilities at Queenscliff Back Beach.			
LOW ●	2/8	Liaise with the Fort's manager regarding a possible route on the seaward side of the Fort.			
	8.2/39	Revegetate surplus open areas north of the main Pt Lonsdale beach in conjunction with path upgrades.			
	8.4/41	Remove abandoned discharge pipe across Queenscliff Back Beach.			
	8.5/44	Review demand for café facilities and a public toilet in the area, and improved walking access to beach. Consider removal of 'Harrys' café/toilet structure if redundant.			
	8.6/46	Arrange for clean up of old rolling stock in the rail yards and planting south of the Railway Station.			

Priority	Goal/ Action No.	Action	Approx. indicative cost	Approx timing	Respon'y
	8.6/48	Consider relocation of Elderly Citizens and Sea Scouts activities and removal of buildings, and improve landscaping of area north of Symonds Street.			
	8.8/52	In consultation with the local community, liaise with DSE regarding the addition of Lakers Cutting to the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park.			
ONGOING	1/5	Promote sustainable practices in the community by developing and interpreting sustainable practices in caravan parks and recreational area			
	1/6	In conjunction with the Central Coastal Board and other coastal agencies, support studies into the potential impacts of climate change on biodiversity and infrastructure on the central coast			
	3/13	Liaise with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative prior to undertaking any works involving ground disturbance, and with the Borough's Heritage Advisor regarding actions affecting non-Indigenous cultural heritage places			
	4/23	Promote healthy recreational use of the foreshore through community activities and events, campaigns, information outlets, publications, web sites and other information sources.			
	4/24	Encourage school and community environmental activities and on-site interpretive services to enhance appreciation and support for protection of the foreshore.			
	4/25	Provide ongoing support and basic training for community groups. Include regular meetings to develop skills and coordinate agreed works programs.			
	4/26	Ensure appropriate penalties and enforcement under local laws and an associated education program on disposal of dog waste. Provide litter bins at key locations for disposal of waste bags.			
	8.5/43	Generally adopt a tree replacement policy of 'like for like' for Princess and Citizens parks but explore opportunities to plant the native Oyster Bay Pines (<i>Callitris rhomboidea</i>). Continue to implement the main actions in the Gerner Sanderson report on parks redevelopment.			
	8.7/49	Give high priority to protecting Swan Bay biodiversity values. Continue to work closely with the Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Committee on conservation programs.			
	8.7/50	Support implementation of the 2002 Stormwater Strategy including wetlands near Swan Bay.			
	8.9/53	Encourage land managers to manage Swan Bay and islands to minimise impacts on natural values, including an ongoing weed control program.			

6.2 Achieving implementation

This plan clearly identifies priorities and issues for immediate and longer-term action. Effective implementation will require matching capacity (financial and management) with these priorities. An indicative **3-year budget plan** was developed to assist Council to implement the management plan (see below). Funding of actions in the plan will need to be considered in Council's overall budget process.

Future revenue sources

Possible revenue sources for foreshore management include:

Caravan Parks and Camping Areas – The use of caravan and camping revenue for broader foreshore management has been discussed previously in this report. Future projections will

assume the provision of cabins at several sites and redevelopment of the Toc H area as quality accommodation. At Barwon Heads, cabins return about \$17,000 pa per unit.

Council rates - Ratepayers gain substantial benefits from the foreshore and it is appropriate that a significant proportion of the annual budget be committed to foreshore management.

Housing rental – Assumes Council manages four houses at Shortlands Bluff in short to medium-term. Also assumes the former PMA houses are demolished when the area is redeveloped.

Boat launching – The boat launching ramp at Queenscliff generates revenue from launching fees. This facility is currently managed by Council and this arrangement should continue. Strategic documents for this use (Boating CAP and Southern Port Phillip Boating Review) suggest there should be no major changes in this use.

Foreshore leases and licences – A range of foreshore uses currently have leases and these should be reviewed as they expire to ensure lease fees are appropriate.

Foreshore parking – Paying for parking is common on urban foreshores around Port Phillip and in some regional areas (eg Lorne over the summer). This may be appropriate as it is a direct relationship between the user and the facility, although it is fair to say its introduction is generally controversial for some years. The layout of the foreshore in Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale means parking between the town and foreshore is difficult to differentiate so pay parking should be considered as part of an overall strategy for the Borough.

Major events – The foreshore in Queenscliff in particular is used for major events. These events should contribute on a cost recovery basis (insurance, crowd management, cleaning and restoration as appropriate) but should also contribute to the general management of the foreshore which is required all year, not just in the event period.

Developer contributions

Developers are required to provide land or financial contributions for open space under the Planning Scheme. This may result in some funding for foreshore management.

Miscellaneous

Other revenue opportunities include filming rights, and outdoor activities including weddings and large group picnics and social functions.

Grants

There are a number of sources of grant revenue which are available for particular foreshore projects. Key ones for the Borough to target will include:

- Envirofund (environment and education projects)
- Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (Regional Catchment Investment Program – NHT)
- Marine Safety Victoria (Boating Safety and Facilities Program)
- Life Saving Victoria (safety signs)
- DSE Coast Risk Mitigation Program
- DSE Beach Cleaning subsidy
- DPI (Recreational Fishing Grants Program)
- Sport and Recreation Victoria (Country Action Grants Scheme)

The Port Phillip and Western Port CMA maintain a detailed grants available calendar which should be referenced for a complete list.

Table 3: Indicative Three-Year Foreshore Budget

Mgt Plan Action	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	NOTES
REVENUE				
Caravan Parks/Accommodation				
Existing Budget	\$1,046,220	\$828,531	\$886,528	1
New revenue from Cabins		\$68,000	\$136,000	2
Shortland Bluff and PMA Housing Rental	\$60,000	\$61,800	\$63,654	3
Leases and Licences				
Boat Launching Fees	\$69,550	\$71,637	\$73,786	4
Foreshore Leases and Licenses Ongoing	\$20,000	\$20,600	\$21,218	5
Foreshore Licences - Major Events	\$10,000	\$10,300	\$10,609	6
Grants and Other Revenue				
Grants (external sources)	\$100,000	\$103,000	\$106,090	7
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,305,770	\$1,163,868	\$1,297,885	
EXPENDITURE				
Caravan Park/Accommodation Capital				
15 Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Victoria Park Master Plan		\$30,000		
Queenscliff Recreation Reserve Master Plan Implementation			\$300,000	8
15 Royal Park Master Plan	\$15,000			
Royal Park Master Plan Implementation		\$250,000		9
29 Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Precinct Financial Investigation and Design		\$50,000		
Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Precinct Master Plan Implementation			\$300,000	10
Recurrent				
Existing Salaries and Administration (Permanent and Casual)	\$289,615	\$241,948	\$254,045	11
New Salary and Costs (Foreshore Manager)	\$80,000	\$84,000	\$88,200	
Cleaning and Maintenance	\$127,411	\$110,000	\$115,500	12
Utilities	\$54,972	\$45,000	\$47,250	13
Boat Ramp Maintenance and Management	\$20,000	\$21,000	\$22,050	14
Other	\$61,652	\$45,115	\$47,371	15
Project Expenditure (Very High Priorities)				
5 Queenscliff - Pt Lonsdale Coastal Walk Design and Development	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
8 Three Key Conservation Sites (Fencing and Weed Control)	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
11 Develop Facility Design Guide	\$10,000			
12 Develop Model Recreation Sites	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	
18 Prepare and Implement a Risk Management Strategy	\$10,000	\$10,300	\$10,609	
27 Temporary Fencing of Dog Beach Dune	\$10,000			
Loan Repayments				
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$768,650	\$967,363	\$1,265,025	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	\$537,120	\$196,505	\$32,860	

NOTES

1. Figure based on Council Budget - includes closure of Golightly in 07/08.
2. Assumes four cabins in 07/08 and eight in 08/09
3. Estimate - need real figures from DSE
4. Figure based on Council budget
5. Estimate
6. Estimate
7. Estimate
8. Year 1 of masterplan implementation
9. Possible upgrades include small number of cabins, improve facilities, extend season
10. Year 1 of precinct plan implementation
11. Based on Council Budget
12. Based on Council Budget with allowance for new cabins
13. Based on Council Budget with allowance for new cabins
14. Figure from Council budget with 5% annual increase added
15. Figure from Council budget with 5% annual increase added

6.3 *Monitoring success*

Following appointment of a foreshore manager, a detailed implementation plan will be needed to guide individual project implementation over the life of the management plan. This will include works scheduling, contract management arrangements and permit and coastal management consent needs.

Progress in plan implementation should be reported via the Borough's annual reporting processes and at least annually to the Foreshore Advisory Committee. An annual 'foreshore report card' could be prepared which summarises key progress for the community.

The plan is to be fully reviewed and revised or rewritten in 3 years time as required under the Coastal Management Act 1995 (section 35 (1) (b)).

Targets could include:

Plan implementation

- % achievement of actions in this Plan (based on target of agreed number of actions in annual program)
Target: 10% of plan achieved each year

Users and facilities:

- Satisfaction of users with foreshore settings, access and environmental management (by survey)
Target: 70% satisfied or very satisfied (part of general Borough survey)
- Length of new or upgraded paths provided each year
Target: 1 km

Environmental:

- Target re hectares of foreshore land with effective weed control and healthy indigenous vegetation, eg 6 ha pa
- Target re hectares of eroded land rehabilitated, eg, 3 ha pa.

7 References

The main references cited in this Plan are set out in appendix 1.

Additional references

DSE 2003, *Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Management Plan*

DSE, 2005, *Our Environment Our Future*, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne

DSE 2006a, *Coastal Spaces Recommendations*, Department Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne

DSE, 2006b, *Draft Sustainable Water Strategy: Central Region*, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne

SKM, 2005, *Climate change and natural resource management scoping study (Gleneel Hopkins Region)*

Trengove MH, 2001, *The Narrows Queenscliffe – Vegetation Management Guidelines*, a Report to the Queenscliff Community Association.

Trengove MH, 1992, *The Vegetation and Management of the Coastal Remnants of the Borough of Queenscliffe*, Unpublished (for the BoQ).

Tourism Research Australia, ca 2005, *Summary of the Camping and Caravan Report, Australian Experiences Report No. 6 (2003/04 period)*

Personal communications (all 2005)

Roger Grant, Geelong-Otway Tourism

Ivar Nelson, DSE Historic Places

John Hawker. Heritage Victoria

8 Appendices

Appendix 1: Notes on existing policies, strategies and reports

Brief summary relevant to CMP. See also additional references in section 7.

Category	Document	Key points
A. Statewide/ regional	1. <i>Victorian Coastal Strategy</i> , VCC, 2002	Key document setting out issues, vision and principles for coastal planning and management. Principles include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect significant environmental features • Ensure sustainable use of natural resources • Plan and provide direction for future • When above met, facilitate suitable development in modified environments (which increases public benefit, is well designed and sited, minimises risk and facilitates multiple-use. Includes action to discourage exclusive occupancy of caravan/camping sites for more than 12 months. Identifies Queenscliff as safe harbour, and Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coast as Coastal Recreation Zone.
	2. <i>Landscape Setting Types</i> , VCC, 1998	Identifies Pt Nepean, Pt Lonsdale and Queenscliff as of outstanding scenic quality. Any development needs to be kept low, and extreme care taken to protect the quality of the setting.
	3. <i>Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast</i> , VCC, 1998	Sets out principles for good coastal siting and design.
	4. Victorian Heritage Register (www.heritage.vic.gov.au)	Series of sites in or adjacent to foreshore reserve are on Heritage Register or Heritage Inventory, hence protected by <i>Heritage Act</i> . Key sites on Register are Queenscliff Pier and Lifeboat Shed (H1515), Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse (H1517), Queenscliff Railway Station (H1586), Fisherman's Shed, Weeroona Pde (H2074) and Wreck Bell, Princess Park (H2070) Also a series of fort, defence, railway and recreation sites at Queenscliff on Inventory
	5. <i>Bays and Peninsulas Regional Tourism Development Plan</i> , Tourism Vic, KPMG, 1997	Identified need to develop year round appeal including educational and interpretive facilities. Supports improved boat access, better facilities and visitor services on public land, nature based tourism, tracks and trails linking activity nodes and a network of signs to highlight features.
	6. <i>Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park Management Plan</i> , PV 2005	Documents values, uses and threats to park. Sets out strategies to protect natural and cultural values, and provide for recreation, education and community involvement. Includes maintenance of bird feeding and roosting values at Swan Bay.
	7. <i>Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study</i> , Planisphere, draft, 2005	Pt Lonsdale and lighthouse culturally important and highly visible landscape elements. Queenscliff landscape valued. Important scenic lookouts identified. Notes accelerated erosion due to recreational use, and sensitivity to development because of visibility. Places significant to community include coast Queenscliff-Breamlea and Pt Lonsdale lighthouse/headland/views. Dislikes include large-scale development and excessive development on dunes. Management guidelines being developed.

Category	Document	Key points
B. Local - BoQ	8. <i>BoQ Planning Scheme / MSS, 2002</i>	<p>MSS includes sections relevant to foreshore:</p> <p><i>Vision (21.04):</i> ‘... ensure high quality foreshores and open space which cater for the requirements of the local community and residents ...’</p> <p><i>Environment (21.05-2):</i> strategies include protection of sites, minimal impact development and identification of suitable locations for tourism services</p> <p><i>Leisure, Recreation and Open space (21.05-3):</i> identifies value and importance of foreshore, supports integrated pathways, access to beach, multi-functional use of facilities, master plans for Narrows, Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse/Rip View Carpark, Queenscliff Lighthouse/Ocean View Carpark, replacement of historic vegetation, upgrading and improved maintenance of amenities, facilities, parks and reserves. Shows proposed path around PPB coast including Bay side of Fort Q. Toc H/PMA houses area show as Public Open Space/Parkland (maps F, G)</p> <p>Local Provision includes:</p> <p><i>Foreshore areas (22.04-3):</i> includes siting and design policies including open fencing to foreshore boundaries and retention of existing native coastal vegetation.</p>
	9. <i>BoQ Corporate Plan 2003-2006</i>	Includes objective to maintain and enhance natural and heritage values and encourage tourism. Actions include encouraging community participation, maintaining parks and reserves, and removing pest plants.
	10. <i>BoQ Draft Land Use Strategy Plan, Fisher Stewart 1997</i>	<p>Prepared to assist in developing Planning Scheme and MSS. Provides details of environment, heritage, open space etc.</p> <p>Describes 11 coastal units including environmental/ landscape issues – most still relevant, eg weeds, vegetation, erosion, access, parking, visual impacts and stormwater.</p> <p>The community sees regulating access to the foreshore and planting indigenous vegetation as important. Shared and multi-use recreation facilities and greater use of existing facilities also important.</p> <p>Tourism/open space needs include improved access and facilities, a walking/cycling network (see p 121), improved caravan parks and better information.</p>
	11. <i>BoQ Urban Character Study, Hansen Partnership, 2000</i>	<p>Provides overview of Planning Scheme and MSS and describes urban character in detail.</p> <p>Identifies and describes 13 urban character precincts, and groups these into two key themes – Queenscliff urban heritage character, and Pt Lonsdale natural coastal character.</p> <p>Extensive community consultation found that people liked the ambience and tranquillity of the area, coastal location, lifestyle and sense of community. For Pt Lonsdale, vegetation and natural coastal character were important; for Queenscliff, heritage values were most significant. The two key development issues related to building height and native vegetation retention.</p> <p>Recommendations include revising aspects of the planning scheme, replacing historic vegetation (eg pines), and reinforcement of coastal planting at Pt Lonsdale.</p>
	12. <i>BoQ Stormwater Strategy Plan, ID&A, 2002</i>	Details risks to environment etc and management strategies. Septic tanks a key risk, also residential runoff, camping areas and roads and carparks. Proposes education and physical measures eg infiltration, outlet treatments, vegetative filtration, sediment traps and gross pollutant traps. Also water sensitive urban design
	13. <i>BoQ Playground Development Plan, Ray Hutchison and Assoc, 2002</i>	Basic review of existing 15 playgrounds with list of improvements. Costed at \$250,000 over 5 years. Little discussion of principles of children’s play or demand/adequacy of existing no. of sites and distribution. Identifies Princess Park playground as regional; 3 district sites and 9 local sites.

Category	Document	Key points
	14. <i>BoQ Disability Action Plan, 2004</i>	Notes that 26% of population have a handicap. Promotes equal access, opportunity and participation, including 'access for all where appropriate' in any new planning and development of recreation/sporting facilities.
	15. <i>Coastal Risk and safety Signage Report, Pt Lonsdale and Queenscliff, Nicola Waldron, Life Saving Victoria, 2004</i>	Detailed review of coastal risk, access, hazards and signage issues. Numerous risks and other issues discussed. Most existing hazard signs do not meet current standards. Recommends series of actions including provision of 83 signs, improved access points and various sections of fencing.
C. Local – site specific	16. <i>Lonsdale Bight: Coastal Process Investigation, Vantree et al for DSE, 1998</i>	<p>Substantial project setting out history of coastal changes, values, threats and recommended actions.</p> <p>Sand movement is west to east. Found no change in alignment where masonry wall constructed, but 10–30 m retreat near Golightly Park before wall extended in 1977, and terminal scour extending 40-m inland at end of wall. This scour is not advancing significantly now (1998). North of end of wall, coast has grown up to 5-15 m.</p> <p>Discusses protection options. Recommends longer groynes to retain a beach near the Pt Lonsdale shops, leaving rock wall and scour as is, with possible lowering of top of dune scarp, and leaving beach to Shortland Bluff as is and managing pedestrian erosion.</p> <p><u>Flora and fauna survey</u> identified three vegetation types – foredune grassland, coastal scrub and Moonah shrubland. Most areas are seriously degraded. The most intact sites are coastal scrub between the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse carpark and Rip View carpark, and the area seaward of the Pt Lonsdale PS (veg quality map fig 6.2). Three areas were of Regional Significance (fig 6.3). The main native faunal species are bush birds and the Common Ringtail Possum.</p>
	17. <i>Queenscliff Draft Coastal Action Plan, CCB and BoQ, 1999</i>	<p>Only covers coast south to Wyuna.</p> <p>Useful overview of values and issues but provides mostly broad strategies.</p> <p>Identifies need to clean up railway precinct and consider residential development near Wharf St, develop Wyuna, develop Ocean View carpark area (remove buildings to north, provide restaurant etc), reduce camping impacts on Victoria Park, improve camping facilities at Recreation Reserve, review Monahan Centre, improve the harbour and parking. Also recommends toilets and path Wyuna to Shortlands Bluff, and possible relocation of Sea Scouts and Snr Cits Club.</p> <p>Recommends a stormwater plan, and staged vegetation management giving priority to Lonsdale Bight foreshore, Shortlands Bluff and the southern part of the front beach</p> <p>Identifies opportunity to develop integrated walking and bicycle paths and formalise beach access (and link to Pt Lonsdale). See pp 31-36 for actions.</p> <p>No erosion problems noted in study area. Sand Island is all dredge spoil.</p> <p>Proposes implementation committee with Parks Victoria to lead.</p>

Category	Document	Key points
	18. <i>Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse and Foreshore Reserve Draft Management Plan</i> , NRE, 2000	<p>Detailed plan setting out future directions and actions. Documents values and management issues.</p> <p>Includes large-scale local survey which identified walking, swimming and passive recreation as the main recreation activities. Improvements suggested include improving paths and stairs, disabled access, signs and historic features, ecological interpretation, erosion control, vegetation management/weed control, landscape protection, seating and removing PMA houses.</p> <p>Directions proposed in Plan include: protect flora and fauna, control weeds, rationalise tracks, improve access, parking, facilities, safety and amenity, remove some surplus buildings and redevelop the Toc H and PMA housing area. A part-time ranger service and funding strategy also proposed.</p>
	19. <i>Pt Lonsdale Shopping Village and Foreshore Areas – Urban Design Framework</i> , Hansen partnership/Context Conybeare, 2002	<p>Detailed review of area including extensive community consultation. Proposes extensive improvements to village and foreshore (pp 32-52). Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocated new amenities block next to Bowling Club. • Improved park/picnic area/beach (seating, shade/shelter, walkways, ramp access, remove clutter, enhance play facilities, consider lighting, encourage education/activity programs) • Revegetation • Loop ramp to beach • Pedestrian link to south • Remove unhealthy cypresses • Moonah copses along road/revised angle parking <p>Includes staging guide (p50). Highest priorities are tree planting and improve picnic facilities and playground (total est \$120,000)</p>
	20. <i>[BoQ Planning Scheme amendment, C16]</i> , 2004 – Economic Impact Assessment, Essential Economics	<p>BoQ population has declined marginally in last 10 years, but there was overall increase of 410 over 7 years if housing west of Fellows Road included. Population of area projected to increase by 3.8% pa from 2003-2010 to 5900 permanent residents.</p> <p>Visitors to area in 2003 approx 780,000 including 70% day trippers. 70% of visitors in high season – Nov-Apr. Growth of 1% pa predicted.</p> <p>Notes that there is poor integration of Q'cliff town centre and beach, and no cafes or restaurants near the water.</p>
	21. <i>Queenscliff Harbour Feasibility Investigation</i> , Egis/Parks Victoria, 2002	<p>Proposed redevelopment costing ~ \$20m to be staged. Main components are larger harbour/more berths, commercial sector, boardwalk, parking, roads.</p> <p>Appears to have little impact on adjacent foreshore areas.</p> <p>Coastal regime in harbour not expected to be affected.</p> <p>Sea Pilots building may be available for other uses</p>
	22. <i>Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) & Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan</i> , DSE 2003	<p>Identifies site values and management strategies.</p>
	23. <i>BoQ Caravan Park Study</i> , NRE, 1996	<p>Reviewed four parks. Found facilities inadequate. Majority of residents and retail sector support camping; caravan users resist change.</p> <p>Applied criteria (location, minimal impact, maximum return). Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Park – reduction or closure • Rec Reserve – premier location: expand or redevelop (could then close Victoria Park) • Royal Park – retain • Golightly Park – develop cabins or sell <p>Also option to develop Wyuna for caravans</p>

Category	Document	Key points
	24. <i>Future Strategies for Camp Wyuna and Golightly Caravan Park</i> , Hansen Partnership, 2003	Sets out detailed case for future directions based on governance, environmental, economic and social considerations. Recommends: <i>Camp Wyuna</i> : Council or DSE to own area with high natural values. EOI process to be used for redevelopment of camp (consider conditional sale if not successful). <i>Golightly Park</i> : Council or DSE to own area outside Res 1 Zone, and manage for natural values. Res 1 Zone area could be sold if no other public use identified. (Van sites to be phased out in both areas.)
	25. <i>Community Sports Club Facility Feasibility Study (Monahan Centre)</i> , Stratcorp Consulting, Draft, 2005	Reviewed Sports Club facilities associated with Monahan Centre at Queenscliff Recreation Reserve. Site is on Crown land and use is not coastal dependant, but no alternative site identified. Recommended upgrading of facilities at cost of \$1.9 million plus extras. Notes older demographic in Borough and identifies need to attract potential participants from surrounding areas to bolster team numbers
	26. <i>Management Guidelines for the coastal cliff at Citizens Park, Queenscliff</i> , Mark Trengrove, 1998	Issues are weeds, unregulated access, erosion and retaining views. Ten regionally significant species recorded including Moonah and Coast Wirilda. Recommends weed control, removing some exotic trees, rationalising walking tracks, excluding bicycles and revegetation.
	27. <i>Queenscliff Pier and Lifeboat Complex Heritage Action Plan</i> , Louise Honman for Parks Victoria, 2003	Details historical, architectural and aesthetic significance of shed, pier etc. Discusses history of local piers, conservation requirements, and possible use of lifeboat shed for low-key interpretation and education. Notes that beach now extends more than 150 m along Pier's 300 m length
	28. <i>Neremba Narrows Reserve Masterplan</i> , Beeston et al, 1997	Ambitious conceptual proposal for environmental sculpture reserve related to Swan bay/birdlife with interpretation centre, amphitheatre etc. Est cost \$2.5m-\$3m. Not implemented.

Appendix 2: Recreation/leisure survey findings

Findings from recent surveys and consultation programs include:

ERASS – the Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey, 2003, Aust Sports Commission

- Victoria-wide participation was highest for walking 31%, aerobics/fitness 16%, swimming 14%, cycling 11%, tennis 9%, golf 8%, running 8%, Australian Rules 5%, Basketball 5% and bush walking 5%. Participation in most organised sports is relatively low (often 1 to 3%) (SRV 2003).
- The survey found that walking is projected to increase by 60% from 2001-2016 for people 65+ years old.

Surveys by Jeavons and Jeavons

Sally Jeavons and colleagues have surveyed about 65,000 individuals about open space in a series of surveys. Findings include the following. (Source: "Outer Space" seminar, South Yarra, 11.10.00 – unpublished):

- People want quality open space, not quantity
- The core activities are walking, socialising and family recreation
- People choose parks close to home, of reasonable size (not too small) and well maintained
- Experiences sought include socialising, resting/relaxing and being in a quite and peaceful place
- Provision for sport is important but should be flexible, and viable
- Successful local open space should meet local needs, relate to the area, have safe access, include paths, a way through, attractive planting, space for socialising (including teens), diversity, complexity (can't see it all) and grouped facilities.

Surf Coast Open Space Strategy, 2004

Extensive consultation for the Community Plan found that:

- The natural environment was very highly valued – particularly the beach/foreshore, walking/bike tracks, parks and gardens and bush areas.
- Priorities for the future include limiting/improving development near the coast, protecting the environment, and providing or improving footpaths, sport and recreation facilities, walking and bicycle tracks, beach facilities, parks and reserves and revegetation.

Additional open space workshops and interviews identified a wide range of issues including:

- A strong desire for more walking and bicycle tracks, more footpaths and better links between residential areas, facilities and open space.
- Requests for improved facilities and standards and a greater range of sporting and informal open space.
- Increased Council support and involvement with volunteer groups, user-pays along the coast, disabled access, toilet maintenance and funding.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Open Space Strategy, 2002

Surveys and forums found that the community gave high priority to conservation areas including bushland and foreshore areas, continuous trails and township parks including opportunities for young people especially playgrounds.

City of Frankston Open Space Strategy, 2001

A survey found factors of major importance and requiring improvement were: litter/rubbish removal, safety, maintenance, toilets and trees/shade.

The highest priorities for resources were the foreshore, bushland and local parks followed by footpaths/nature strips and walking and bicycle tracks.

Appendix 3: SWOT analysis re open space

Based on steering committee discussion, 12.7.05, and planning team observations.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats/ Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of coast line - covers northern, eastern and southern Borough boundaries • Large areas of foreshore/open space in Borough • Unique character – township and coast • Informal coastal lifestyle • Diversity of environment: varied formal and informal areas • Cultural icons - Fort, piers, lighthouses, heritage, residential buildings etc • Landscape/views: ocean, Heads, shipping and heritage vistas • High conservation value - Marine National Park on doorstep, Swan Bay shoreline, fauna and flora • Ownership and pride, high community involvement in local issues • Recreational magnet for resident and tourist population - fishing, boating, clean and safe beaches. • Good access from Melbourne, Geelong, by Ferry etc • Coastguard ; shipping Pilot service operating from Queenscliff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area of coastline managed by Council – resource and quality issue • Some coastal areas within municipality managed by other coastal managers – management inconsistent • Erosion, weeds, lack of connection of remnant vegetation • Beach lost adjacent to rock wall • Access: Unregulated and unauthorised causing damage to soils and vegetation • Weak pedestrian links between town centres and foreshore • Amenities: Lack of toilet blocks, water fountains, public barbecues • Design: Some sites/facilities poorly designed and uncoordinated, eg seats, signs • Drainage and Stormwater: Areas where untreated and/ or unscreened waste goes directly into Swan Bay and Lonsdale Bay • Pressure on limited land within the coastal strip resulting in non coastal uses being pushed onto crown land; i.e. Skateboard Park • No sound basis for location and leasing of caravan sites • Queenscliff Recreation Reserve lacks master plan to guide use, development and integration with coast • Eastern and north eastern municipality boundary issues with Greater Geelong City Council • Heritage and environmental signage inadequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set short and long term priorities on issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation Trust rollover arrangements, i.e. possibility of caravan park \$'s being redirected to foreshore • Lovers Lane extension • Provision of further amenities toilet blocks, drinking fountains • Formalise access walking and biking tracks reducing unauthorised access • Weed and erosion management • Toc H Pt Lonsdale Reserve • Better coordination between coastal managers: The Coastal Management Plan will provide the five coastal managing authorities with strategic guidelines and actions for the foreshore as a whole with common objectives. • Review of existing land use and development on crown land, eg Golightly Caravan Park • Shared pathway network including continuous coastal walk • Development/upgrading opportunity at Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area. • Opportunity/need to upgrade parking/viewing areas, eg Ocean View carpark • Review/rationalise/upgrade caravan/camping areas • Introduce user-pays to raise revenue, eg charge for car parking in the peak periods • Possibility of parking vehicles away from foreshore and ride on bus or train from Marine Discovery Centre to the beach • Promotion of tourist attractions and educational facilities located within the foreshore, eg Marine Discovery Centre. Increase awareness to schools and community groups outside the Borough of what Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale has to offer • Review existing uses of Council freehold land, eg Camp Rd, Camp Wyuna • Investigation of feasibility of hot salt baths • Restaurant/café at Queenscliff with coastal views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate resources and possibly skills to implement plan • Activities of various land managers uncoordinated • Proposed residential development north of Fellows Road: considered by some members of the community as a serious threat. • Some caravan sites on Crown land have exclusive (ongoing use) • Safety: unstable cliffs • Coastal erosion • Mobile coastal environment • Diminishing Moonah Coastal Woodland community and invasive weed impacts • Impact of human uses on the coastal environment • Channel dredging/deepening • Burnt point access across Salt Marsh • Access: vehicular and pedestrian – excessive parking demand along coast; variable walking access from residential areas • Non coastal uses on crown land Lack of expertise to manage extensive foreshore area

Appendix 4: Issues identified

Issues affecting the foreshore generally are listed under a) below. Site-specific issues are listed under b).

a) General foreshore issues

4.1 Recreation and use

Overall provision

- Council manages a large proportion of the foreshore, including most beach and sporting areas and recreation facilities (except for the Queenscliff Harbour, managed by Parks Victoria).
- Key sites for tourists and day trippers (eg Pt Lonsdale lighthouse/Rip View area/shops, Ocean View carpark and Queenscliff foreshore) do not meet modern design standards.

Distribution

- Open space is widely distributed along the coast, with most residents having reasonable access to a foreshore area.

Access

- Public access is provided to most of the foreshore reserve except at Fort Queenscliff.
- Access for people with disabilities is variable with some uneven surfaces, steep paths, and sections of soft sand.
- There has been a high reliance on access to the foreshore by private vehicle – footpaths or shared pathways leading to the beach are lacking in many residential areas.

Links/paths

- Many paths exist but gaps exist in the main coastal walk especially near the Fort and through parks at Queenscliff.
- Shared path around Swan Bay and the Narrows successful.
- The standard of paths is variable with many little more than narrow sandy tracks.
- The section of Lovers Walk above the scoured area is difficult to traverse.
- There are many unregulated access tracks from housing areas and caravan parks to the coast, and excessive tracks through bushland areas behind the dunes.
- There are opportunities to improve links and walking/bicycle access to community facilities and residential areas.
- Most paths are not sign posted with no information provided on destination, time or distance.
- Walking links from main commercial areas at Queenscliff and Pt Lonsdale to foreshore could be improved.
- Important to define paths for walking only, and shared cycling/walking.

Diversity of settings

- Wide range of settings from largely natural beaches and bushland to semi-developed areas, eg for picnics, and developed areas, eg parking areas, caravan parks, boating and sporting facilities.

Facilities/Design

- Basic facilities at most informal Council sites with some 'tired' designs, eg seats, tables and shelters.
- Facility standards vary widely.
- Little design consistency – signs, toilets, bollard, barriers, tables, information shelters etc.
- Some recreation and parking areas lack shade and shelter and detract from setting.
- Urgent need for tree planting in some areas, eg along Pt Lonsdale Road near shops
- Very large number of rubbish and dog bins.
- Moderate provision for children's play.

Accommodation/caravan parks

- Council manages four caravan parks – issues with location, environmental impacts, compatibility with other activities, types of facilities (eg cabins), equity of access/use, fees etc. Important to retain revenue stream, important for shop operators, permanent use of

Crown land (and Council?) sites not equitable – PV moving to ballot system at some locations, eg Rye. Need Council policy on site use. No worthwhile opportunity for van park on Murray Rd land.

Information, interpretation, promotion

- Poor orientation/direction signs to/at most sites.
- Inadequate focus on icon sites, eg Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area, Rip View and Ocean View carparks.
- Council identity obscure at most sites.
- Limited information available to public on foreshore and recreation opportunities
- Uncoordinated interpretation – wide variety of styles and messages. Some interpretive signs have poor legibility, eg at Ocean View Carpark and Pt Lonsdale lighthouse. Others, eg in Queenscliff, mostly of high standard.
- Opportunities to continue to facilitate events and promote recreation/tourism activities

Changing uses and needs

- Increasing need for walking tracks, seats, viewing points and shade for older users.
- Demand for more dining/sitting near beachfront.
- Tourists generally looking for high quality facilities and services.

4.2 Environment and cultural heritage

Protection of flora and fauna

- High priority given to natural environment in Council Plan and planning scheme not evident in on-ground management of vegetation.
- Erosion having a serious impact on vegetation at scour.
- High quality vegetation, eg along Swan Bay foreshore, may have highest priority for protection. Moonah Coastal Woodland on Narrows also important.

Weeds and pests

- Weeds a major ongoing problem – much of original understorey lost. Need to determine policy and priority for action, eg focus on small highly-visible demonstration areas.
- Pest animal control difficult close to residential setting. Needs to be integrated with other land managers.

Aboriginal Cultural heritage

- Need to ensure protection of any Aboriginal sites and involve Aboriginal community in any management and interpretation of these sites.

European Cultural Heritage

- Replacement policy for old exotic trees – are similar species always appropriate? Cypresses unstable, may be a case for Moonahs in some locations – need a policy.
- Essential to meet Heritage Victoria requirements for key heritage sites and support protection of other significant sites
- Opportunities to improve interpretation of some sites, eg Wreck Bell, and fortifications along coast.

4.3 Development

- Opportunities for sensitively designed development in select areas, eg dining near Queenscliff foreshore, possible accommodation north of Pt Lonsdale lighthouse.

New subdivisions

- Need greater focus on provision of walking access to foreshore from any new residential development (to minimise car use and beachfront parking).
- Need to strictly regulate walking access from subdivisions, caravan parks etc through foreshore.
- Developer contribution for foreshore management is logical since foreshore is major selling feature
- Strong siting and design constraints vital to minimise any visual or other impacts on the foreshore.

4.4 Management, resources and community

Roles, responsibilities, skills

- Opportunity to clarify agency and staff responsibility for all foreshore planning, development and management.
- Consider consolidation of planning and management responsibilities
- Are Council technical skills adequate for the complexities of coastal management?

Priorities

- Many plans/strategies prepared but many actions not implemented.
- Plan needs to identify major priorities for resource allocation. Also indicate cost penalty of not undertaking relevant tasks, eg fencing near Surf Life Saving Club re erosion.
- Consider focus on key 'icon' sites

Maintenance

- Lack of cyclical maintenance and asset replacement program. Some facilities in poor condition.
- Need to consider future maintenance as important issue in site planning
- Past emphasis on grass mowing rather than vegetation management.

Resources

- Low level of resources for development and maintenance (but small rate base).
- Is funding equitable? What proportion of foreshore management should ratepayers, businesses, caravan park users and other visitors pay?
- Consider other revenue sources, eg parking along foreshore, built accommodation (cabins, lodges etc), sale or lease of appropriate surplus land.
- Review lease and camp fees – are commercial rates charged/appropriate?

Sustainable management

- Opportunities to increase sustainability, eg take rubbish home (phase out bins) [some debate re this], use recycled, durable materials etc.

Community involvement

- Positive involvement by volunteers, eg schools, Coast Action/Coastcare, surf club – continue to encourage. Difficult to recruit volunteers – one-off events to be best. SLSC has about 650 members – give them more direction, eg weed control program?
- Increased community use of foreshore/open space an important target - to maximise health and social benefits.

b) Issues for eleven management areas

Initial issues related to the 11 management units identified in the BoQ Draft Land Use Strategy Plan are as follows.

1. Pt Lonsdale Back Beach

- Need to protect sense of naturalness along beach (away from lighthouse)
- Weeds highly invasive
- Link management with adjacent Buckleys Reserve
- Protect Hooded Plovers on beach (3 pairs between Pt Lon and Ocean Grove)
- Access paths steep and of variable quality
- Erosion along 'private' walking tracks, eg near fellows Rd
- Variable facilities, eg signs, seats
- Lookout point above Surf Life Saving Club urgently needs improvement
- Surf Life Saving Club buildings could be regarded as intrusive
- Gun emplacement - protect, interpret?
- Generally good facilities and pleasant setting in adjacent Ganes Reserve

2. Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area

- Approach from north and carpark area unattractive for such an important site – poor arrival experience. Former PMA houses and Toc H area poorly maintained and under-utilised – opportunity for major redevelopment possibly including low-set accommodation, improved parking and visitor facilities and walking/cycling links to lighthouse, town, Rip View etc.
- View of Rip near lighthouse good but marred by vehicles parked next to lighthouse
- Lighthouse and Buckleys Cave presentation and interpretation could be improved
- Poorly defined visitor circulation
- Walking access poorly regulated west of lighthouse and near Toc H
- Attractive views of lighthouse and pier from beach
- Rip View carpark provides very good views but lacks shade and amenity
- Weeds highly invasive – mar walk north of lighthouse and affect biodiversity values

3. Pt Lonsdale Front Beach

- Popular area with paths, good views and range of facilities – close to shops. Opportunity to better integrate shops area and foreshore
- Beach pathway well used but sand can reduce access. Dead-end south of shops with unregulated off-track use
- The three groynes have provided useable beach areas
- Most picnic facilities in poor condition
- Mesh fencing unattractive
- Erosion on exposed slopes near beach
- Also erosion behind bowling club – club has been asked to consider relocation.
- Limited shade and shelter in some areas and along road – other areas offer shade and shelter
- Parking dominates roadsides – many people drive to area – opportunity for improved walking access
- Weeds highly invasive
- Marine NP an added feature
- No apparent replacement program for dying indigenous vegetation
- Royal Park little used off-season

4. Lawrence Rd to Camp Wyuna

- No useable beach next to rock wall, but adjacent path popular
- Lawrence Road carpark poorly designed and maintained
- Golightly Caravan Park inappropriately located (partly on Crown land) and visually intrusive – eroded access track, ugly fencing and weed growth next to foreshore. Long-term leases debatable for such a site. Opportunity to rehabilitate part of area as part of foreshore reserve with coastal walk and views.
- Opportunity to generate beach? – but funding will not be available for groynes
- Incomplete walking links behind dunes
- Weeds highly invasive – mar walks through bushland
- Erosion at scour and along Lovers Walk a major issue – more severe than predicted in coastal processes study (1998)
- Paths poorly signposted
- Camp Wyuna to be substantially upgraded by YMCA (recent lease) – Council to take over management of most bushland
- YMCA plan ecological activities (will cater for 120 students) – opportunity for major weed control/veg management program in area

5. Queenscliff Back Beach

- Important to preserve relatively natural feel of coast here
- Wide beach and attractive coastal views including lighthouse

- Recent beach erosion, possibly seasonal
- Many unregulated and poorly signed access tracks to beach - some tracks on loose sand very difficult for people with disabilities
- Also basic walking track along dunes parallel to beach (Lovers Walk?) – partly fenced, poorly signed, not continuous, eg stops at new housing estate and at Fort
- Weeds highly invasive – mar walks through bushland
- Reserve south west of lighthouse has several rented houses. Currently overseen by Committee of Management headed by DSE.
- No walking access defined near/around Fort – opportunities for a continuous path from front beach to harbour
- Fort area, Ocean View carpark (managed by Council) and Recreation Reserve not integrated in any way – opportunity to master plan area as a unit. Carpark lacks shade and amenity.
- Recreation Reserve largely turns back on foreshore and surroundings, has possibly incompatible combination of uses and variable facilities. Monahan Centre incompatible with coastal location. No shade or seats at playground. Unregulated access to beach leading to erosion.
- Camping in Victoria Park may not be best long-term use of site [some residents object to roads, electricity posts etc]

6. Queenscliff Front Beach

- Need to preserve attractive vistas along beach, to and from jetty etc.
- Variable facilities, access and parking in foreshore reserve.
- Opportunity to define walking paths through parks at Queenscliff?
- Marked build up of sand near pier
- Interpretive signs informative, eg on pier. Opportunity to do more with lifeboat shed and shelter.
- No dining opportunity along foreshore – Planning Scheme identifies 3 possible café sites – Harry's site at Queenscliff, Ocean View carpark and Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area
- Opportunity for info centre – has been proposed
- Walking access to town centre not obvious/inviting

7. Harbour and Boat Ramp

- Important to encourage walking/cycling access between town and harbour development.
- Detailed interpretation near terminal.
- JL Jordan Reserve boat launching area appears adequate. Is Council appropriate manager? Revenue raised all spent within reserve.
- Railway area needs review – appropriate to store old rolling stock etc on foreshore land? Some vans used for accommodation. Future location of Elderly Citizens and Sea Scouts?
- Access to nearby houses/garages also needs review.

8. Swan Bay Foreshore

- Some sections of relatively intact vegetation – protection important
- Popular path along much of foreshore with several viewing points – important to retain/maintain.
- Q L Yacht Club under-utilised because too shallow to launch now – used for social activities. Move to Harbour later? Adjacent open space also appears little used.

9. The Narrows

- DPI Centre enhances area and provides key point of interest – Marine Discovery Centre, attractive walks and vistas across Swan Bay
- Poor stormwater drainage to Swan Bay
- Former school sites on triangle – need to provide good links to open space etc
- Shared path provides popular access along Narrows

10. Murray Rd and Burnt Point

- Relatively intact salt marsh vegetation – protection important
- Access limited to boardwalk
- Housing a dominant feature along Murray Road
- Limited public access to foreshore at Burnt Point. Issue of damage to private land

11. Swan Bay and Islands

- Very high natural values in most areas – protection the key requirement
- Limited user impacts

Appendix 5: Workshop findings

Summary of outcomes of two workshops were held in September, 2005.

1. Workshop at Queenscliff Town Hall

20 people participated plus Borough staff and consultants.

Question	Location	Comments
Things liked best	Pt Lonsdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good access to beaches, front beach, promenade, remnant vegetation • Village contained, good • Views – front beach to lighthouse • Playground brings life • Pt Lon Bowling club part of local history
Issues and challenges	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for sea level/climate change – statewide issue but include in Plan • Encourage Friends groups • Standardise signs throughout • Tea rooms – consider at Rip View, Lighthouse precinct, Ocean View • Aboriginal sites – refer to Council policy in Plan re referrals to Aboriginal groups
	Pt Lonsdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic management, parking • Relation between foreshore and shops • Need designated walking tracks from residential areas to beaches eg Williams Rd, Kirk Rd. Some streets over-vegetated • Sea wall maintenance • Cliff damage between toilets and playground • Need to manage weeds, rubbish and informal tracks • Dog poo bags left • Conflict with bikes on walking tracks • Mgt Plan not implemented because of lack of funds. Review dune stabilisation, access tracks. Need pedestrian path either side of Ocean Rd • Toc H abandoned site an issue. Consider eco park as at St Kilda Bot Gardens? Transfer kids accommodation to Camp Wyuna? • Toc H/Lighthouse area – Do we need to knock down houses? Toilets terrible. Don't want whole lot of buildings there. Weed issues. Opportunity for interpretation. Pathway rationalisation and maintenance issues. Boardwalk Flagstaff to first access track – interpretation opportunity. Henry Hudson (local) knows maritime history • Toc H – develop as lower cost cabins and shelter for short term visitors • Bowling Club has lease to 2008. Well-used, social benefits, keen to retain. DSE won't stop cliff erosion. • Bowling Club – mixed views on long term relocation • Area between Bowling club and Rip View – wasteland, use for parking? Some for, some against. Also issue of informal access tracks near cliff • Parking near shops a problem – reconfigure existing parking? Some strongly against parking fees – could exempt locals and/or limit parking time • More coin in slot telescopes • Attention to weeds/fences Albert St to Williams Rd

Question	Location	Comments
	Narrows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golightly Park ugly – worst of the 50s. Need to change permanent tenancies on Crown land. Need decision on site. Golightly Park – consider ‘proper’ ‘open’ park, eg ballot system Erosion increasing at Dog Beach – Moonahs threatened, public safety issue Myriad of tracks – rationalise (2 groups) Need another groyne ear Lawrence Rd Weeds Burnt Point access/fishing/rubbish/over use issues – often on private land. Fence out part and add inlet to Marine NP (liaise with DSE/PV). Parking problems in Summer – Fraser St and Henry St Lopping of vegetation by residents with houses near dune Swan Island stormwater issues – opportunities for wetlands to improve quality DPI carpark – screen with vegetation. Add boardwalk to Murray Rd
	Q’cliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain foreshore Rip View – Black Lighthouse. Remove stormwater pipe Rip View. Sign – dangerous undertow Citizens park – revegetate with Moonahs etc Revisit hot sea baths idea, relocate info centre and playground Front beach under used – maybe due to heavy seaweed occurrence Opportunities to enhance foreshore vegetation Need firm decision on tree species for Princess/ Citizens parks. Also need tracks for prams etc Boardwalks and walkways desirable – with due regard for heritage Restate protection of archaeological sites Pier – need clear guidelines for protection. Important to protect Sedimentation in Cut – made worse by Ferry running engine Sand Island needs protection of natural values
Highest priority tasks/issues	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better pedestrian links including continuous, managed coastal path – including access for disabled/elderly Erosion/sand deposition – deaths at Dog Beach over time – need fences, path at top only Weeds threatening biodiversity, eg in Narrows – maintenance important Stormwater treatment, eg near railway and old yacht club Golightly – compromise with cabins – no gated, exclusive use Toc H – need very careful development, eg amphitheatre Interpretive signs – but not too many Parking Pt Lon shops, Henry/Fraser Sts Impact of private development on coast – houses overlooking, paths to beach, tree lopped, privatisation of govt land

2. Workshop at Pt Lonsdale PS Hall

10 people participated plus Borough staff and consultants.

Question	Location	Comments
Things liked best	Pt Lonsdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground, Bowling Club, mixed facilities, drawcard to lighthouse area.
	Narrows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DPI Centre, Lovers Walk, Moonah woodland, Swan Bay potential
	Queenscliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic buildings, piers, environment, museums, clubs, beach facilities, railway, ferry, picnic area near Pilots.
Issues and challenges	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment degraded - need systematic approach and good maintenance of foreshore reserves. Continuous coastal path strongly supported.

Question	Location	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem with privatisation of public land – Harbour, Crows Nest, HS site, Golightly. Also impact of big houses overlooking coast. • Manage walkways to sustain surrounding areas. Seek advise from Aboriginal groups.
	Pt Lonsdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave Bowling Club as is. • Rip View carpark could have sensitive coffee shop. • Any development near Lighthouse needs to be sensitive. • Toc H area needs careful development, eg amphitheatre as at Fairfield Park on Yarra. • Surf Life Saving Club – need proper parking – keep cars off side of road in summer (dangerous). • Worst features – seats (for disabled etc), bins, toilet location, cycling track disappears, Toc H degraded. • Ricketts Point Tearoom would work well in lighthouse area. • Groynes need review and maintenance.
	Narrows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yacht Club can't launch there anymore – too shallow. Consider canoes, windsurfing. • Stop fishing south of Burnt Point – include in Marine National Park. Serious/unpleasant impacts of trespassing on private land on Burnt Point – needs action. • Lg trees obscuring view of Swan Bay. Some residents want to maintain views – coastal management focus on tree planting. • Parking for DPI centre should be at west end leaving grassed area. Weed control in remnant vegetation also important. • Emphasise DPI centre. Make accessible for general walking. • Maintain coastal reserve, control weeds. • Dog beach erosion – need to restrict access down dunes. • Safety issue at Scour – need path at top only • Golightly – no housing – retain caravans with path on beach side. • Golightly – compromise with cabins of varying costs – particularly lower costs. • Lawrence Rd carpark – tidy up, rearrange seating.
	Q'cliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old carriages unsightly – clean up. Turn workshops into a museum. • Need planting around Coast Guard station at boat ramps. • Harbour – must have coastal path access through here. Will be loss of vegetation. • Princess/Citizen parks – need path along cliff edge with defined beach access. • Remove dredging gear from near Ferry Terminal. • Harry's Kiosk and Survey Office – reuse or remove. • Coastal path needs to go through Fort to be continuous. Seal part for wheelchairs. Continue all the way to Pt Lonsdale. • Weeds around Shortlands Bluff. • Gun emplacements need restoration. • Worst features: Ocean View carpark needs facelift, bad toilet (wharf), lack of playground, poor seating, unattractive town, bins and bike racks. • Victoria Park – protect as botanic park, or some prefer seasonal or year round caravan use. • Close some paths to beach – excess tracks. • Weeds everywhere. • Need more tables, bbq's eg near Cottage by the Sea.
Highest priority tasks/issues	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coastal management and facilities. • Better pathways/access.



Appendix R

**Council Report Coastal Management Plan -
Ordinary Meeting 19 September 2006**

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 19 SEPTEMBER 2006

4.3 QUEENSLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

SUMMARY

The Borough of Queenscliffe, DSE, Parks Victoria and other Committees have delegated responsibility for the management of Foreshore Reserves on behalf of the Crown (Department of Sustainability and Environment). The development of a Coastal management Plan is a requirement under the Coastal Management Act.

The Coastal Management Plan has been developed in accordance with visions of the community, relevant organisations, existing strategies and guidelines established by Council, the State Government and other relevant governing bodies.

This report recommends that Council adopt the Coastal Management Plan and submit it to the Minister for Environment for approval. Subject to approval by the Minister, the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan will be progressively implemented through the budget and assistance from external grants. Many of the recommendations within the Plan will also be subject to planning approval and further community consultation processes on the detail.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (1) adopt the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan;
- (2) submit the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan to DSE for approval by the Minister for Environment in accordance with the Coastal Management Act (1995);
- (3) subject to approval by the Minister, the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan is progressively implemented through budget submissions and assistance from external grants;
- (4) note that many of the recommendations within the Plan will be subject to planning approval and community consultation processes.

Moved: Cr. Semmens

Seconded: Cr. Doull

MOTION

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

AGENDA FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 19 SEPTEMBER 2006

4.3 QUEENSCLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

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BACKGROUND

Coastal Management Plans

A Coastal Management Plan is a public document, approved by the Minister for Environment. The plan establishes an agreement between a Committee of Management, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the community as to how an area of the Borough of Queenscliffe will be managed. A coastal management plan must set out the land management requirements for an area and includes a three year business plan detailing proposed works for the site.

A Coastal Management Plan provides direction to the committee in terms of actions and activities to take place on the reserve, planned expenditure and maintenance requirements.

The main objectives of a Coastal Management and business plan are to:

- Provide a vision for the management of the reserve for the future in accordance with the *Victorian Coastal Strategy*;
- Identify the environmental, heritage and recreational values of the area;
- Set objectives for the protection of these values and strategies to protect and enhance them;
- Provide a prioritised list of actions and a time frame in which to achieve the actions;
- identify resources and/or possible sources of income /grants to complete priority actions; and

4.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

4.3 QUEENSLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Cont'd)

- Define the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the management of the reserve and implementation of the actions.

The Coastal Management Plan will be used to guide subsequent development of more detailed master plans and works for the area and provide support for future bids for funds from Government Agencies and other funding sources.

The Borough of Queenscliffe together with Government Departments responsible for the future management and development of all coastal Crown Land with the Borough wish to develop an on-going prioritised Coastal Management Plan.

Project Objective

The purpose of the project was set by Council and the Department of Sustainability and Environment to provide a Coastal Management Plan to establish up to date management guidelines actions and priorities to encourage and guide an integrated approach for the future management, use and development of the Queenscliffe foreshore reserve.

The main objectives of the management plan taken from the project brief are to:

- *Provide a vision for the management of the reserves in the future in accordance with the Victorian Coastal Strategy.*
- *Identify the environmental, heritage and recreational values of the area.*
- *Set objectives for the protection of these values and strategies to protect and enhance them*
- *Provide a prioritised list of actions and a time frame in which to do them to achieve the objectives.*
- *Identify resources or possible sources of income /grants to do priority actions through the development of a Business Plan.*
- *Define the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the management of the reserve and implementation of the actions.*
- *To engage the Borough community, businesses and other stakeholders in the process by pursuing an inclusive approach with opportunities for input through its preparation.*

DISCUSSION

Key goals identified

The draft Coastal Management Plan identifies eight main goals in response to the main issues facing the coast:

1. Build skills, resources and partnerships to implement the Plan
2. Develop a continuous coastal path.
3. Undertake systematic weed control and enhance Indigenous vegetation at key conservation sites

4.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

4.3 QUEENSLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Cont'd)

4. Manage and improve recreation facilities and accommodation and ensure public safety
5. Rationalise access paths and minimise soil erosion
6. Facilitate an upgrade of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse area (photo below)
7. Plan and implement an upgrade of the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff area
8. Progressively improve other areas

Priority Actions

The Plan focuses on identifying the highest priority tasks which can make a real difference to the coast by conserving important natural and cultural values, and provide improved recreation opportunities to meet changing community needs. Key actions include:

- *Employ a foreshore manager to develop and establish appropriate financial and management systems for the whole foreshore and oversee the implementation of the management plan.*
- *Establish a Foreshore Advisory Committee to involve the community and assist the Borough in implementing the management plan.*
- *Ensure revenue from caravan parks and camping areas is available for use on Crown land foreshores throughout the Borough, and increase Council and grant funding for coastal management.*
- *Initiate transfer of management of the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Shortlands Bluff Reserve to the Borough, and consider transfer of VicTrack land on Swan Bay.*
- *Undertake urgent works to improve safety at key locations.*
- *Support urgent remedial erosion control works at Dog Beach (the Narrows Beach).*
- *Join up existing coastal paths and upgrade existing sections to create a continuous walking path from Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse to Queenscliff Pier.*
- *Commence a systematic weed control program by initially establishing three demonstration areas at key conservation sites near Camp Wyuna, Pt Lonsdale lighthouse, and Swan Bay.*

- *Upgrade key paths and recreation facilities and settings at the Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club lookout, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach, Golightly Park Crown land and Princess/Citizens parks as models for future upgrading of other popular recreation sites.*
- *Revise caravan park layouts to improve amenity, increase the diversity of sites including cabins, and increase the proportion of short-term sites, while retaining overall site numbers.*

4.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

4.3 QUEENSCLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Cont'd)

- *Undertake major upgrading of the Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area and Queenscliff Recreation Reserve/Shortlands Bluff area.*

The high priority actions are:

- *Employ a foreshore manager, funded at least in part from foreshore revenue, to develop and establish appropriate financial and management systems for the whole foreshore and oversee the implementation of the management plan.*
- *Establish a Foreshore Advisory Committee with appropriate terms of reference to assist the Borough as Committee of Management in implementing the management plan.*
- *Change budget arrangements to ensure revenue from caravan parks and other foreshore activities is available for use on Crown land foreshores throughout the Borough for implementing this management plan.*
- *Initiate the transfer of management responsibility for the Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Shortlands Bluff Reserve from DSE to the Borough. Investigate possible Council management of VicTrack land on Swan Bay adjacent to the rail alignment (subject to resolution of a management agreement and funding arrangements).*
- *Prepare a detailed design and schedule of works for a Pt Lonsdale-Queenscliff coastal walk and undertake sufficient works for the path to be opened as a safe and accessible route.*
- *Develop and implement an ongoing program to establish three weed control areas at The Narrows, near Pt Lonsdale lighthouse and on Swan Bay and progressively extend into adjacent areas. Ensure careful planning, strong leadership, adequate resourcing and extensive volunteer education and involvement. Consider a third site on Swan Bay after establishment of initial sites.*
- *Develop and use a style guide with appropriate designs for seats, tables, fences, signs, bollards and other foreshore design elements.*
- *Upgrade key recreation sites at Pt Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club lookout, Pt Lonsdale Front Beach and Princess/Citizens parks as models for future coastal management.*
- *Progressively prepare detailed master plans for caravan parks with the aim of revising caravan park layouts to improve amenity, increase the diversity of sites (including cabins), and increase the proportion of short-term sites.*
- *Develop and implement a risk management strategy to identify and rapidly deal with safety issues. Include high priority actions from relevant reviews including the Life Saving Victoria report (2004), and arborist and cliff safety reports.*

4.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

4.3 QUEENSLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Cont'd)

- *Retain paths shown on figures 2-4 and close, fence and revegetate surplus tracks created for private beach access. Construct fences to prevent unregulated access through coastal vegetation. (Give highest priority to surplus track closures in areas of high biodiversity value.)*
- *Fence out the eroded sand cliff at Dog Beach (the Narrows Beach) and implement the findings of the proposed DSE erosion study.*

Implementation

The Plan includes an action program with indicative costs, timing and responsibilities has been developed to assist in implementing the plan, once approved. These would be subject to Council budgetary processes, further community consultation on the detail and planning approval processes.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council established a steering committee to bring together those organizations responsible for the foreshore areas with a view to agreeing on an on-going prioritized Coastal Management Plan.

The steering committee and project team has reviewed background information, inspected all parts of the coast, interviewed interested stakeholders and run two community workshops. Important issues have been reviewed and debated with the steering committee and Councillors.

The plan was exhibited for a period of six weeks. A total of 42 submissions were received as follows:

Government

1. Parks Victoria
2. DSE
3. Dept Victorian Communities, Sport and Recreation

Community-based organisations

4. Point Lonsdale Bowls Club
5. Point Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club
6. Point Lonsdale Civic Association
7. Queenscliffe Community Association
8. Queenscliffe Heritage Committee
9. Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Mgt Committee
10. Swan Bay Environment Association

Commercial interests

11. Queenscliff Lonsdale Tourism

12. Ocean View Kiosk lessee

4.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

4.3 QUEENSCLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Cont'd)

Personal

13. Kate Taylor
14. C O'Dowd and L Rowe
15. Gavin Hodge
16. Anon, Pt Lonsdale
17. Anon, Pt Lonsdale
18. Ben Hawkins, Vicki Beale,
19. Elizabeth McDonald
20. Graeme Martin
21. David Kenwood
22. V and A McKenzie
23. Trudi Toyne
24. Lauren Rickards,
25. Joan Lindros
26. Tony Schott

Golightly Park users

27. Golightly Caravan Park Residents Assoc.
28. Helen Brauns
29. Margaret Ruddick
30. Paul Lacava Monica Dillon
31. The Smith Family
32. K Watson / R Watson
33. Valerie Barclay, John Rabusin
34. EM and GW Newlands
35. J and I McKay
36. Annette Inglis
37. J and B Osborne
38. G and J Weston
39. B and J Rice
40. Leigh Alexander
41. Jenny Wiltshire
42. Peter Skinner and Family

A wide range of views were expressed in submissions. Some respondents provided comments on specific sections of the Draft Plan while other comments were more general. Some responses included detailed argument for the position put forward; others were brief with only one or two issues raised.

There was general support for many of the initiatives in the plan including improved pathways, weed and erosion control and improved amenity and facilities along the foreshore.

4.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

4.3 QUEENSCLIFFE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Cont'd)

The most contentious issues included resources, and accommodation - particularly the future use of Golightly Caravan Park, and the introduction of cabins. Several respondents expressed appreciation of the planning process and the initiative taken to develop the plan.

The steering committee discussed responses at its meeting of 19 July 2006 and agreed to a series of changes to the report. These changes have been incorporated in the final plan prepared for Council.

The following table summarises the submissions received and responses:

Draft Plan section	Sub No.	Stakeholder comment / issue	Steering committee comments
Government agencies			
Goal 1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support manager position to help implement plan 	Note
Goal 2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say more about main access points and improving/limiting access 	Adequately covered – see text, figures
Goal 3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support pest plant actions near Swan Bay 	Revise text
Goal 5	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil run off into Swan Bay a problem – constructed paths will help 	Note
5.8.6	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PV does not want to manage boat ramp PV long term office location not resolved 	Modify text Note
Goals	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggests changes to plan structure – goals 2,3,6,7,8 queried 	Rename Goal 3
5.1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vital, positive goal. Support foreshore management as a business unit (detailed comments provided) Support effective management of leases with appropriate rentals 	Note Note Note
5.2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments re route of coastal path 	No change
5.4.1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSE supports long term relocation of Pt Lon bowling club (though no potential site identified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSE does not support current Skatepark location 	Revise text Revise text
5.4.2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more rationale for built accommodation/restaurants etc 	Modify text
5.5	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dog beach erosion played down – incorporate SKM findings in final plan 	Issue discussed and action included
5.8.3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSE supports long term relocation of CFA 	Modify text

Draft Plan section	Sub No.	Stakeholder comment / issue	Steering committee comments
5.1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSE supports BoQ managing VicTrack land – but VicTrack’s response? 	Note
5.7	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say more about Victoria Park and bowls/tennis 	Note – to be covered in proposed master plan
5.8.3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Omit SLSC proposal for facility near Lawrence Rd 	Omit
5.8.6	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More actively seek consolidation of activities/removal of buildings at Q’cliff – survey storage, yacht clubhouse, sea scouts etc 	Modify text
5.7	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support importance placed on recreation in plan. Master plan for Rec Reserve/Monahan Centre a high priority. Say more about Feasibility Study and link to CMP. 	Note (leave to master plan)
Community-based organisations			
5.4.1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congratulations on report – in general agreement with. Hope plan will provide a common course of action. Pleased with proposal for 21 yr lease renewal. Shared parking possible in some cases – but often busy. Cliff erosion – need to fence off and take remedial action. 	Note
5.1 5.4.3 5.5 5.8.1 etc	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully support foreshore manager position Correct naming of Pt Lonsdale SLSC and facilities. Club has approx 650 members (p 66). Members don’t have time for weed control work. Strongly support new LSV safety signage (p 35) – especially Pt Lon area. Also need to extend audit to cover Q’cliff front beach and Swan Bay. Strongly support upgrading track at Pt Lon back beach and beach access ramp – very urgent 	Note Correct/modify text and priorities
Overall Goals 1-8	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general support key goals priorities and actions Need dominant foreshore manager – is BoQ adequately equipped/funded? Support coastal path Want replanting when vegetation removed Do not sell public assets on or adjoining foreshore. Is spending on caravan parks etc realistic? Streetscape changes at Pt Lon need community support. DSE/BoQ must support stable tenancy of bowling club. Need numerous paths and cater for older demographic – motorised buggies etc. Limit soil erosion and improve beaches eg Bight Beach. Need to develop a traffic and parking plan for BoQ. Support fresh approach at Pt Lon lighthouse – but no long term tenancy At Rec Reserve, design for public use/pleasure – not just upgrade 	Note

Draft Plan section	Sub No.	Stakeholder comment / issue	Steering committee comments
Sections 5, 6	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very detailed response. Supports many recommendations but suggests specific changes: • Funding should be largely from DSE • Consider rising sea levels • Cabins/cottages should not be introduced in Royal and Victoria parks - concerned about impacts on parks/nearby residents. Golightly should not be sold though cabins/cottages ok. Remove old vans and annexes (Rec Reserve). • Employment of foreshore manager not supported • Suggest very high priority for master plan for Rec Reserve area (with variations), addition of Lakers Cutting to Marine NP, implementation of Stormwater Strategy • Consider café/restaurant at Rip View or Ocean View carpark – not Harrys site. • Demolish storage shed next to Fort on Hesse St. • Move carpark at DPI Marine Centre • Consider walking link from Pt Lonsdale to Ocean Grove. 	<p>Note/revise text</p> <p>Review comments re Rec Reserve area in proposed master plan</p>
Various	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests greater recognition of BoQ Heritage Policy and Overlay provisions in Planning Scheme. • Suggests higher priority for Q/cliffe pier works [PV role], removal of sand and vegetation near pier, retention of Harry's, and clarification of PV and BoQ roles re front beach. Also: • Referral of future signs / interpretive material to Heritage Advisor / Heritage Committee • No introduction of cabins into public parks and coastal reserves. • Planning Permit be required for all foreshore works • BoQ be made coordinating authority for all coastal works • New Foreshore Manager work closely with Heritage Advisor 	<p>Add text re Heritage Policy and heritage protection.</p>
Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 8	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreshore manager position should be on Council staff and have skills to manage for environmental conservation and recreation • Continuous coastal path not as important as repairing/ closing/rehabilitating existing tracks – change priority of action 5/27. Protect Coastal Moonah Woodland areas along track at the Narrows. • Add 'protect' to goal 3. Prefer second area for weed control to be Swan Bay foreshore or other Coastal Moonah areas (not Pt Lonsdale). Also maintaining previous weed control work. Refer to Trengove's report re Narrows site. Modify action 3/8. • BoQ should foster work of Friends etc; foreshore manager should seek grants • Acknowledge work of SBEC – nursery propagation and weed work at Swan Bay • Add more on high natural values surrounding BoQ – section 2 	<p>Modify text re increased priority for rehabilitation of minor tracks; weed areas etc</p> <p>Add third weed control site (Swan Bay)</p>
2.7	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change a key threat – discuss implications and possible actions – eg councils combine to monitor, educate community re reducing emissions, reduce Council emissions, replant dunes 	<p>Add information/action on climate change</p>

Commercial interests			
5.8.5	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree with overall plan but would like higher priority for upgrade of Q' cliff foreshore – improve facilities in Princess/Citizen parks, improve access to beach, clear seaweed (and sell?), improve parking, redevelop Harry's site as café/toilets, reinstate hot sea baths, relocate visitor info centre to brick building in Citizens park, conserve pier. Identify Govt funding sources/programs (list provided) 	Minor revisions to text.
5.7	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Ocean View carpark/kiosk area eg shelter for kiosk, tables, seats, toilets etc. Consider single combined building. 	Consider in proposed master plan
Personal			
5.4	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Against sale of Golightly – has benefited area 	Note
5.6	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support proposal to upgrade Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area with improved approach, low-cost accommodation, tearooms, paths, weed control and conservation of heritage buildings. Could raise revenue in short term by renting ex-PMA houses as holiday accommodation, and allowing some vans etc in Toc H area until developed. Also consider community hall in Toc H area. Could lease area to commercial operator. Happy to talk to Council re opportunities. 	Note. Consider further prior to proposed EOI process for area.
6, 5.2 etc	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Go ahead and do it.' Enthusiastically support plan – particularly active recreation provision. Recognise different uses and needs of pathway users –provide range of paths, and use-specific pathway maps. Consult with path users re details eg signs, taps, alignments. Make sure advisory committee not dominated by clubs. 	Note. Revise text.
5	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chase Govt funds Continuous path and vegetation management a high priority Deal with erosion near end of Laker Drive Provide for walkers coming from Rail Trail 	Note/minor revisions to text.
5	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 1 very important, but do with community. Coastal path good but ongoing weed control needed Affordable accommodation supported Soil erosion at Dog beach and Santa Casa big problem Sport seems to get first bite of cherry (re Rec Reserve upgrade) Far too little coastal management by Council in past – get cracking. Need more rangers. 	Note
5	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fantastic to ride bike Q' cliff to Pt Lonsdale – and link with Rail Trail Upgrade path from Ocean View carpark to beach Facelift of Rec Reserve area supported – new seats, tables, planting etc 	Note

	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-time resident and regular walker in area. Impressed with thoroughness and length of plan. • Interested in continuous coastal walk – but dog walking and cycling not compatible – need separate walking opportunities. • Royal Park popular with locals for walking – sheltered in bad weather. Limit camping period. Not the right location for cabins, and these would have to be self contained. • Toc H area suitable for village style development, with upgrading of area. • Golightly also suitable for village type development as public access has been denied for years • Very important to retain bowling club in Pt Lonsdale (high social value) – Ganes Reserve for families and insufficient parking. • Is Pt Lonsdale urban or a village? Against parking fees at Pt Lonsdale. Favour some tree pruning for safe roadside walking. 	Note/revise text re bowling club
5	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal path not necessary in some areas • Weed control a must • Safety a must. Recreation facilities should be funded by clubs • Rec Reserve upgrade not urgent • Burnt Point being ruined by fishers. Rezone Laker Rd to marine park 	Note/revise text re Lakers Cutting
5	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very detailed letter. Supports many initiatives (discussed in detail), but not all. • Prefer Enviro and Conservation Mgr to Foreshore Mgr – concerned about exploitation of parks. • Against cabins in Royal and Victoria parks and reserves – high impact and privatisation. Sale of Golightly would push cabins etc into other reserves. Expansion of camping period would take away from public use, and damage areas. • Consider relocating Dog Beach to foreshore near Ferry. • Against parking fees or limits at main carparks. • Support Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area upgrade and café etc at back of Rip View carpark • Move DPI carpark away from Highway • Consider climate change actions 	Note/add text re climate change
5	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliment Council on review of previous studies and down to earth proposals in plan. But concerns about funding these. More visitors than residents in busy periods so State Govt should contribute. Using coastal income along foreshore long overdue. • Give priority to continuous path and weed control. • Question need for foreshore mgr. • Opposed to cabins at Royal Park and Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area. Barwon Heads type buildings quite attractive – maybe ok at Lighthouse. Low occupancy rate in Barwon Heads buildings (?) – trial Toc H buildings first. • Need to spend more in camping areas, not divert funds. 	Note/provide more budget details in plan.
5	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to cater for older people, and families with children • Support retention of skate park at present location – expand for youth eg extend facilities, BMX, adventure activities, permanent toilets etc. • Consider Indigenous and cultural heritage significance eg along coastal path and at Pt Lonsdale lighthouse 	Note/add text re heritage values

5.2	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks for your efforts in protecting Queenscliffe's heritage/amenities. • Concerned that runners are overlooked. They enjoy narrow sandy coastal tracks through tea tree. Concerned about discussion of shared paths for walkers and bike riders – runners not considered. • Need to deal with erosion at Dog Beach. 	Note
Overall	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General support to preparation of plan but inadequate vision and planning. Goals acceptable. • Need budget before considering Foreshore Mgr and works. Caravan park revenue should be used on foreshore • Strongly oppose sale of Golightly land. Also against extension of camping or cabins on public or council land. Need an accommodation strategy and future need investigation. Investigate sites for caravan park/cabins on private land. • Need to consider/discuss rising sea levels. • Fully support upgrading walking tracks, including sea side of Fort and Rec Reserve • Inappropriate to develop Harry's site as restaurant • Against public/private development of Pt Lonsdale lighthouse area • Need economic analysis of cost of BoQ taking over mgt of extra Crown land. • Against parking fees or group charges. • Retain sporting grounds • More appropriate beach for dogs? • Include Lakers Cutting in MP • Suggests Friends groups to remove weeds and maintain parks – working bees v productive 	Note/add more budget information and cover climate change and Lakers Cutting status
5.4.2	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disgusted with BoQ campaign re sale of Golightly. Council needs cash. Cabins expensive to build. Area near beach no longer a primary dune. 	Note
Golightly Park users/supporters			
5.4.2	27-42	<p>Series of comments made in total of 16 responses. Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of CMP supported – but not proposals for Golightly. • Park used for caravanning for a long time – makes major contribution to local community. • BoQ gets about \$200,000 from park each year but returns little. • Crown land section has been used for a long time – is an authorised use • Plan contradicts recent Govt caravanning policy • Dune area not unsightly and in good condition – photo misleading • Surplus Ed Dept land could be added to park. • Park does need an upgrade and landscape improvements • Claimed that local community support retention of park. • Mix of accommodation types, and upgrading of area, supported (by some) • Proposed walking path and lookout at Golightly not supported. 	Note

DISCUSSION

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The adoption and implementation of Coastal Management Plan will have financial implications for the Borough. The day-to-day maintenance of facilities and environmental works are funded by income generated by leases, the budget and grant funding. Currently, the Borough's contractors, under the maintenance contract, undertake day-to-day foreshore maintenance works.

The Plan provides a prioritised list of realistic actions required to improve and enhance the Queenscliffe foreshore areas. The full range of actions is not expected to be entirely funded by the Borough, and requires partnerships with other responsible agencies and grants. Figures estimated in the Plan are for a number of projects that will span over a number of years, subject to available funding.

Important capital works recommended in the Plan will be sought through the normal Council budget process according to priority. The Plan will also provide justification and support to grant applications under various Commonwealth and State funding programs, which usually forms an important criterion of grant applications.

ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY/RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The significant flora and fauna values of coastal land will continue to degrade unless actions recommended in this plan are implemented. Management recommendations contained within environmental policies and legislation.

Indirect social benefits will be derived from improved environmental and recreational conditions including enhanced management practices of the reserve from the conservation of biodiversity and habitat values.

CONCLUSION

Adoption of the Plan will provide a guide for the future management and development of Queenscliffe Foreshore Reserves. Staged implementation of the actions in the plan over a number of years will protect and enhance the environmental and recreational values of these reserves.

The Plan provides guidance and direction for the day-to-day management of the reserves. The articulates locally focused management strategies for foreshores, consistent with the government and local strategies.

It is recommended that Council adopt the Plan and submit the Plan for approval. Many of the recommendations within the Plan will also be subject to planning approval and further community consultation processes on the detail.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (1) adopt the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan;
- (2) submit the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan to DSE for approval by the Minister for Environment in accordance with the Coastal Management Act (1995);
- (3) subject to approval by the Minister, the Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan is progressively implemented through budget submissions and assistance from external grants;
- (4) note that many of the recommendations within the Plan will be subject to planning approval and community consultation processes.

Natalie Walker

MANAGER, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT



Appendix S

**Council Report Lighthouse Reserves
Minutes Ordinary Meeting 18 October 2011**

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**



15.3 Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve & Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve

File: QG058-03-02

Report Author: Chief Executive Officer

Purpose

This report provides information to Council on the future management of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and the actions taken to attract funding to progress future development of both sites.

Background

The Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve (Shortlands Bluff) and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve (Toc H) are currently managed by a Department of Sustainability and Environment appointed Crown land Committee of Management. In recent years the Borough of Queenscliffe Council has had one officer representative on this Committee that comprises DSE officers only.

In 2010/11 DSE formally approached the Borough of Queenscliffe Council to requesting Council to consider taking responsibility as the manager of both the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. The action by DSE to consider appointing the Borough Council as Committee of Management is consistent with the commentary and findings in a range of relevant reports including:

- Point Lonsdale Lighthouse & Foreshore Reserve Management Plan 2002
- Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan 2006
- Queenscliff Recreation Reserve Masterplan 2008

Council has considered their role in the future management of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve on several occasions as part of Assembly briefings and workshops during 2010 and 2011. In relation to the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Council has been keen to take on the role of Committee of Management given the status of the relatively unencumbered site, consistency with Council's current role in tourism accommodation provision and the potential for future development of this site. This was recognised in the 2010-2013 Council Plan and the Business & Tourism 2011/12 Priority Actions that states '*Develop a Masterplan for tourism accommodation development at the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve (Shortlands Bluff).*'

In terms of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Council discussions to date have recognised the complexity of this site in relation to indigenous heritage, historical buildings, existing navigational uses, vegetation values and scale of the site. In this context the Council has acknowledged the need for extensive planning to determine the best future use of the lighthouse reserve. In the absence of funding from the State and or Federal Government Council has been more circumspect in relation to its future role as Committee of Management.



This is also reflected in the 2010-2013 Council Plan and the Business & Tourism 2011/12 Priority Actions that states *'Investigate funding opportunities for development of Toc H and Shortlands Bluff, working with the Department of Sustainability and Environment to implement the Borough of Queenscliffe's development priorities.'*

Discussion

In recent months consultations between officers from the Department of Sustainability & Environment, Regional Development Victoria and the Borough of Queenscliffe Council has resulted in identifying common goals regarding the future development of the two lighthouse reserves as well as State Government funding opportunities that would enable Council to commission a future plan for both sites.

Consistent with the priority actions in the Council Plan officers have submitted an initial funding proposal seeking \$55K from Regional Development Victoria's 'Planning for Tomorrow Program'. This project proposal is consistent with the presentation to the Assembly workshop of Council on 22 September 2011 and is framed around the following components.

Project Description

The project involves preparation of detailed concept plans and feasibility analysis and costing for accommodation and related development at the Queenscliff lighthouse Reserve and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Project Objectives:

Specifically, the project will:

- Review the indigenous heritage considerations and vegetation values of the lighthouse reserves;
 - Clarify and plan the preferred use of the lighthouse reserves moving forward, ensuring the highest and best use of these sites from a Council, community and stakeholder perspective;
 - Apply sustainability principles to the future use and management of the site.
 - Build upon the attractiveness and versatility of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale as key regional tourist destinations;
 - Test and evaluate the financial viability of the Borough of Queenscliffe Council developing the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve;
 - Develop Expression of Interest documentation for the Point Lonsdale and, if appropriate, the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve;
 - Enable a hand over of the sites from the Department of Sustainability and Environment to the Borough of Queenscliffe as land manager.
-



Principles underpinning the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve

- High Quality Accommodation based on sustainable design that takes advantage of the viewsapes and the privacy and seclusion of the site;
- Promotes walking and cycling and minimises road infrastructure on the site and seeks to locate carparking at the periphery or 'off-site';
- Takes advantage of the proximity and seeks to develop links to the adjacent lighthouses and Fort (and this may be incorporated into the design);
- Protects existing indigenous vegetation and promotes new indigenous plantings;
- Considers redesign of the Rip View carpark and the future use of the 'Bullring'.

Principles underpinning the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve

- Protect the indigenous heritage of the site;
- Protect and enhance existing indigenous vegetation;
- Maintains public access;
- Achieves environmental sustainable design leadership including achieving a balance of open space, vegetation and tourism accommodation related facilities;
- Achieves a range of accommodation outcomes including group and cluster accommodation up to 2 storey;
- Minimise road infrastructure on site and promote walking and cycling;

Total Cost:

It is envisaged that the Development Plan for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve would cost in the vicinity of \$100K.

Council Plan

The 'Business & Tourism' strategic direction of the 2010 – 2013 Council Plan includes 2011/12 Business Plan Priority Actions that relate to the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. The relevant priority actions are to:

- *'Develop a Masterplan for tourism accommodation development at the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve (Shortlands Bluff);*
 - *Investigate funding opportunities for development of Toc H and Shortlands Bluff, working with the Department of Sustainability and Environment to implement the Borough of Queenscliffe's development priorities.'*
-



Financial

DSE is currently in the process of formally appointing the Borough Council as the Committee of Management responsible for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. Initial indications are that DSE would direct approximately \$80K to Council as part of the transfer of Committee of Management. Council would be in a position to allocate some of these funds to future planning for the development of the lighthouse reserves and to annual maintenance.

A project proposal has been submitted to Regional Development Victoria seeking \$55K towards the Development Plan for Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Council has allocated \$25K in the 2011/12 budget towards a masterplan for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve.

Social

The Development Plan for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve presents a unique opportunity to develop two outstanding areas of the Borough of Queenscliffe that have been severely neglected in recent years. The Development Plan is a critical first step in reinstating and enhancing the significant open space values of the two lighthouse reserves and the opportunities for sustainable recreation activities and social interaction.

Environmental

The Development Plan for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve presents a unique opportunity to develop two outstanding areas of the Borough of Queenscliffe that have been severely neglected in recent years. The Development Plan is a critical first step in reinstating and enhancing the significant environmental values of the two lighthouse reserves.

Risk Management

The key risk for Council centres on success in accessing funding from the State Government to undertake the Development Plans for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. Significant goodwill has been demonstrated between officers from the Department of Sustainability & Environment, Regional Development Victoria and the Borough Council. This provides a level of confidence in moving forward.



Conclusion

The Development Plan for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve presents a unique opportunity to develop two outstanding areas of the Borough of Queenscliffe that have been severely neglected in recent years.

The Development Plan is a critical first step in reinstating and enhancing the significant environmental values of the two lighthouse reserves.

The Development Plan will also provide a detailed feasibility analysis to guide Council's decisions regarding future investment and role in developing and managing tourism accommodation at the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and tender processes associated with future use of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Councillors: Burgess/Butler

That Council accepts the role of Committee of Management of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve subject to securing funding from the State Government to undertake a Development Plan (as outlined in this report) for the two lighthouse reserves.

Carried Unanimously



Appendix T

**Council Report Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve -
Minutes Ordinary Meeting 22 Oct 2014**

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**



13. LOCAL ECONOMY

13.1 Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve

File:	QG058-03-08
Report Author:	General Manager Planning and Infrastructure
Strategic Objective:	A vibrant local economy
Portfolio:	Local Economy
Portfolio Holder:	Cr Graham J Christie, JP

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the stage 2 consultation outcomes following public exhibition of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper, and to seek Council's approval to undertake a detailed financial and feasibility analysis of Option 2 (landscape improvements) and Option 3 (Eco accommodation).

Background

Council was appointed by the State Government as the Committee of Management for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve in November 2012. Not long after, as a result of securing project funding and advertising a project tender, Council appointed the consulting firm Planisphere to identify options for the future use of the reserve.

A Discussion Paper in relation to the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve, including options for its future use was prepared by the consultants. At its 26 March 2014 ordinary meeting, Council resolved to approve release of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document for the purposes of community consultation.

The Discussion Paper was made available on Council's website and a Project Bulletin was mailed to all ratepayers (including non-residents) with an attached survey inviting, among other things, respondents to rank the Design Principles and three Concept Plan Options for the site. An online version of the survey was also made available on Council's website. A Community Open House session was held in Queenscliff on Saturday 26 April for community members to become further informed about the contents of the Discussion Papers, ask questions of clarification and to express their views to Council and the project consultants (Planisphere). Feedback was invited until Friday 16th May.



Key Issues

- Results of the community consultation process.
- Recommendation by the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group in relation to which option should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
- Recommendation by the project consultants, Planisphere, in relation to which concept option should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.

Discussion

Community Consultation Outcomes

Feedback in relation to the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper was received in two forms;

1. Survey responses (320 surveys)
2. Submissions (10 submissions)

Nine people/organisations provided both a survey and a submission. In all, feedback was received from 321 individual people/organisations.

A detailed summary of the consultation outcomes is contained within Planisphere's 'Queenscliff Consultation Summary' report (see **Appendix 1**).

Project Reference Group Recommendation

The Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group met on Friday 5 September 2014. Having earlier been presented with the results of the community consultation process, each of the five Project Reference Group members was invited to select one of the following (i.e., either A, B, C or D):

- A. OPTION 1 (No change) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
- B. OPTION 2 (Landscape Improvements) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
- C. OPTION 3 (Eco-Accommodation) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
- D. NONE OF THE OPTIONS should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.

This process was undertaken confidentially, and the result was that:

- **Four (4) Project Reference Group members selected Option 3 (Eco-Accommodation) for detailed planning and feasibility analysis.**
- **One (1) Project reference Group member selected Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) for detailed planning and feasibility analysis.**

As well as nominating their preferred option for detailed planning and feasibility analysis, Project Reference Group members were invited to outline any modification/s to their preferred option as



presented in the Discussion Paper, which they would like Council to consider. The comments received are summarised below:

- *Feasibility study to include commercial accommodation operating model, assess a range of funding sources / models, and consider the economic impact of the project (or project stages) on local tourism and visitation.*
- *Design should maximise sea views, natural surroundings, enhance native flora and fauna, and integrate the site with Fort Queenscliff.*
- *Consider a staged approach to the development, with visitor hub/café the highest priority.*
- *Further detailed planning to consider design / architectural advice about the most appropriate accommodation footprint on the site with respect to the range of planning, cultural, environmental, maritime, heritage and community considerations.*

In accordance with the Project Reference Group Terms of Reference, the Project Reference Group had completed its role at this meeting with regard to the project.

Consultants' Recommendation

Planisphere's report at **Appendix 1** states:

The following recommendations take into account the analysis from the community feedback as described in this report and the contents of the project brief.

Three options were prepared for community consultation as follows:

1. *No change*
2. *Landscape improvements*
3. *Eco accommodation*

Community feedback favours Option 2, with Option 3 as the second most popular choice. Queenscliff Permanent Residents were almost undecided with Option 2 receiving 51% of first preference votes and Option 3 receiving 42%. The Community Reference Group voted with 4 members in favour of Option 3 and 1 member in favour of Option 2.

*Planisphere recognises Council's desire to increase local economic activities and generate additional revenue streams and the community's wish to see landscape improvements and reasonable level of acceptance of some development. **For these reasons we recommend that Option 3 is taken forward to financial feasibility.***



Council Plan

The following **Council Plan 2013 - 2017** extracts are relevant to this report:

Under **Strategic Objective 2: A vibrant local economy**, the following strategy is identified:

- Increase tourism visitation to the Borough.

Under **Strategic Objective 3: A unique natural environment**, the following strategy is identified:

- Protect the natural environment and significant vegetation.
- Limit the spread of noxious weeds.

Under **Strategic Objective 5: A proactive and accountable Council**, the following initiative is identified:

- Establish reference groups to advise Council on major community projects as determined by Council.
- Ensure sustainable financial management and maximise external funding opportunities.

Financial

There are no financial impacts as a direct result of this report. The aim of this report is to facilitate the progression of one of the concept options to full financial analysis.

Social

There are no social implications as a result of further detailed planning and feasibility analysis being undertaken.

Environmental

There are no significant environmental concerns associated with this report. Subject to the eventual option selected, all environment approvals will be considered and obtained at the appropriate time if applicable.

Risk Management

There are no significant risks associated with this report.



Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

Under Section 80C (1) (2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council staff and persons engaged under a contract to provide advice or a report to a meeting of the Council or a special committee, and who have a direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice or report relates, must disclose the type of interest when providing the advice or report and before the advice or report is considered by the Council or the committee.

Officers involved in developing the report have no direct or indirect interests.

Assessment

As indicated, the purpose of this report and the associated recommendation is to enable Council to select a concept option to progress to detailed feasibility and financial analysis. This step in the project will move the project to the next stage to ensure that Council's future considerations are roundly informed by community aspirations, environmental considerations and sound financial management principles.

The stage 2 community consultation outcomes indicated that:

- Option 1 was the leased preferred option
- 55% of completed respondents preferred Option 2 while 33% preferred Option 3
- 51% of Borough permanent residents preferred Option 2 while 40% preferred Option 3
- 51% of Queenscliff permanent residents preferred Option 2 while 42% preferred Option 3
- 51% of Point Lonsdale permanent residents preferred Option 2 while 38% preferred Option 3
- 59% of non-permanent residents preferred Option 2 while 23% preferred Option 3

Whilst the community consultation outcomes indicate that Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) is most favoured, the response is not overwhelming or emphatic. Following consideration of the community consultation outcomes, four of the five members of the Project Reference Group favoured Option 3 (Eco-Accommodation) for feasibility analysis. Planisphere also recommends that Option 3 should progress to the next stage. It should also be noted that Option 3 includes most elements of Option 2 (i.e. landscaping infrastructure) that would allow public access to parts of the reserve.

In light of the above, serious consideration should be given to undertaking a feasibility and financial assessment of both Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) and Option 3 (Eco-Accommodation). This would position Council well to make an informed, balanced and strategic decision about the future of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve.



Conclusion

The officers recommend that a detailed financial and feasibility analysis be undertaken in relation to both Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) and Option 3 (Eco-Accommodation). Council should note that a detailed feasibility and financial analysis forms part of the existing contract arrangements between Council and the consultant.

Councillors: Merriman/Christie

That Council, having regard to the suggestions made by the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group at its meeting on 5 September 2014, approve preparation of a detailed feasibility and financial analysis of both Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) and Option 3 (Eco-Accommodation) as presented in the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper.

Carried Unanimously



Appendix U

**Council Report Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve
Minutes Ordinary Meeting 22 Oct 2014**

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**



13.2 Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve

File:	QG058-03-08
Report Author:	General Manager Planning and Infrastructure
Strategic Objective:	A vibrant local economy
Portfolio:	Local Economy
Portfolio Holder:	Cr Graham J Christie, JP

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the stage 2 consultation outcomes following public exhibition of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper, and to seek Council's approval to undertake a detailed financial and feasibility analysis of Option 2 (Landscape Improvements).

Background

Council was appointed by the State Government as the Committee of Management for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve in November 2012. Not long after, as a result of securing project funding and advertising a project tender, Council appointed the consulting firm Planisphere to identify options for the future use of the reserve.

A Discussion Paper in relation to the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, including options for its future use was prepared by the consultants. At its 26 March 2014 ordinary meeting, Council resolved to approve release of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document for the purposes of community consultation.

The Discussion Paper was made available on Council's website and a Project Bulletin was mailed to all ratepayers (including non-residents) with an attached survey inviting, among other things, respondents to rank the Design Principles and four Concept Plan Options for the site. An online version of the survey was also made available on Council's website. A Community Open House session was held in Point Lonsdale on Saturday 26 April for community members to become further informed about the contents of the Discussion Papers, ask questions of clarification and to express their views to Council and the project consultants (Planisphere). Feedback was invited until Friday 16 May.



Key Issues

- Results of the community consultation process.
- Recommendation by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group in relation to which option should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
- Recommendation by the project consultants, Planisphere, in relation to which concept option should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
- Financial implications of recommended option from Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group and consultants.

Discussion

Community Consultation Outcomes

Feedback in relation to the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper was received in four forms;

1. Survey responses (842 surveys)
2. Written Submissions (43 submissions)
3. Newspaper cut-out slip (77 received)
4. Petitions (1,084 signatures)

In total, feedback was received from 1,641 individual people/organisations, either in one or multiple forms, with 256 people/organisations providing feedback in more than one form.

A detailed summary of the consultation outcomes is contained within Planisphere's 'Point Lonsdale Consultation Summary' report (see **Appendix 2**).

Project Reference Group Recommendation

The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group (PRG) met on Friday 5 September 2014. Having earlier been presented with the results of the community consultation process, each of the Project Reference Group members was invited to select one of the following (i.e., either A, B, C, D or E):

- A. OPTION 1 (No change) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
 - B. OPTION 2 (Landscape Improvements) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
 - C. OPTION 3 (Eco-Accommodation) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
 - D. OPTION 4 (Thermal Spa & Boutique Accommodation) should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
 - E. NONE OF THE OPTIONS should progress to detailed planning and feasibility analysis.
-



This process was undertaken confidentially, and the result was that:

- **All Ten (10) PRG members selected Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) for detailed planning and feasibility analysis.**

As well as nominating their preferred option for detailed planning and feasibility analysis, Project Reference Group members were also invited to outline any modification/s to their preferred option as presented in the Discussion Paper, which they would like Council to consider. The comments received are summarised in the Project Reference Group meeting minutes (see **Appendix 3**).

In accordance with the Project Reference Group Terms of Reference, the Project Reference Group had completed its role at this meeting with regard to the project.

Consultants' Recommendation

Planisphere's report at **Appendix 2** states:

The following recommendations take into account the analysis from the community feedback as described in this report and the contents of the project brief.

During the process of preparing the Discussion Paper it became clear that there was significant community interest in the Point Lonsdale Reserve and potential conflicts between Council's desire to 'generate additional revenue streams to improve the two lighthouse reserves' and the community's desire for no or little development on the reservation.

For this reason it was decided by Council and the Community Reference Group that the Discussion Papers would suggest a number of options, rather than a single option as per the Brief.

Four options were prepared for community consultation as follows:

1. *No change*
2. *Landscape improvements*
3. *Eco accommodation*
4. *Thermal spa and boutique accommodation*

As demonstrated in the previous analysis community feedback clearly favours Option 2 as the preferred option to take forward into the financial feasibility stage.

Having regard to the clear requirements of the Brief to increase local economic activities and generate additional revenue streams Planisphere would ordinarily recommend that Option 3 should undergo financial feasibility assessment in order to investigate ways to generate revenue for the Council to undertake the landscape works so desired by the community.

*However, due to the very high level of community concern over any development on the reservation and a clear recognition that this level of concern is genuine, deeply held and consistently expressed by all sections of the resident/ratepayer community during the consultation process, **it is our recommendation that Option 2 is taken forward to financial feasibility.***



The financial feasibility assessment should include all elements contained in Option 2. We note the suggestions made by members of the Community Reference Group for other landscape improvements and commercial operations. It is not considered that any other options have been tested with the community at this time and should not therefore be investigated as part of this next process. The Council may choose to investigate these options at some future time.

Option 2 as presented in the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper is estimated to cost \$900,000 in capital costs (preliminary estimate) and an estimated annual \$83,000 operating cost (maintenance and depreciation). These estimates would increase if modifications suggested by the project reference group are incorporated into a final design. It should be noted the proposed detailed feasibility and financial analysis stage of the project will provide a more robust estimate of costs.

Council Plan

The following **Council Plan 2013 - 2017** extracts are relevant to this report:

Under **Strategic Objective 2: A vibrant local economy**, the following strategy is identified:

- Increase tourism visitation to the Borough.

Under **Strategic Objective 3: A unique natural environment**, the following strategy is identified:

- Protect the natural environment and significant vegetation.
- Limit the spread of noxious weeds.

Under **Strategic Objective 5: A proactive and accountable Council**, the following initiative is identified:

- Establish reference groups to advise Council on major community projects as determined by Council.
- Ensure sustainable financial management and maximise external funding opportunities.

Financial

There are no financial impacts as a direct result of this report. The aim of this report is to facilitate the progression of one of the concept options to full financial analysis which is included in the current consultancy scope of works .

Social

There are no social implications as a result of further detailed planning and feasibility analysis being undertaken.



Environmental

There are no significant environmental concerns associated with this report. Subject to the eventual option selected, all environment approvals will be considered and obtained at the appropriate time if applicable.

Risk Management

There are no significant risks associated with this report.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

Under Section 80C (1) (2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council staff and persons engaged under a contract to provide advice or a report to a meeting of the Council or a special committee, and who have a direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice or report relates, must disclose the type of interest when providing the advice or report and before the advice or report is consider by the Council or the committee.

Officers involved in developing the report have no direct or indirect interests.

Assessment

As indicated, the purpose of this report and the associated recommendation is to enable Council to select a concept option to progress to detailed feasibility and financial analysis. This step in the project moves the project to the next stage to ensure that Council's future considerations are roundly informed by community aspirations, environmental considerations and sound financial management principles.

The consultation outcomes indicate that Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) is strongly favoured by the community, and all ten members of the Project Reference Group favoured Option 2 for feasibility analysis. Planisphere also recommends that given the very high level of community support, Option 2 should progress to the next stage.

Given the above, a detailed feasibility and financial analysis of Option 2 would position Council well to make an informed, balanced and strategic decision about the future of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Planisphere has recommended that unless further community consultation occurs, then only the items which were presented in the Discussion Paper as part of Option 2 should now be further assessed. Whilst this principle is sound, the officers consider that modifications suggested by the Project Reference Group that relate specifically to on-ground work at the reserve which are generally in accordance with Option 2 as considered by the community should be included in the financial assessment.



The on-ground works suggested by PRG members that could be considered in the financial assessment include:

- *Community / groups / schools etc should be involved in project elements such as plantings, working bees etc.*
 - *Celebrate the historical, environmental, maritime, indigenous, military, social and navigational features.*
 - *Provide interpretive signage, improved roads and pathways, a more orderly parking area, picnic and BBQ facilities, improved access to the lighthouse, a ship viewing area and information, weed management, toilet upgrade (a new toilet and shower block) and maintenance.*
 - *Remove and/or maintenance of Toc H buildings and remove graffiti*
 - *Removal of temporary fencing around disused buildings*
 - *Removal of buildings with no prospect of remediation*
 - *Possible retention, subject to feasibility study, of one Toc-H building as a centre to provide community advice on plans for the Reserve and historic information to visitors*
 - *Re-vegetation planning utilizing expertise of local groups such as Swan Bay Environment Association, Friends of Buckley Park, Bellarine Landcare Group working in conjunction with Council*
 - *Community working bees for site tidy up, weeding and replanting*
 - *Improvement of BBQ facilities and possible shelter pavilion*
 - *Implement maintenance contracts to ensure site is generally well maintained to make it an attractive destination for groups (weddings etc)*
 - *Make good of existing toilet block with preference given to preserving the retro sandstone beach vernacular appearance - possible roof addition*
 - *Improvement of fencing and signage along Ocean Road*
 - *Better (not necessarily more) structured parking with wayfinding to availability of overflow parking at Rip View. Designated parking spaces to accommodate small (24 seat) buses carrying school groups – Marine Discovery Centre & Wyuna YWCA camp, disabled and elderly visitors.*
 - *Repair/reseal road and tidy up of shoulder*
 - *Better historical interpretive information covering lighthouse, maritime, military, aboriginal, Buckley heritage*
 - *Undertake dilapidation survey of heritage structures and develop maintenance plan (identify contributing alternative funding sources)*
 - *Works in general should be undertaken with reference to classic maritime look and feel to establish a feel of uniformity and integrated approach (refer Low Head Tasmania) Separation of walkers from vehicles along roadway*
 - *General upgrade of paths and access to toilets to cater for people with disabilities*
-



- *Installation of quality viewing decks around the Rocket Shed, Foghorn Shed and WW2 Searchlight Structure west of the Flagstaff which suit people with differing access abilities*
- *Replacement of toilet block in style sympathetic with site's heritage buildings(if demonstrated need)*
- *Work with Queenscliff Maritime Centre to determine what could be displayed on Reserve and what is needed for operation/maintenance of the lighthouse and associated buildings to maximize interaction potential*
- *Periodic community working bees to maintain involvement in site*
- *Possible interactive ship viewing data*
- *Installation of a round-about at the corner of Point Lonsdale Road, Rip-View exit, Reserve Entrance and Ocean Road*
- *Possible pop-up cafe over summer - obtain input from main street traders re business impact*

The above list contains the suggestions that generally relate to the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. Additional suggestions were provided that involve project governance arrangements, alternative options (e.g. National Park) or are outside the scope of this project (e.g. trail between Point Lonsdale and Barwon Heads). No recommendations are made regarding these suggestions as they go to questions of governance, land management and / or development beyond the lighthouse reserve and were not subject to consultation with the community. As mentioned, a summary of all suggestions is included in **Appendix 3**.

Option 2 as presented in the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion paper is estimated to cost \$900,000 in capital costs and \$83,000 in annual operating costs. These estimates are likely to increase if any modifications included in the community feedback or suggested by the project reference group are included. There is only minimal income potential with option 2 of between \$4,000 and \$6,000 assuming a café lease was included. The significant net cost to Council of this option is not included in Council's long term financial plan.

In light of the above, Council should seek to fully understand and assess the possible sources of funding to cover both the capital construction costs as well as the ongoing operating costs required to meet the asset maintenance and asset renewal requirements of Option 2.

Conclusion

The officers recommend that a detailed financial and feasibility analysis be undertaken in relation to Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) including identification and assessment of funding sources to meet the capital cost associated with construction and the ongoing operating cost to meet asset maintenance and asset renewal requirements of Option 2. It should be noted that a detailed feasibility and financial analysis forms part of the existing contract arrangements between Council and the consultant.



Recommendation:

That Council, having regard to the suggestions made by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group that relate specifically to works within the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, at and in the days following its meeting on 5 September 2014:

- 1) Approve preparation of a detailed feasibility and financial analysis of Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) as presented in the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper,**
- 2) Expand this detailed feasibility and financial analysis to include a financial assessment of the possible sources of both capital funds and recurrent operating costs.**

Councillors: Merriman/Wasterval

That Council, having regard to the suggestions made by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group that relate specifically to works within the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, at and in the days following its meeting on 5 September 2014:

- 1) Approve preparation of a detailed feasibility and financial analysis of Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) as presented in the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper, including the items identified by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group that are identified on pages 21 & 22 in the 22 October 2014 Ordinary Meeting.**
- 2) Expand this detailed feasibility and financial analysis to include a financial assessment of the possible sources of both capital funds and recurrent operating costs.**

Carried Unanimously



Appendix V

**Council Report Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve
Minutes Ordinary Meeting 29 April 2015**

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**



13. LOCAL ECONOMY

13.1 Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve

File:	QG058-03-08
Report Author:	General Manager Planning and Infrastructure
Strategic Objective:	A vibrant local economy
Portfolio:	Local Economy
Portfolio Holder:	Cr Graham J Christie, JP

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the detailed feasibility and financial analysis outcomes for Option 2 (landscape improvements) at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Background

Council was appointed by the State Government as the Committee of Management for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve in November 2012. Following securing project funding and advertising a project tender, Council appointed the consulting firm Planisphere to identify options for the future use of the reserve.

A Discussion Paper in relation to the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, including options for its future use, was prepared by the consultants. At its 26 March 2014 Ordinary Meeting, Council resolved to approve release of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document for the purposes of community consultation.

The Discussion Paper was made available on Council's website and a Project Bulletin was mailed to all ratepayers (including non-residents) with an attached survey inviting, among other things, respondents to rank the Design Principles and four Concept Plan Options for the site. An online version of the survey was also made available on Council's website. A Community Open House session was held in Point Lonsdale on Saturday 26 April 2014 for community members to become further informed about the contents of the Discussion Paper, ask questions of clarification and to express their views to Council and the project consultants (Planisphere). Feedback was invited until Friday 16th May 2014.

As mentioned, the Discussion Paper contained 4 options for the future use of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve which in are summarised below:



OPTION 1 - No change.

OPTION 2 - Landscape Improvements only.

OPTION 3 - Eco-Accommodation and landscape improvements

OPTION 4 - Thermal Spa & Boutique Accommodation and landscape improvements

A Community Reference Group was established to provide feedback on the identified options. The ten members of the Community Reference Group, having considered the consultants Discussion Paper and Community Feedback, identified Option 2 as the preferred option (it should be noted all ten reference group members supported Option 2).

Community feedback, consultant's recommendations, the Reference Group's feedback and Council Officers' recommendations were considered by Council at its 22 October 2014 Ordinary Meeting with Council resolving as follows:

That Council, having regard to the suggestions made by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group that relate specifically to works within the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, at and in the days following its meeting on 5 September 2014:

- 1) Approve preparation of a detailed feasibility and financial analysis of Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) as presented in the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper, including the items identified by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group that are identified on pages 21 & 22 in the 22 October 2014 Ordinary Meeting.*
- 2) Expand this detailed feasibility and financial analysis to include a financial assessment of the possible sources of both capital funds and recurrent operating costs.*

The consultants have completed the feasibility and financial analysis in accordance with the above Council resolution and is included as **Appendix 1**.

Key Issues

- Financial assessment of Options 2.
- Assessment of possible funding sources to implement Option 2

Discussion

Below is a summary of Options 2 as presented in the March 2014 Discussion Paper and the capital and operating costs based on the feasibility and financial assessment.

Option 2 – Landscape Improvements

The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Concept Plan – Option 2 included in **Appendix 1** contains the following key elements:

- Significant landscape, vegetation and public realm improvements throughout the site;
 - New bbq and recreational infrastructure;
-



- Heritage interpretation of the site;
- A new toilet block and refurbishment of the existing toilet block;
- Formalisation of car parking (including bus parking);
- Refurbishment of Engine Shed (noting significant improvements have been achieved by the current tenants, the Point Lonsdale Board Riders Club), and;
- Provision for a kiosk on site (final site to be assessed and determined).

The estimated capital cost of implementation Option 2 is \$1.23 Million with an ongoing maintenance cost estimated at \$70,000 per annum. Detailed breakdown of estimated costs is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 1 also includes commentary on other items suggested by the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Community Reference Group.

Council Plan

The following **Council Plan 2013 - 2017** extracts are relevant to this report:

Under **Strategic Objective 2: A vibrant local economy**, the following strategy is identified:

- Increase tourism visitation to the Borough.

Under **Strategic Objective 3: A unique natural environment**, the following strategy is identified:

- Protect the natural environment and significant vegetation.
- Limit the spread of noxious weeds.

Under **Strategic Objective 5: A proactive and accountable Council**, the following initiative is identified:

- Establish reference groups to advise Council on major community projects as determined by Council.
- Ensure sustainable financial management and maximise external funding opportunities.

Financial

The estimated capital cost of implementation Option 2 is \$1.23 Million with an ongoing maintenance cost estimated at \$70,000 per annum.

In accordance with the Council Resolution of 22 October 2014, the consultant's report identifies and discusses a number of possible funding sources for the capital cost and ongoing maintenance costs. These are summarised below.



Government Grants

The current State Government is due to identify its funding programs in the next State Budget in May of this year. While the detail of these programs are unknown at this stage, it is clear that the State Government policy allows for significant funding for infrastructure and job creation through the fund previously known as the 'Regional Growth Fund'. Council officers will continue to monitor available funding programs, including liaising with Regional Development Victoria, to identify possible funding streams. Advice at this time indicates that the new funding programs will be announced in the next 2 months.

Rates

It is estimated that a one off 19% rate increase would be required to fund the capital cost of implementing Option 2. Based on the current rate differential, the average residential property would be required to pay an additional \$371 per annum in rates, representing a significant increase and cost burden for rate payers. An additional estimated 1.3% rate increase would fund the annual maintenance cost of \$70,000.

Car Parking

The consultant considered the potential revenue should paid car parking be introduced at both the lighthouse reserve and Ripview Carpark. Based on the provision of an estimated 25 car parking spaces at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and the existing 64 spaces at Ripview Carpark, an estimated \$153,000 per annum of revenue could be generated. This is offset by the purchase of parking equipment (initial up front cost of \$60,000) plus annual maintenance and enforcement (\$60,000 per annum).

A Net Present Value (NPV) analysis of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve landscape improvements and the paid parking option using a 7% discount rate indicates that income from the paid car parking option would not provide a return on total investment within 20 years.

Commercial Accommodation

The consultants noted that *Council resolved against commercial accommodation development within the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve*, however a financial assessment was provided based on the model being considered at the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve (i.e. 10 eco-cabins) for consideration.

The total costs and revenue of this scenario are summarised in the below table.

Cost and Revenue Elements	Cost
Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Landscape Plan Capital Cost	-\$1,229,619
Commercial accommodation development Capital Cost (10 cabins)	-\$1,948,000
On-going site and cabin maintenance	-\$250,080
Annual accommodation revenue	+\$539,640



A NPV analysis of this scenario using a 7% discount rate indicates a positive return could be achieved in 16 years.

The consultants also undertook an economic impact assessment of Option 2 (landscape improvements). The economic impact assessment examines the total economic impact to the Gross Regional Output of the region. During the construction phase the estimated total impact is over \$2.1 million to the local economy, supporting 9 local jobs.

Social

The landscape improvements only option is the preferred option strongly expressed by the submitters during consultation in April and May 2014. Proposed landscape improvements as outlined in this report and **Appendix 1** will dramatically improve the public amenity and accessibility of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Environmental

It is considered the overall improvements proposed will deliver an improved environmental outcome. There is likely to be a need to remove vegetation as part of the landscape improvements. Before any removal is undertaken, an assessment of the value of vegetation proposed to be removed will be undertaken and environment approvals will be considered and obtained at the appropriate time, if applicable.

Risk Management

There are no significant risks associated with this report. Risks will be identified and mitigation strategies considered as part of the detailed design phase.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

Under Section 80C (1) (2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council staff and persons engaged under a contract to provide advice or a report to a meeting of the Council or a special committee, and who have a direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice or report relates, must disclose the type of interest when providing the advice or report and before the advice or report is considered by the Council or the committee.

Officers involved in developing this report have no direct or indirect interests.

Assessment

The capital and operating costs of Option 2 at Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve are significant. Officers have reviewed the potential funding sources identified by the consultant and provide the following assessment.



Government Grants

While the current State Government is yet to finalise funding programs, State Government Policy confirms that funding programs will enable Council to pursue the \$1.23 Million capital cost. It is considered that to deliver on the vision as outlined in the Concept Plan included in **Appendix 1**.

Rates

It is considered unreasonable to increase rates by 19% in one year to raise the necessary funding for the cost of capital works. Given that no revenue will be generated from the landscape improvements, taking a loan for the capital costs would be contrary to Council's current budget principles (i.e. borrowings used to invest in revenue generating projects or to match funds from Government grants) and would ultimately cost the rate payer more over the life of the loan due to the cost of financing.

An additional estimated 1.3% rate increase to fund the annual maintenance cost of \$70,000 is however considered reasonable. Alternatively, Council could consider using budget spending from other areas which would result in reduced services in the affected areas.

Car Parking

The provision of paid car parking at the Rip View and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve car parks could provide an efficient source of revenue. However, paid parking could discourage visitors to the area and result in parking spilling into the adjacent residential areas. It should be noted that Council currently only has paid car parking at J L Jordan Reserve (boat ramp). Introduction of paid car parking combined with Government Grants could be an option to fund and maintain the landscape improvements. A detailed community consultation program is recommended should paid parking be identified as an option.

The estimated revenue provided by the consultants was based on limited available information and broad assumptions. Further analysis, such as traffic volume counts over a 12 month period, may be required to firm up estimated revenue from the introduction of paid parking at the two car parks.

Commercial Accommodation

The consultants have demonstrated that the low level of accommodation of 10 cabins could fund capital and ongoing maintenance costs at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, including if a loan was taken to fund the full capital works. It is estimated that if a loan was taken to fund the full capital cost of \$3.2 Million (landscape improvements and cabins), annual repayments would be in the order of \$220,000. Estimated income from the cabins is \$289,000 which would cover the cost of the loan and ongoing maintenance.

While this option is feasible from a financial point of view, it is clear from the outcomes of previous community consultation that the community does not want any accommodation development on this site.



Conclusion

Option 2 landscape improvements at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve come at a significant cost. The most feasible funding source for Council is pursuing relevant Government grants. The possible installation of paid parking is also considered viable, however would require further analysis and detailed community consultation.

Recommendation

That Council

1. Endorse the Concept Plan as included in the *Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Masterplan Addendum – Financial Assessment of Option 2* (Appendix 1) and confirm Option 2 as the preferred option for future use of the reserve;
2. Authorise the CEO to identify and apply for funding from either the State Government or Federal Government for the implementation of Option 2;
3. Determine Council's position in relation to the introduction of paid car parking at Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Rip View car parks.

Councillors Merriman / Salter:

That Council

1. Endorse the Concept Plan as included in the *Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Masterplan Addendum – Financial Assessment of Option 2* (Appendix 1) and confirm Option 2 as the preferred option for future use of the reserve;
2. Authorise the CEO to identify and apply for funding from either the State Government or Federal Government for the implementation of Option 2;
3. Defer consideration of the introduction of paid car parking at Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve and Rip View car parks until the outcome of the above resolution (2) is known.
4. Refer the public question number 2 (see page 6) for discussion at a future Assembly, prior to making a decision on this matter.

Carried unanimously



Appendix W

**Council Report Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve -
Minutes Ordinary Meeting 29 April 2015**

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**



13.2 Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve

File:	QG058-03-08
Report Author:	General Manager Planning and Infrastructure
Strategic Objective:	A vibrant local economy
Portfolio:	Local Economy
Portfolio Holder:	Cr Graham J Christie, JP

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the detailed feasibility and financial analysis outcomes for Option 2 (landscape improvements) and Option 3 (landscape improvements and eco-accommodation) at the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve and recommend a preferred option.

Background

Council was appointed by the State Government as the Committee of Management for the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve in November 2012. Following securing project funding and advertising a project tender, Council appointed the consulting firm Planisphere to identify options for the future use of the reserve.

A Discussion Paper in relation to the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve, including options for its future use, was prepared by the consultants. At its 26 March 2014 Ordinary Meeting, Council resolved to approve release of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Document for the purposes of community consultation.

The Discussion Paper was made available on Council's website and a Project Bulletin was mailed to all ratepayers (including non-residents) with an attached survey inviting, among other things, respondents to rank the Design Principles and three Concept Plan Options for the site. An online version of the survey was also made available on Council's website. A Community Open House session was held in Queenscliff on Saturday 26 April 2014 for community members to become further informed about the contents of the Discussion Papers, ask questions of clarification and to express their views to Council and the project consultants (Planisphere). Feedback was invited until Friday 16th May 2014.

The Discussion Paper contained 3 options for the future use of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve which in are summarised below:



OPTION 1 - No change.

OPTION 2 - Landscape Improvements only.

OPTION 3 - Eco-Accommodation including landscape improvements.

A Community Reference Group was established to provide feedback on the identified options. The five members of the Community Reference Group, having considered the consultants Discussion Paper and Community Feedback, identified Option 3 as the preferred option.

Community feedback, consultant's recommendations, the Reference Group's feedback and Council Officers' recommendations were considered by Council at its 22 October 2014 Ordinary Meeting with Council resolving as follows:

That Council, having regard to the suggestions made by the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group at its meeting on 5 September 2014, approve preparation of a detailed feasibility and financial analysis of both Option 2 (Landscape Improvements) and Option 3 (Eco-Accommodation) as presented in the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Discussion Paper.

The consultants have completed the feasibility and financial analysis in accordance with the above Council resolution and is included as **Appendix 2**.

Key Issues

- Financial assessment of Options 2 and 3.
- Identifying preferred Option.

Discussion

Below is a summary of Options 2 and 3 as presented in the March 2014 Discussion Paper and the capital and operating costs of the Options based on the feasibility and financial assessment.

Option 2 – Landscape Improvements

The Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Concept Plan – Option 2 included in **Appendix 2** contains the following key elements:

- New BBQ and play area
- New / upgraded walking tracks including connection to the Fort Queenscliff precinct
- Landscape and Public Realm improvements including viewing platforms / ship viewing areas

The estimated capital cost of implementation Option 2 is \$535,088 with an ongoing maintenance cost estimated at \$35,000 per annum.



Option 3 – Landscape Improvements and Eco Accommodation

The Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve Concept Plan – Option 3 included in **Appendix 2** contains the following key elements:

- New BBQ and play area
- New / upgraded walking tracks including connection to the Fort Queenscliff precinct
- Landscape and Public Realm improvements including viewing platforms / ship viewing areas
- 10 Accommodation units (8 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 1 bedroom)
- Café with attached visitor hub

The estimated capital cost of implementation Option 3 is \$2.95 Million with an ongoing operating and maintenance cost estimated at \$215,000 per annum.

Estimated annual income from the proposed 10 accommodation units is \$540,000.

Appendix 2 includes a Net Present Value (NPV) analysis of the capital expenditure and revenue generation which indicates a positive NPV (i.e. income exceeds expenditure on a discounted cash basis) is achieved in year 11 assuming no borrowings.

Further details on basis of estimates, NPV analysis and concept plans is included in **Appendix 2**.

Council Plan

The following **Council Plan 2013 - 2017** extracts are relevant to this report:

Under **Strategic Objective 2: A vibrant local economy**, the following strategy is identified:

- Increase tourism visitation to the Borough.

Under **Strategic Objective 3: A unique natural environment**, the following strategy is identified:

- Protect the natural environment and significant vegetation.
- Limit the spread of noxious weeds.

Under **Strategic Objective 5: A proactive and accountable Council**, the following initiative is identified:

- Establish reference groups to advise Council on major community projects as determined by Council.
 - Ensure sustainable financial management and maximise external funding opportunities.
-



Financial

The following table summarises the estimated costs and income for Options 2 and 3.

Option	Capital Cost	Operating / Maintenance Costs	Income
Option 2	\$535,088	\$35,000	\$0
Option 3	\$2,952,269	\$215,080	\$539,640

A NPV analysis by the consultants assuming a 7% discount rate indicates that Option 2 (landscape improvements) will result in an accumulated deficit of \$980,496 over a 20 year period.

The consultant's report concludes *this is considered a significant cost burden for Council, especially given the low rate base in the Borough and large amount of coastal land which is maintained by Council.*

Similarly, a NPV analysis of Option 3 (accommodation and landscape improvements) using a 7% discount rate indicates a positive return could be achieved in year 11. It should be noted this analysis assumes Council sourcing funding for this option from its own sources. If Council was to attract funding from other levels of Government the financial outcome would improve.

A further funding option discussed by the consultant is to fund the capital cost of Option 3 through borrowings. Borrowings of \$2.95 million would require annual repayments of an estimated \$205,000. With an estimated operating profit of accommodation being \$359,560 (excludes cost of maintaining public landscaped areas), there is sufficient funds to service the loan.

In addition to the above, there will be opportunities to pursue State and / or Federal Government grants to fund (either partially or wholly) the elements of the Option 3. To this end, Council officers have submitted an application for funding through the Federal Government's National Stronger Regions Funding Program for \$1.15 Million. This funding application only covers the landscape option (Option 2) component and café. The result of the application is unknown at this stage with an announcement scheduled in late May 2015. As the result of the application is unknown, this report and the financial analysis has not considered this funding.

The consultants also undertook an economic impact assessment of Option 3. The economic impact assessment examines the total economic impact to the Gross Regional Output of the region. During the construction phase the estimated total impact is over \$5.2 million to the local economy, supporting 21 local jobs. The economic impact of the operating phase of Option 3 will provide a total output of \$940,652 and 10 FTE jobs. This is conservative as it only relates to the expenditure generated by visitors at the site. However it is likely that the accommodation, landscape improvements and café identified in the investment will have a wider economic benefit for the Borough of Queenscliff through additional length of stay and attracting visitors to the area who otherwise may have stayed elsewhere. Refer to **Appendix 2** for further details.



Social

Proposed landscape improvements as outlined in this report and **Appendix 2** for both options 2 and 3 will dramatically improve the public amenity and accessibility of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve as well as providing an economic benefit for the local economy (refer to financial section of this report).

Environmental

There will be a need to remove vegetation as part of the landscape improvements. Before any removal is undertaken, an assessment of the value of vegetation proposed to be removed will be undertaken and environment approvals will be considered and obtained at the appropriate time, if applicable.

Risk Management

There are no significant risks associated with this report. Risks will be identified and mitigation strategies considered as part of the detailed design phase.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

Under Section 80C (1) (2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council staff and persons engaged under a contract to provide advice or a report to a meeting of the Council or a special committee, and who have a direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice or report relates, must disclose the type of interest when providing the advice or report and before the advice or report is consider by the Council or the committee.

Officers involved in developing this report have no direct or indirect interests.

Assessment

As mentioned earlier in the report, Option 2 (landscape improvements) is estimated to cost \$980,000 over 20 years (net present value). This option comes at considerable cost with no opportunity to generate revenue. Part of the funding for this option could come from a relevant government grants program, however Council would still most likely be required to fund part of the capital cost (most government funding grants come with a requirement for Council to contribute based on a funding ratio). In addition, maintenance of the improved landscape area would need to be fully funded by Council.

Option 3 (accommodation and landscape improvements) generates income estimated at approximately \$540,000 per annum based on 10 high quality eco cabins. A NPV analysis indicates that a positive return could be reached in 11 years.



Conclusion

Option 3 (accommodation and landscaping) is the most feasible option for future use of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve. It provides for improved public realm and access to the site as well as generating income to enable Council to maintain the site to a high quality and provides an additional source of income, effectively reducing pressure on future rate increases.

Councillors Merriman / Salter:

That Council

- 1. Endorse the Option 3 Concept Plan (accommodation and landscape improvements) and confirm Option 3 as the preferred option for future use of the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve;**
- 2. Authorise the CEO to identify and apply for funding from either the State Government or Federal Government to implement Option 3;**
- 3. Progress with detailed design of Option 3 subject to budget availability, and;**
- 4. Provide a further report to Council when detailed design has been completed.**

Carried unanimously



Appendix X

Draft 2017-18 Implementation Plan

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**

Implementation Plan 2017/18

DRAFT

Please read this Implementation Plan in conjunction with the draft Council Plan 2017-2021



Borough of Queenscliffe
Queenscliff & Point Lonsdale, Victoria, Australia

Strategic Objective 1:

Enhance community wellbeing by providing a safe environment where people are involved, healthy and active in recreation, arts and culture.

2017-2021 Strategies

- Maintain the Borough's standing as a safe place for residents and visitors.
- Protect, enhance and promote public health.
- Support older residents to live safely and independently.
- Increase participation in sport, recreation and life-long learning opportunities.
- Enhance opportunities for participation in arts and cultural activities.
- Support local clubs, community organisations and volunteers.
- Develop path and trail links that encourage walking and cycling and connections to neighbouring towns and the region.
- Support families, children and young people by facilitating access to services and community facilities.
- Promote shared use of community facilities.

2017/18 Initiatives:

1. Implement the Borough of Queenscliffe's Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 and meet Council's statutory responsibilities related to public health standards;
2. Provide an accredited, responsive aged support service with a 'zero waiting' list;
3. Investigate and respond to the Federal Government policy changes to the Home and Community Care service;
4. Facilitate collaboration between local community and emergency service organisations in planning to improve safety in the Borough of Queenscliffe.
5. Seek State Government funding for and implement a new school crossing service at St. Aloysius Primary School;
6. Provide a community grants and sponsorship program to support local clubs and community organisations;
7. Conduct public events that recognise the contribution of volunteers;
8. Support local organisations plan and implement community recreation, sport, and civic activities and events;
9. Support planning for the future use of the Fisherman's Cooperative building.

Strategic Objective 2:

Play our part in protecting the local, national and globally significant values within our natural environment for future generations.

2017-2021 Strategies

- Protect significant vegetation and continue revegetation of urban and open space areas.
- Continue to eradicate the spread of noxious weeds.
- Respond to the impacts of erosion and climate change on our beaches and the coast.
- Lead by example and work with the community to reduce carbon emissions.
- Increase and promote the use of renewable energy.
- Enhance recycling and green waste and minimise waste to landfill.
- Advocate for additional protection of significant wetlands within and adjacent to the Borough.
- Actively participate in relevant regional, state and national environmental initiatives.

2017/18 Initiatives:

1. Continue planning with the community to determine the future of the Borough's historic Avenue of Honour and how best to manage the replacement of trees along the Avenue;
2. Continue street tree and park planting programs that reflect the character of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale;
3. Work with local and regional organisations to implement weed reduction programs;
4. Support local organisations and volunteers undertaking projects designed to protect and enhance the natural environment;
5. Produce a Foreshore Plan to identify priority actions to enhance the amenity and use of the foreshore and beaches;
6. Undertake beach cleaning activities for major public events and at the Queenscliff Front Beach in the Summer, Easter and September School Holiday periods;
7. Work with local and regional organisations and neighbouring Councils to reduce waste and promote and increase recycling in the Borough and enhance the green waste disposal capacity of the region;
8. Continue to implement the Council's Corporate Carbon Neutral Action Plan;
9. Facilitate community participation in the Community Environment Alliance and promote new projects through implementing Council's small grants program;
10. Work with the Community Environment Alliance to identify opportunities to enhance alternative power supplies to the Borough of Queenscliffe;
11. Work with the City of Greater Geelong and State Government partners to implement recommendations from the Geelong Queenscliffe Coastal Adaptation Program;
12. Continue to advocate to the State Government for inclusion of Laker's Cutting into the RAMSAR listed Swan Bay site.

Strategic Objective 3: *Foster a diverse and vibrant local economy.*

2017-2021 Strategies

- Diversify the local economy and increase employment opportunities for local residents.
- Support local businesses and new businesses investment opportunities.
- Encourage procurement practices that increase employment opportunities for local residents.
- Market the Borough's unique features and provide a high quality tourism information service.
- Increase year round tourism visitation by enhancing use of beaches and parks and supporting arts and cultural events.
- Improve the quality of physical and technological infrastructure that connects local facilities and tourism attractions across the Borough.
- Progress the implementation of priority projects related to Fort Queenscliff and the two lighthouse reserves.
- Implement improvements to the Council managed caravan parks to achieve benefits for the whole community.
- Implement the priority actions in Council's Economic Development Strategy.

2017/18 Initiatives:

1. Produce and implement the recommendations of the Borough of Queenscliffe Council's Economic Development Strategy;
2. Advocate to all levels of Government to implement the Fort Queenscliff Tourism Master Plan;
3. Advocate for and seek funding from other levels of Government to improve coastal infrastructure that enhances the local amenity and improves community and visitor experiences;
4. Secure State Government funding to produce and promote a range of local stories about the history and heritage of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale that can be readily accessed by the community and visitors;
5. Work with local businesses and community organisation, Tourism Greater Geelong & the Bellarine and Visit Victoria to promote tourism experiences in Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale;
6. Support local organisations to plan and promote major public participation and tourism related events in Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale;
7. Continue to seek advice on tourism and economic development priorities through Council's formal Advisory Committee and other stakeholders;
8. Provide an accredited Visitor Information Centre service through the active involvement of volunteers;
9. Work with local businesses and community organisations to implement a Winter Arts Festival;
10. Work with local organisations to produce a Strategy to improve the planning and management of arts and culture events;
11. Review Council's procurement policy and practices to enhance opportunities for local businesses;
12. Facilitate local businesses access to information and professional development opportunities.

Strategic Objective 4:

Preserve and enhance the Borough as a special place through excellence of design and conservation of its rich culture and unique heritage.

2017-2021 Strategies

- Conserve the Borough's significant history, culture and heritage.
- Maintain the Borough's unique features and neighbourhood character.
- Continue to enhance the Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale town centres.
- Enhance access to and the amenity and use of the Borough's parks and foreshore reserves.
- Plan for the ongoing preservation and regeneration of the Borough's historic Avenue of Honour.
- Engage the community in strategic land use planning.
- Review and update the Queenscliffe Planning Scheme to achieve the Council's vision and strategic objectives.
- Ensure high quality design and construction standards in new and upgraded community infrastructure.

2017/18 Initiatives:

1. Implement the priority recommendations of the 2017 Queenscliffe Planning Scheme Amendment (C27) by undertaking a review of the heritage provisions in the Queenscliffe Planning Scheme and the related amendment to the Planning Scheme;
2. Seek funding opportunities to support a future review of the Neighbourhood Character provisions in the Queenscliffe Planning Scheme;
3. Promote local heritage through arts, cultural and reconciliation activities and events;
4. Promote Council's Heritage Fund to facilitate conservation of privately owned significant heritage assets;
5. Facilitate pre-application planning between Council and applicants considering a planning permit application related to properties with significant heritage values;
6. Improve regulation of statutory planning compliance;
7. Implement Council's asset renewal and maintenance program to ensure the safe and effective use of Council owned and managed community buildings, open space and other infrastructure;
8. Complete a risk assessment and produce a mitigation plan for gun emplacements near the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.

Strategic Objective 5:

Maintain a cohesive, well governed, financially sustainable and independent Borough.

2017-2021 Strategies

- Provide transparent and accountable governance and meet all legislative requirements.
- Ensure the continuing financial sustainability and independence of the Borough.
- Enhance communication and community engagement in decision-making across the 3225 postcode area.
- Advocate on opportunities and issues of key concern to the local community to other levels of government.
- Continually review and plan to meet corporate needs while enhancing organisational capacity and performance.
- Maximise the return on Council assets and leverage external funding opportunities.
- Strengthen and promote the Borough as a place to explore and implement innovative approaches to environmental, technological, social and economic initiatives.
- Foster partnerships with community organisations, business, neighbouring Councils and Statutory Organisations and other levels of government.

2017/18 Initiatives:

1. Ensure that Councillor and Council officer behaviour complies with the respective Codes of Conduct;
2. Ensure adherence to guidelines on prudent management of debt, cash and asset renewal;
3. Effectively manage public and organisational risk and meet all legislative requirements;
4. Strengthen organisation development and workforce planning to more effectively meet community service expectations and statutory obligations;
5. Produce and forward the Council Plan, Strategic Resource Plan, Performance Statement and Annual Budget to the Minister for Local Government 28 days following Council adoption;
6. Complete an annual review of Council's Strategic Resource Plan and long term budget as part of Council's annual Budget preparation process;
7. Continue to administer the Fire Services Property Levy in accordance with State Government legislative requirements;
8. Continue to meet Council's extensive Crown land management obligations;
9. Implement Council's 'Community Information and Engagement' policy to improve public participation in Council's decision making processes;
10. Enhance the provision of community information on Council's key decisions and the progress of priority projects;
11. Establish reference groups on major community projects as determined by Council;
12. Assess and report on community perceptions on Council's performance through the annual Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey;
13. Continue to improve Council's records management systems;
14. Enhance on-line services available on Council's website.

2017/18 Capital Works Program

The following Capital Work priorities will be undertaken in the 2017/18 financial year.

1. Continue construction of the Queenscliff Sports and Recreation Precinct project;
2. Complete the Master Plan and associated Business Plan for the three Council managed Caravan Parks in the Borough of Queenscliffe;
3. Implement the upgrade to the Caravan Parks at the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve and Victoria Park;
4. *Advocate for funding from other levels of Government to upgrade utilities and amenities in Royal Park Tourist Park;
5. *Seek funding from other levels of Government to implement the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Master Plan (Stage 1);
6. Produce a detailed design and commence construction of the 'Destination Queenscliff' project (*this includes improvements to the Ocean View Car Park and a new Kiosk / café; improvements to the southern end of Hesse Street and in the Fort Queenscliff surrounds as well as landscape improvements and construction of eco-cabins in the Queenscliff Lighthouse Reserve*);
7. *Seek funding from other levels of Government to implement the Queenscliffe Hub project;
8. Review the Hesse Street Revitalisation Plan and produce a Streetscape Plan that identifies opportunities to further enhance the amenity of the Queenscliff Main Street;
9. Replace all streetlights with more efficient LED technology;
10. Produce a Master Plan for Queenscliffe Park (former High School site) that provides a safe and friendly activity space for children and families;
11. Support Point Lonsdale Tennis Club in upgrading of lighting and court infrastructure;
12. Support the Queenscliffe & District Neighbourhood House to improve the amenity and functionality of the site through the construction of new decking;
13. *Seek State Government funding to construct a number of way finding interpretive signs that promote the history and heritage of and provide direction to key locations in Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale;
14. Implement the recommendations of Council's Tourism Directional Signage Project;
15. Renew kerb and channel assets in Hobson Street and upgrade the footpath and nature strip in Harbour Street in Queenscliff;
16. Complete a Pathways Strategy for Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale.

[*Important Note: A number of priority capital works projects identified (*) in 2017/18 are dependent on Council securing funding from other tiers of Government.]

Councillor contact details

Portfolio: Community Wellbeing

Cr Bob Merriman, AM

Mobile: 0400 062 967

Email: bob.merriman@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au

Portfolio: Environmental Sustainability

Cr Tony Francis, Mayor

Mobile: 0429 117 346

Email: tony.francis@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au

Portfolio: Local Economy

Cr Ross Ebbels

Mobile: 0427 447 160

Email: ross.ebbels@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au

Portfolio: Planning & Heritage

Cr Boyce Pizzey OAM, BA. MBA. (Melb)

Mobile: 0428 291 207

Email: boyce.pizzey@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au

Portfolio: Governance & Performance

Cr Susan Salter, Deputy Mayor

Mobile: 0428 398 966

Email: susan.salter@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au



Appendix Y

Rating Strategy - April 2016

**Essential Services Commission
Higher Rate Cap Application
2017-18**

Rating Strategy

Adopted 13 April 2016



Borough of Queenscliff
Queenscliff & Point Lonsdale, Victoria, Australia

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to detail the elements of the Borough of Queenscliffe Rating Strategy and any changes proposed to the previous Rating Strategy, including the implementation of the State Government's new rate capping legislation, which commences from 1 July 2016.

A summary of recommendations is provided on Page 31 of this document.

2. Purpose

The purpose of a rating strategy is to explain the Borough of Queenscliffe Council's approach towards raising rates and charges within the Borough under *Part 8 - Rates and Charges on Rateable Land* of the *Local Government Act 1989 (LGA)*. A rating strategy sets out the factors considered by Council when selecting the rating system to determine how money will be raised from properties within the Borough. It establishes Council's policy on the valuation base to be used, how differential rating will be applied between various property types, the Council position on a Municipal Charge and service charges (waste collection and disposal, including kerbside, green and public waste services, application of rebates and the payment methodology to be used).

In developing a rating strategy, Council seeks to balance service levels in accordance with the needs, means and expectations of the community. Rating levels are set to adequately resource Council's role, functions and responsibilities within the limitations of Federal and State Government legislation and policy. In setting rates and charges, Council gives primary consideration to its strategic objectives, sound financial management principles, annual budget considerations, legislative requirements, the current economic climate, other external factors and the overall impacts upon the community. Under the LGA, a primary objective of all Victorian local governments is to ensure the equitable imposition of rates and charges. The purpose of a rating strategy is therefore to consider what rating options are available to Council under the LGA and how Council's choices in applying these options will contribute towards meeting an equitable rating strategy. The objective of the strategy is not to influence the total amount of money to be raised – only to redistribute the share of revenue contributed by each property to raise the revenue amount that will be determined in the annual budget process.

3. Background

In reviewing the Borough's Rating Strategy, Council has benchmarked all rates (including differential rates) and charges with those charged by other neighbouring G21 region councils. The Rating Strategy considers the impact of the State Government imposed rate capping legislation to be introduced in 2016/17 and provides for continued full cost recovery of waste management expenditure by separating out funding raised from general rate revenue for all waste management services, including the collection and disposal of residential kerbside waste, green waste and public waste services. Kerbside waste and public waste services were previously included in general rate revenue and the cost distributed among all rateable properties.

Council endorsed a draft Rating Strategy at a Special Council Meeting held on 20 January 2016. Public submissions were subsequently invited over a 28 day public exhibition period. At a Special Council Meeting held on 9 March 2016, Council subsequently resolved to incorporate the following principles in the revised draft Rating Strategy:

- a) Full cost recovery of all waste management services;
- b) Transparent itemisation of three waste management charges (kerbside waste, green waste and public waste) on the 2016/17 Rate Notice; and
- c) Disclosure of all costs associated with each of the waste management streams to the community as supplementary information to accompany the 2016/17 Rate Notice.

Council further resolved that the draft Rating Strategy be revised to incorporate:

- a) the fixed charges of (i) public waste and (ii) green waste; and
- b) a CIV-based residential kerbside waste charge, including hard waste.

As a result, a fixed Public Waste charge is proposed to apply to all properties in the Borough with each property contributing equally to the full cost recovery of public waste services, including street and park bins collection, street cleaning, street sweeping and beach cleaning. The fixed Public Waste charge will be itemised on the Rate Notice. The proposed CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge to recover the cost of residential kerbside waste collection and disposal will be described as a Kerbside Waste charge on the Rate Notice. The Kerbside Waste charge is proposed to apply to all residential premises rated as General rate or Tourist Accommodation rate properties that are capable of being occupied. As a result, only those who can access the service will contribute, based on the property value (CIV), to recover the total cost. Commercial and Vacant Land properties will no longer contribute to recover the cost of residential kerbside waste.

Total rate revenue will decrease by an amount that is the cost of kerbside waste and public waste collection and disposal services and service charge revenue will increase by an amount reflecting the cost of each of these services. The base General rate in the dollar decreases and the differential rates are adjusted down accordingly (as these are calculated as a percentage of the General rate).

If applied in the 2015/16 rating year, the comparative contributions previously collected from ratepayers toward general rates, kerbside and public waste services, as well as the existing separate green waste service, would be as follows:

**Comparative contributions to General rates, Kerbside, Public and Green Waste services
by Sample CIVs**

Rates & Charges	2015/16 per Current Year's Rate Notice *			
	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$900,000	\$1,200,000
Sample CIVs	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$900,000	\$1,200,000
General Rates	\$716.05	\$1,432.10	\$2,148.15	\$2,864.20
Kerbside Waste	\$61.55	\$123.05	\$184.55	\$246.10
Public Waste	\$30.25	\$60.55	\$90.85	\$121.10
Sub total: 2015/16 Rates*	\$807.85	\$1,615.70	\$2,423.55	\$3,231.40
Green Waste Charge	\$36.90	\$36.90	\$36.90	\$36.90
Total 2015/16 Rates & Charges	\$844.75	\$1,652.60	\$2,460.45	\$3,268.30

4. Community engagement

Public consultation is an important part of the development of the Rating Strategy. Given the complexity of rating systems and how rating systems are applied, this emphasises the importance of maintaining a better informed community.

Council, together with the local community, place a high priority on clearly communicating the elements of the draft Rating Strategy and understanding the State Government imposed changes. This is particularly important this year due to the impact of rate capping and how this alters the way that Council rates are calculated.

Public submissions were invited on the previous draft Rating Strategy endorsed by Council on 20 January 2016, which occurred over a 28 day exhibition period in line with Section 223 of the LGA and closed on Wednesday, 17 February 2016. This Rating Strategy is prepared in accordance with the Act and was submitted to Council for approval following a further community consultation process, involving a call for public submissions for a further two week period. The aim is to assist in enhancing the community's understanding of the principles underpinning the proposed changes to the Rating Strategy relating to waste management charges and provide further opportunity for community feedback. The revised Rating Strategy was made available for inspection at the Council offices and on Council's web site from 17 March to 31 March 2016. Interested community members were invited to make a submission on any proposal contained in the Strategy. All submissions were considered by Council at a Special Council Meeting on 13 April 2016.

To assist interested persons to understand the Rating Strategy and make a submission if they wish, Council officers undertook a further community engagement process, provided additional general information and awareness communication during the public submission period and sought further community feedback on the Rating Strategy. The final step was for Council to adopt the Rating Strategy after receiving and considering all submissions from interested parties. The Rating Strategy was adopted on 13 April 2016 prior to Council considering the Draft 2016/17 Budget at its Ordinary Meeting of Council scheduled on 27 April 2016.

The key dates for the Rating Strategy community engagement process were as follows:

Rating Strategy Process	Timing
1. Officers prepared initial draft Rating Strategy	December
2. Councillors workshop initial draft Rating Strategy	December – January
3. Final draft Rating Strategy submitted to Council for consideration	20 January
4. Public notice calling for submissions	21 January
5. Information and awareness	21 January – 17 February
6. Rating Strategy made available for public inspection and submissions	21 January – 17 February
7. Submissions period closed (28 day duration)	17 February
8. Hearing of submissions by Council	18 February
9. Council consideration of draft Rating Strategy	24 February
10. Council resolution to revise draft Rating Strategy	9 March
11. Council's Governance & Finance Portfolio Reference Group meeting to consider revised draft Rating Strategy	16 March
12. Public notice calling for further submissions	17 March
13. Information and awareness	17 March – 31 March
14. Draft Rating Strategy available for public inspection and submissions	17 March – 31 March
15. Final Rating Strategy and submissions presented to Council for consideration	13 April

5. Fire Services Property Levy

The Fire Services Property Levy must be collected by Council on behalf of the State Government under the Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012. This State Government imposed levy comprises a range of fixed rates and variable rates that apply to properties in the Borough, which are increased annually by the State Government in line with Treasury and Finance forecasts for taxation revenue and economic variables. The levies applied in the 2015/16 rating year by State Government were:

FSPL Rates	2015/16 Financial Year	
	Fixed	Variable per \$1000 of CIV
Residential	\$104.00	\$0.1440
Tourist Accommodation	\$104.00	\$0.1440
Commercial	\$210.00	\$0.9900
Public Benefit	\$210.00	\$0.1440

6. Rating system

Rates and charges are an important source of revenue, accounting for approximately 60% of the total underlying operating revenue received by Council annually, with the balance almost equally comprised of government grants and user fees (mainly caravan park income).

Planning for future rate increases is a critical part of the annual budget process. As part of preparing the budget, Council considers the renewal and maintenance needs of its assets/infrastructure and community needs in relation to its available income requirements for the coming year, before deciding how much it should raise in general rates (within legislated rate capping limits), after having first taken into account other sources of revenue.

Council needs to strike a balance between competing priorities, in determining the amount of rate revenue to be raised as a funding source, whilst at the same time considering community sensitivity to increases and the capacity to pay such annual increases.

Once the total rate revenue amount required is determined, Council then decides the best method of allocating the rates across all rateable properties. Under the Act, Council has a number of rating options available to it, including uniform rates, differential rates, municipal charges, service rates and charges and special rates and charges. In determining the most appropriate method for allocating rates Council takes into consideration the key principles of equity and efficiency as well as other principles of simplicity, efficiency, sustainability and competitiveness.

The Borough of Queenscliffe uses a differential rating system to calculate rates.

For example if the Capital Improved Value of a property is \$750,000 and the Council rate in the dollar is set at 0.25 cents in the dollar, then rates would be \$1,875.00 ($\$750,000 \times 0.0025$). Note:, rates are rounded up or down to the nearest five cents.

Valuation and Rate Notices provide specific details to ratepayers about how rates are calculated.

6.1 Strategic directions

Council's annual rate setting objective is developed within a framework that integrates planning from its strategic objectives through to service delivery. The strategic objectives of Council are set out in the Council Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and the annual Budget (including Strategic Resource Plan).

Council's Strategic Financial Plan recommends that the Rating Strategy be reviewed with respect to differential rating levels, giving consideration to the benefits that accrue to particular sections of the community and their capacity to pay. This plan also recommends that a consistent approach to rate increases should be applied from year to year.

The Borough's previous Long Term Financial Plan assumed a consistent annual rate increase of 4.5%, noting Council's decision to apply a smaller increase of 3.8% in the

2015/16 Adopted Budget with 4.5% applied in its Strategic Resource Plan for the three financial years from 2016/17 – 2018/19.

With the introduction of rating capping legislation, a capped rate increase of 2.5% has been imposed by the State Government in the 2016/17 financial year on general rates and municipal charges. The rate cap is much lower than the increase assumed in Council’s current Long Term Financial Plan, having a significant impact on Council’s cash available to fund operating budgets, major projects and capital works.

Rate increases adopted by the Borough of Queenscliffe over the past six financial years 2010/11 – 2015/16 are illustrated below.

Average Rate Increase	
Year	Rate Increase
2010-11	5.50%
2011-12	4.50%
2012-13	4.00%
2013-14	4.50%
2014-15	4.50%
2015-16	3.80%
Average Rate Increase 2010-11 to 2015-16	4.46%

The challenge faced by the Borough, as with many small rural Councils, is the low growth in rateable properties (and therefore rate income) and unavoidable increases in costs related to meeting legislative compliance requirements (such as general election costs), the increasing expectations and demand for Council services and the challenge of meeting infrastructure renewal needs.

The table above illustrates the past increases deemed necessary by Council, in adopting budgets in recent years. This has typically been in excess of CPI as Council has sought to address the challenges associated with infrastructure improvements, the defined benefits superannuation liabilities facing Local Government, additional legislative and accountability requirements, asset renewal and maintenance challenges, State Government levies, wage increases and other employee costs and changes to services and work conditions approved by the Fair Work Commission and State and Federal Governments.

6.2 Cost recovery of waste management services

There is an underlying principle applied in the LGA recognising that local government may apply full cost recovery to ratepayers for the provision of waste collection and disposal services within the municipality. The introduction of a Kerbside Waste charge and a Public Waste charge enables Council to continue to apply this principle. Council acknowledges that the previous practice of recovering all waste costs from general rate revenue is no longer achievable under the new rate capping legislation. Application of waste charges applies a consistent approach to the strategies already applied by the vast majority of councils in Victoria.

The introduction of waste management charges for all waste services allows Council to continue to apply this principle using a different application method. These waste management cost streams include residential kerbside collection and disposal, green waste collection and disposal and public waste collection and disposal. These cost streams are included in the annual budget and may include the net cost of items such as:

Kerbside Waste

- Roadside E Waste collection
- Kerbside waste collection (including general, recycling and hard waste)
- Landfill disposal (including Landfill Levy)
- Waste collection bin renewal
- Waste and litter education
- Regional Waste Management Group membership

Green Waste

- Kerbside collection and disposal of green waste
- Green waste monitoring and evaluation
- Green waste education program

Public Waste

- Public waste collection (including street and park bins)
- Street cleaning and sweeping
- Beach cleaning

This means that the distribution of the burden of the costs to be recovered can be applied to properties, using different methodologies, using an approach that Council considers to be the most equitable for each waste service component.

Establishing a fixed charge for public waste collection and disposal recognizes that those ratepayers who may access a waste service or receive the benefits of a waste service will fundamentally receive the same service or share similarly in the benefits of that service and therefore should contribute equally to the cost of that service.

Council proposes that a CIV-based residential Kerbside Waste charge be applied, which continues the current practice of sharing the rate burden on a sliding scale. While

acknowledging that property values do not necessarily indicate an owner's wealth or capacity to pay rates, an alternative fixed charge approach would result in those owners with lower valued properties paying significantly more than is currently the situation.

6.3 No financial gain

In establishing the proportion of rates and charges to be levied on properties, there is a common misconception that if a property's valuation rises then Council receives additional income. This is not the case, as the general revaluation process simply results in a redistribution of the rate burden across all rateable properties within the Borough. Any increase to total valuations is offset by a reduction in the 'rate in the dollar' used to calculate the rate for each property.

Separation of waste management charges from general rates does not raise additional revenue, but ensures that the fundamental principle of cost recovery is maintained. The methodology used to apply waste management charges will redistribute the burden of these costs across properties within the Borough according to the methodology applied. For example, fixed charges distribute the burden of cost according to a user pay or benefit principle where all ratepayers with access will share the burden equally. Alternatively, a property value (CIV-based) approach recognises that those ratepayers with higher property wealth should contribute more.

Similarly, introduction of a Kerbside Waste charge applied to residential properties will shift the burden of full cost recovery for kerbside collection and disposal from all rateable properties under the existing general rates system to only those ratepayers who may access the service (residential and tourist accommodation properties).

All properties in the Borough will continue to contribute to the full cost of public waste collection and disposal, however the principle applied is that all ratepayers receive an equal benefit from public waste services provided in the Borough.

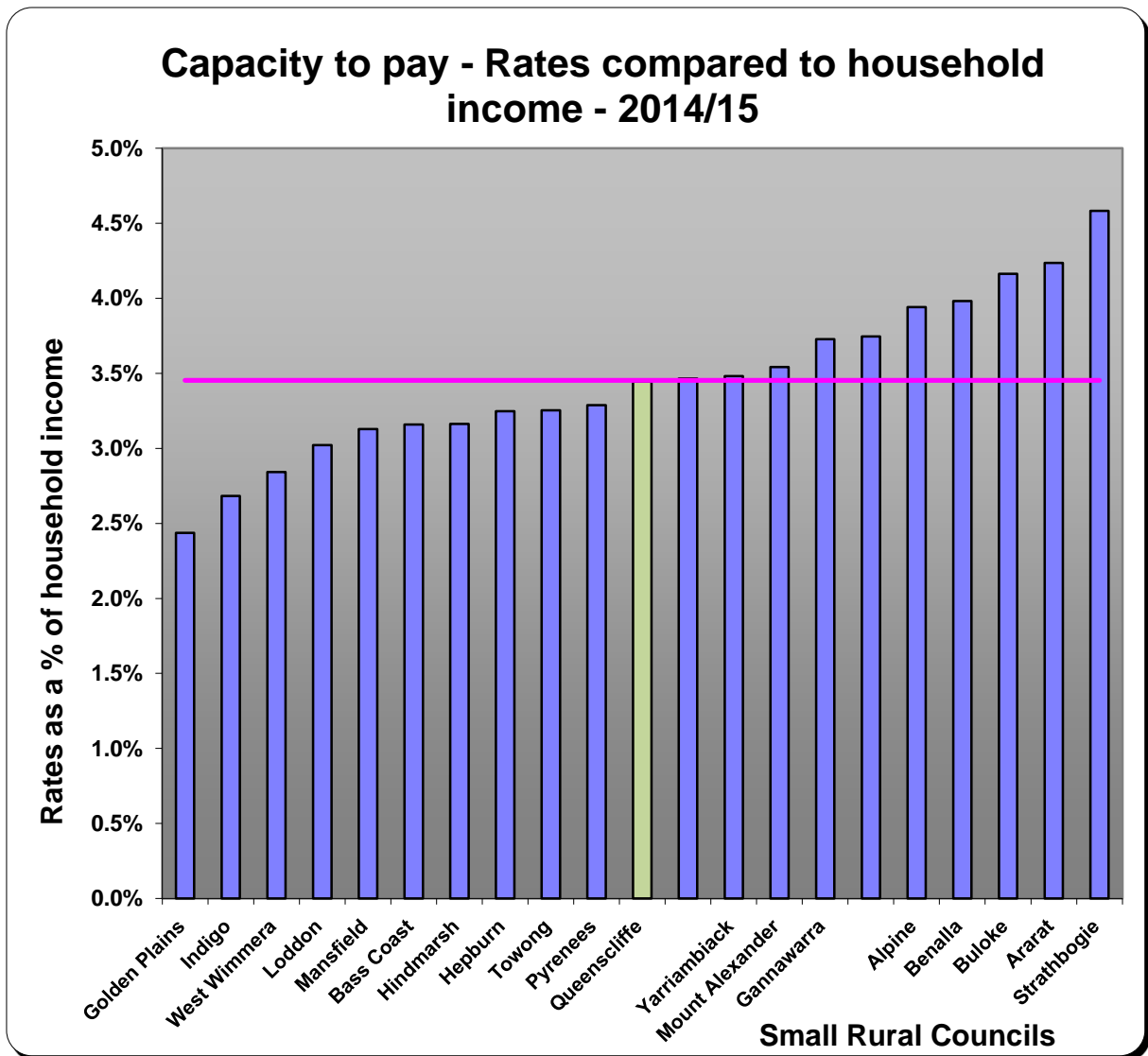
6.4 Community impact

Council is aware of the financial impact that property rates may have on different community groups. Financial modelling is conducted, as part of the review of Council's Rating Strategy in preparation for developing the annual budget and to consider the impact of various rating options on each class of property against which rates are levied.

Council's practices and decisions regarding rating are underpinned by the principles of equity, incentive, simplicity, efficiency and legislative compliance. In considering these principles, Council has reflected on a number of factors and their broader community impact. The following graphs include representations of:

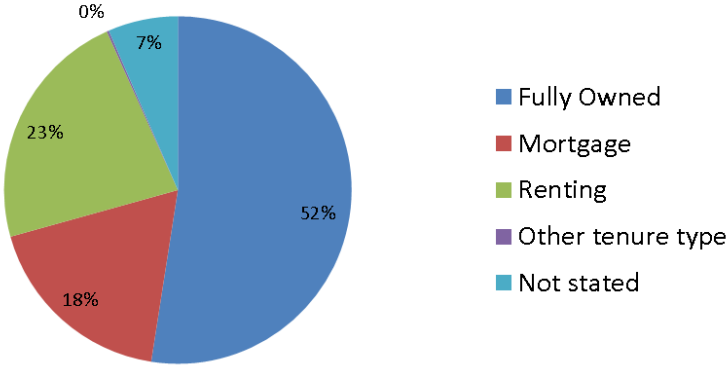
- the overall capacity to pay, (ie rates compared to household income across 21 small rural councils represented as a percentage is indicated on the following graph). The Borough sits at 3.4% which is slightly below the average of 3.5%;

- the relatively high proportion of fully-owned home ownership, compared to our neighbouring G21 councils (52% compared to 36%); and
- the Borough's age demographic which shows a high percentage of the population as 60 years or over.

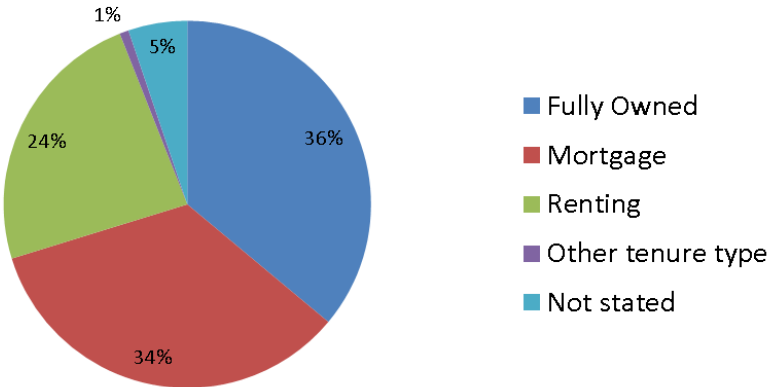


The following graphs indicate housing tenure or home occupancy within the Borough compared with neighbouring Councils in the G21 region (2011 data).

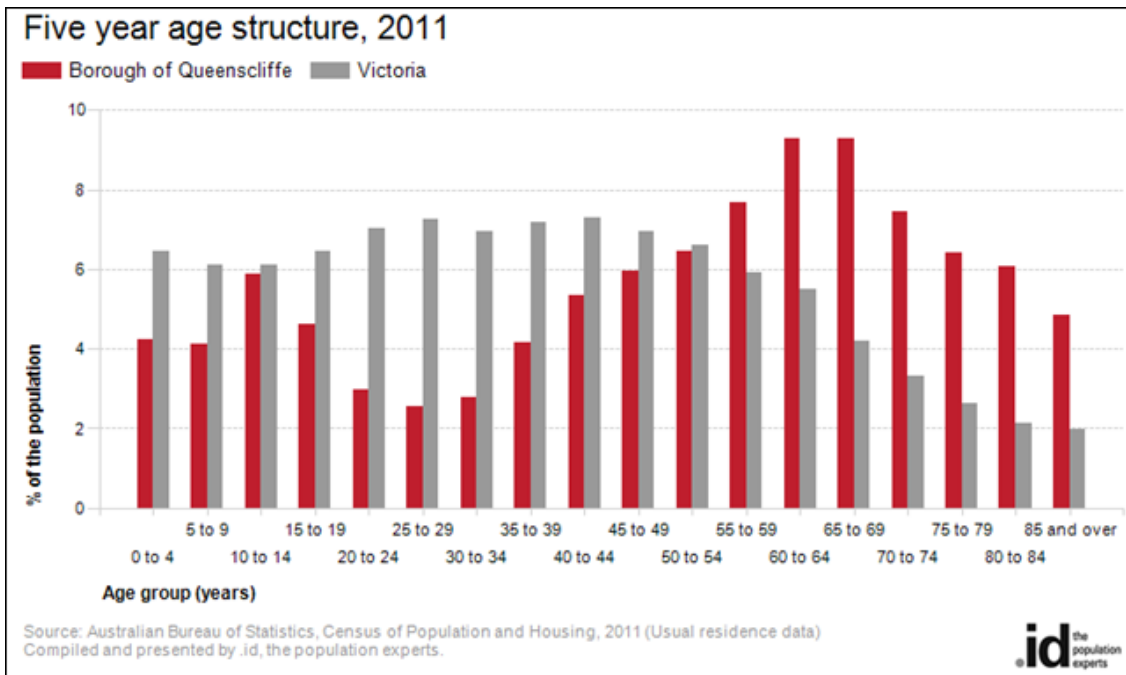
Borough of Queenscliffe - Housing Tenure



G21 Region - Housing Tenure



The age demographic for the Borough of Queenscliffe as a comparison to the State of Victoria is depicted below (Source Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011)



The set of data above identifies a much higher level of home ownership in the Borough of Queenscliffe when compared to other neighbouring Councils in the G21 Region. The bar chart indicating five year age cohort data highlights the higher numbers of people aged over 60 years in Queenscliffe when contrasted with Victoria. This information reflects that a comparatively higher proportion of the general ratepayer population of the Borough own their own homes, are more likely to be retired and on fixed incomes, and while possibly asset rich (given the comparatively higher value of properties in the Borough) and cash poor, their capacity to pay is lessened.

Were Council to apply a uniform rate as opposed to a differential rate, the impact on non-commercial, non-tourist accommodation ratepayers (residential) would be greater and this would result in all ratepayers covering the cost of activities associated with tourism-related activities, which is not equitable. The use of differential rates decreases the rates apportioned to residential properties.

The State Government legislation allows councils to calculate a separate charge for the collection and disposal of waste, including residential kerbside waste (general waste, hard waste and recycling services), green waste and public waste. This enables full recovery of costs, which the State Government acknowledges to be a user pay service with typical costs increases that are significantly higher than CPI. Separating waste charges on the Rate Notice also enables increased transparency about the waste management costs to be recovered in each year.

With the introduction by the State Government of rate capping legislation, Council intends to a CIV-based charge for kerbside collection and disposal, and a fixed charge for public waste collection and disposal. Costs associated with waste management generally

increase by a level well in excess of CPI and are typically costs that Council cannot control. The State Government and Council have recognised that these costs cannot be sufficiently recovered by general rate increases if the rate cap is restricted to CPI. The CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge will apply to residential premises rated as General rate or Tourist Accommodation rate that are capable of being occupied. This means that Commercial and Cultural & Recreational rated properties will no longer contribute to the costs of providing this kerbside waste collection and disposal service because these properties do not receive this service. The result is that those ratepayers who are eligible to access the service, take full responsibility for the service provided to them. The fixed Public Waste charge will apply equally to all rateable properties in the Borough.

To further lessen the burden on those most vulnerable to rate increases, Council currently provides a \$20 pension rebate in addition to the pension concession funded by State Government (Refer section 7.6). It is proposed to increase this additional pension rebate from \$20 to \$40, effective from the 2016/17 rating year.

6.5 Property valuations

For the purpose of the *Local Government Act 1989* and its rating provisions, the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* is the principal Act in determining property valuations. In general, each separate occupancy determined by Council's independent valuer on rateable land must be valued and rated. Contiguous areas of vacant land with more than one title in the same ownership may be consolidated for rating purposes.

An assessment for the purpose of rating may be against any piece of land subject to separate ownership or occupation. In this context, land has been defined to include buildings, structures or improvements.

Property values are determined by independent professional valuers appointed by Council. The valuers assess the value of each property in line with guidelines laid down by the State Valuer General.

Valuers must assess the value of a property in three ways:

- Capital Improved Value - the total market value of the land plus buildings and other improvements;
- Net Annual Value - the current value of a property's net annual rent (by law, Net Annual Value must be at least five per cent of the Capital Improved Value for commercial property and exactly five per cent of Capital Improved Value for residential property); and
- Site Value - the market value of the land only.

The Borough of Queenscliffe, like most Victorian councils, uses the Capital Improved Value (CIV) to levy general rates.

Being a measure of the realised value of property, the CIV is seen to be fairer and more equitable to ratepayers than a valuation that is based on the notional value of land alone.

In addition, differential rating combined with CIV affords Council greater flexibility in developing rating outcomes to pursue its particular objectives. For this reason, Council has adopted the CIV system for valuing properties for the purpose of raising general rates.

It is recommended that Council continue to use Capital Improved Value as the methodology for valuing properties.

State legislation requires that all properties in every municipality be revalued every two years. The next general revaluation will be conducted as at 1 January 2016 and the resulting rates calculated will be applied in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 rating years

Council's independent valuer undertakes a physical inspection of some properties during each revaluation. Other valuations are derived from a complex formula based on sectors, sub-market groups, property condition factors (including age, materials and floor area), factors such as locality and views, and land areas compared to sales trends within each sector/sub-market group. Council's independent valuer determines the valuations according to the highest and best use of a property.

Owners/ratepayers can object within 60 days of receipt of the initial Rates and Valuation Notice. Valuation and Rate notices are issued around 1 September each year. Objections to Site Value can also be made, within 60 days of having received a Land Tax Assessment, provided that an objection has not previously been lodged with Council in the current rating year. If still not satisfied with the outcome, following this objection process, a person may opt to request further review via the VCAT (Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal) appeals process.

Changes in property values will vary across a municipality. These will be reflected in each property's Valuation & Rates Notice. In a municipal revaluation year, rate increases are impacted by the rate increase (or rate cap) and the property valuation increases of individual properties relative to the average across the municipality. This may result in rates for some properties going up while others go down. If a property's value increases by less than the average increase across the municipality, the rate increase for that property will be relatively lower than the average. Rate increases experienced will be relatively higher if a property's value increases by more than the average increase in valuation.

As outlined earlier, councils do not collect extra revenue as a result of the revaluation process. Valuations are simply used as an apportioning tool to assess how the rate burden will be distributed among rateable properties.

Information about a property's value is included on the Valuation and Rate Notice issued by Council.

6.6 Differential rates

Section 161(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* allows Councils to raise any general rates by the application of a differential rate if it uses the capital improved value system of valuing land.

Councils are able to levy either a uniform rate or one or more differential rates. A uniform rate is where all rateable properties in a municipality are charged based on the same rate in the dollar. Differential rates are where councils set different rates in the dollar for different categories of rateable land.

Differential rates are not about the amount each ratepayer pays. Rather they are about the relative proportion each class of property will pay.

Councils may for example, have differential rates for vacant land, various categories of residential property or commercial properties – each paying a higher or lower rate in the dollar.

Differentials should be applied to achieve specified local objectives. There is no limit on the number or type of differential rates that can be levied, but the highest differential rate can be no more than four times the lowest differential rate.

If Council decides to apply differential rates as part of the mix, it will consider some or all of three equity principles, as outlined below:

- the benefit or user pays principle – some groups have more access to, make more use of and benefit more from specific council services;
- the capacity to pay principle – some ratepayers have more ability to pay rates than do others with similarly valued properties; and
- the incentive or encouragement principle – some ratepayers may be doing more towards achieving Council's goals than others in areas such as environmental or heritage protection for example.

Another consideration is delivering a simple and transparent system of rates and charges. A simple rating system is more transparent, meaning that the underlying purpose and principles behind it are clearer (ie. providing clarity regarding who is liable for a particular rate and how the liability is calculated).

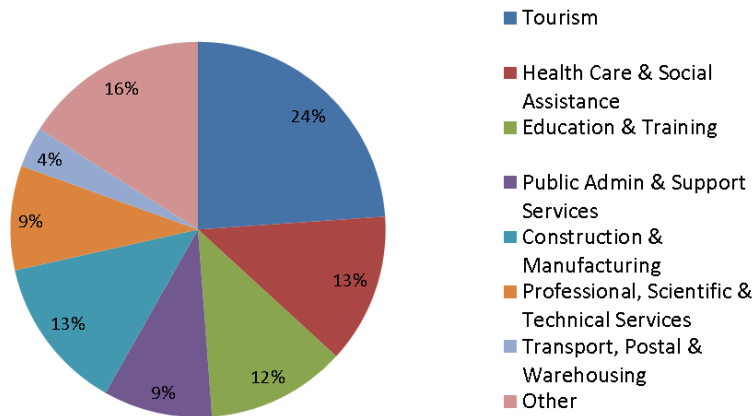
In considering the benefits or user pays principle, particularly as it relates to additional services provided by Council to the tourism sector, Council has considered the presence of tourism-related employment in the Borough.

The following reflects that tourism related employment as the major industry (combining retail and accommodation/hospitality industry data) in the Borough of Queenscliffe has jumped by 2.5% between 2006 and 2011 (Census years), but has decreased in the G21 Region for the same period. This equates to an extra 33 tourism industry jobs that have been created between 2006 and 2011. Employment opportunities across the Borough

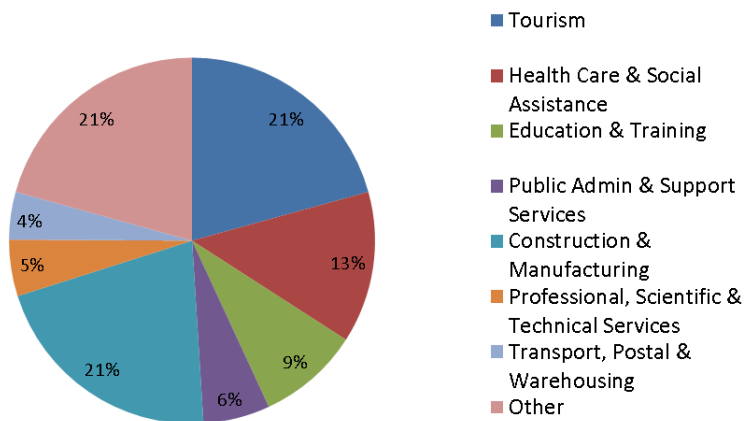
have increased by 70 positions across all sectors, 47.1% of these new positions were in the tourism-related industry. This information will be updated following the 2016 Census.

Comparative industry sector of employment data for 2011:

Borough of Queenscliffe 2011 Industry Sector of Employment

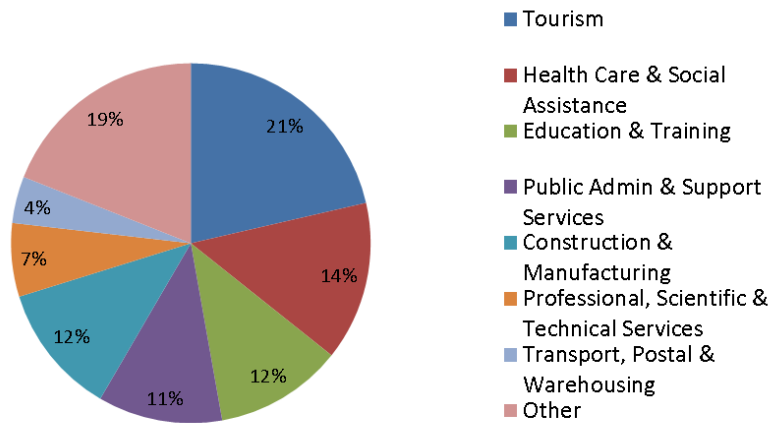


G21 Region 2011 Industry Sector of Employment

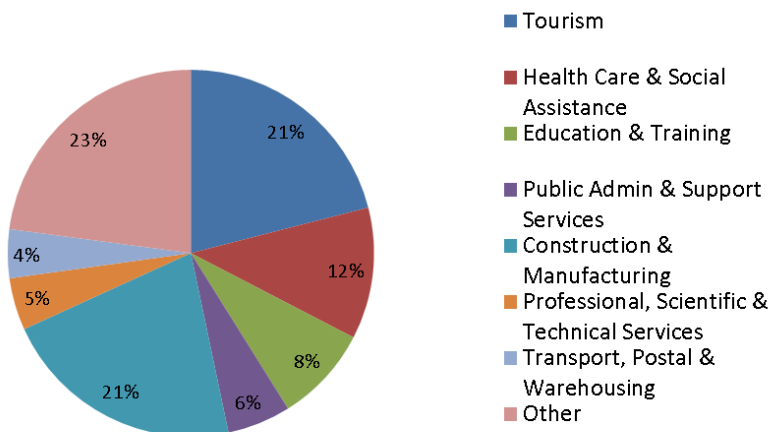


Comparative industry sector of employment data for 2006:

Borough of Queenscliffe 2006 Industry Sector of Employment



G21 Region 2006 Industry Sector of Employment



6.7 Differential rate definitions

The definition of each differential rate is detailed in Appendix B of the annual budget. This is summarised as follows:

Residential land is any land, which is:

- used primarily for residential purposes; or
- unoccupied but zoned Residential under the Borough of Queenscliffe Planning Scheme; and
- not Commercial land or Tourist accommodation land.

Commercial land is any land, which is:

- used primarily for the carrying out the manufacture or production of, or trade in, goods or services (including accommodation); or
- unoccupied but zoned Business under the Borough of Queenscliffe Planning Scheme; and
- not Tourist accommodation land

Tourist accommodation land is any land, which:

- contains a dwelling, unit, cabin or house or part of a house, with five or less bedrooms available for holiday rental that is used, whether primarily or otherwise, to provide holiday accommodation for the purpose of generating income from the provision of such holiday accommodation;

7. Rating structure applied to the Draft 2016/17 Budget

Council's proposed rating strategy comprises the following key elements:

- Property values (based on Capital Improved Value or CIV) and differential rating to be used to determine the distribution of total rates levied;
- Differential rating for Commercial properties including properties with six or more bedrooms which are rented out as holiday accommodation;
- Differential rating for Tourist Accommodation properties, specifically those properties with five or less bedrooms which are rented out as holiday accommodation;
- A rating concession for identified Cultural and Recreational ratepayers;
- A CIV-based charge for residential kerbside waste collection and disposal (garbage and recyclables);
- A fixed charge for public waste collection and disposal;
- A fixed charge for green waste service;
- Fixed charges for additional garbage bins;
- A pension rebate of \$40, which is in addition to the State government funded pension concession, per eligible ratepayer property. Eligibility includes application on a principal place of residence with only one rebate per property;
- No application of a fixed municipal charge.

Striking a proper balance between the above elements provides equity in the distribution of the rate burden across residents, businesses and recreational ratepayers.

The current rating system results in all ratepayers sharing the total rate burden on a sliding scale, based on the value of their property.

It is important to note the impact that the introduction of fixed charges will have on the lower valued property owners. In previous rating years where a general rate has funded all kerbside and public waste collection and disposal costs, the higher valued properties and those not able to access the service subsidised the lower valued properties. The introduction of a CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge will continue this current practice of sharing the rate burden on a sliding scale, however the introduction of a fixed Public Waste charge changes the current practice of sharing the rate burden on a sliding scale, to one where those owners with lower valued properties will pay more and those with higher valued properties will pay less than is currently the situation.

It is acknowledged that property values do not necessarily indicate an owner's wealth or capacity to pay rates. Fixed waste charges establish a principle whereby ratepayers who may access or receive the benefits of a waste service in the Borough, will fundamentally receive the same service or share similarly in the benefits of that service and should therefore contribute equally to the cost of that service. Comparisons with neighbouring G21 region councils are also provided for information. Note this data relates to the current 2015/16 financial year.

Comparison of rates and charges to G21 region councils

Rates and charges for residential properties	<i>Queenscliffe Adopted Budget 2015/16</i>	<i>COGG Adopted Budget 2015/16</i>	<i>Colac-Otway Adopted Budget 2015/16</i>	<i>Surf Coast Adopted Budget 2015/16</i>	<i>Golden Plains Adopted Budget 2015/16</i>
General	0.00269281	0.00283200	0.00451300	0.00254570	0.00368600
Municipal Charge	0.00	94.30	178.00	195.00	225.00
Garbage Charge	0.00	258.25	285.00	350.00	238.00
Recycling Charge	0.00	0.00	189.00	0.00	0.00
Green Waste Charge	36.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CIV - 1,200,000	\$3,231.37	\$3,398.40	\$5,415.60	\$3,054.84	\$4,423.20
Municipal Charge	\$0.00	\$94.30	\$178.00	\$195.00	\$225.00
Garbage Charge	\$0.00	\$258.25	\$285.00	\$350.00	\$238.00
Recycling Charge	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$189.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Green Waste Charge	\$36.91	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Rates and Charges	\$3,268.28	\$3,750.95	\$6,067.60	\$3,599.84	\$4,886.20
% above BOQ 2015/16 Budget	n/a	14.77%	85.65%	10.14%	49.50%
CIV - 900,000	\$2,423.53	\$2,548.80	\$4,061.70	\$2,291.13	\$3,317.40
Municipal Charge	\$0.00	\$94.30	\$178.00	\$195.00	\$225.00
Garbage Charge	\$0.00	\$258.25	\$285.00	\$350.00	\$238.00
Recycling Charge	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$189.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Green Waste Charge	\$36.91	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Rates and Charges	\$2,460.44	\$2,901.35	\$4,713.70	\$2,836.13	\$3,780.40
% above BOQ 2015/16 Budget	n/a	17.92%	91.58%	15.27%	53.65%
CIV - 600,000	\$1,615.69	\$1,699.20	\$2,707.80	\$1,527.42	\$2,211.60
Municipal Charge	\$0.00	\$94.30	\$178.00	\$195.00	\$225.00
Garbage Charge	\$0.00	\$258.25	\$285.00	\$350.00	\$238.00
Recycling Charge	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$189.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Green Waste Charge	\$36.91	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Rates and Charges	\$1,652.60	\$2,051.75	\$3,359.80	\$2,072.42	\$2,674.60
% above BOQ 2015/16 Budget	n/a	24.15%	103.30%	25.40%	61.84%
CIV - 300,000	\$807.84	\$849.60	\$1,353.90	\$763.71	\$1,105.80
Municipal Charge	\$0.00	\$94.30	\$178.00	\$195.00	\$225.00
Garbage Charge	\$0.00	\$258.25	\$285.00	\$350.00	\$238.00
Recycling Charge	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$189.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Green Waste Charge	\$36.91	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Rates and Charges	\$844.75	\$1,202.15	\$2,005.90	\$1,308.71	\$1,568.80
% above BOQ 2015/16 Budget	n/a	42.31%	137.45%	54.92%	85.71%

Separate waste charges and municipal charges at neighbouring councils results in higher total rates payable over a range of property valuations. With the introduction by the State Government of a rate cap of 2.5% and the introduction of a CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge and a fixed Public Waste charge in the 2016/17 year, the outcome for Queenscliffe will result in increases in Rates and Charges, noting no Municipal charge applies. General rate revaluations that will apply to the 2016/17 rating year, will impact on the relative increases in Rates and Charges across different properties.

The Borough's current rating structure is detailed in Appendix B of the Budget. 2015/15 highlights are as follows:

– Rate in the dollar

Type or class of land	2014/15 cents/\$CIV	2015/16 cents/\$CIV	Change
General rate for rateable residential properties	0.259423	0.269281	3.8%
General rate for rateable commercial properties	0.337250	0.350066	3.8%
General rate for rateable tourist accommodation properties	0.285366	0.296210	3.8%
Rate concession for rateable cultural and recreational properties	0.064856	0.067321	3.8%

– Total amount to be raised for rates and charges

	2014/15 \$	2015/16 \$	Change
General rates	6,132,900	6,411,141	4.5%
Supplementary rates	10,000	10,000	0.0%
Charges - second bins	14,700	15,435	5.0%
Charges - green waste	0	106,485	100.0%
Less: additional \$20 pension rebate offered by Council	(8,600)	(8,460)	-1.6%
Less: rebate for properties of environmental interest	0	(4,800)	100.0%
Total rates and charges	6,149,000	6,529,802	6.2%

– Number of rateable properties

Type or class of land	2014/15 No.	2015/16 No.	Change
Residential	2,669	2,600	-2.6%
Commercial	153	164	7.2%
Tourist accommodation	205	285	39.0%
Cultural and recreational	5	5	0.0%
Total number of assessments	3,032	3,054	0.7%

7.1 General or residential rate

The actual rating burden applied to general or residential properties is determined by decisions to apply either higher or lower rates in the dollar of property value to other classes of property. The equity of the general rate is therefore a by-product of the equity

inherent in the setting of those other rates. Differential rates are set relative to the general or residential rate.

The objective of this general rate is to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including (but not limited to) the construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets, development and provision of community services and provision of general support services.

Residential properties generate the vast majority of Council's rate revenue (83.31%). Therefore, the Rating Strategy is largely about the equitable distribution of the rate burden across the community according to assessment of property value and how Council adopts the use of differential rating for a relatively small (16.69%) proportion of the rate base.

7.2 Residential vacant land rate

In 2015/16, there are 82 residential vacant land properties in the Borough, with valuations ranging from \$182,000 to \$2,520,000 (average is \$707,000). Council currently rates these at the same rate in the dollar as for the general or residential rate.

There is a practice in other Councils whereby a higher rate is applied to vacant land, for example to encourage development of that land. Given the comparatively low number of vacant lots and the comparatively high land values within the Borough, no premium has been applied to the general rate.

The objective of this residential vacant land rate is to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including (but not limited to) the construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets, and provision of general support services.

Previously vacant residential land was charged a fixed Green Waste charge. It is proposed that vacant residential land assessments be excluded from both the Green Waste and Kerbside Waste charges from the 2016/17 financial year. The Public Waste charge will be applied to all rateable properties within the Borough, which includes vacant residential land.

In summary, given the comparatively low number of vacant lots and the comparatively high land values within the Borough it is recommended that Council continue its practice of applying the general or residential rate to residential vacant land.

7.3 Commercial rate

From the 2013/14 rating year the Borough of Queenscliffe applied a two-tiered differential rate to its Commercial and Tourist Accommodation properties. The differential rate applied to Commercial rated properties is 130% of the General (residential) rate. In the Borough of Queenscliff, Commercial properties include those with six or more bedrooms rented out as holiday accommodation.

A comparison of the immediate neighbouring councils shows that City of Greater Geelong has a Commercial rate of 208% of the general rate and Surf Coast Shire has a Commercial rate of 190% of the general rate. This compares to the Borough of Queenscliffe Council's Commercial rate of 130%.

The rationale underpinning the application of this differential rate centres on the additional financial demands on Council and the benefits that flow to the commercial sector in the provision of visitor information services as well as tourism promotion. It is also noted that commercial businesses can claim rates and charges as a tax deduction.

The objective of this Commercial differential rate is to ensure that all rateable commercial properties make an equitable financial contribution, which reflects capacity of the property and for which Council may provide additional services, to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including but not limited to the:

- Costs associated with the Visitor Information Centre service and tourism promotion.
- Construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets
- Development and provision of community services
- Provision of general support services

A Commercial differential rate is regarded as necessary to provide the additional services to this sector. The tourism industry is the largest industry within the Borough. Festivals and events are also a related critical driver for the Borough of Queenscliffe economy and Council delivers a coordinated program to attract, develop and retain a strong calendar of events. A significant portion of the money raised is invested to undertake visitor information services and tourism strategies, to support the growth and future wellbeing of this sector within the Borough. Investment in tourism, along with the general nature of commercial properties, results in a higher servicing cost to Council. Therefore, a differential rate is applied to ensure equity across ratepayers.

In summary, given the additional funds that Council allocates to visitor information services and tourism promotion and the benefits that flow to commercial properties, it is recommended that Council does not propose to change the 130% differential rate applicable to commercial properties including those with six or more bedrooms rented out as holiday accommodation.

7.4 Tourist accommodation rate

As discussed in Section 7.3 above, in 2013/14, the Borough of Queenscliffe applied a two-tiered different rate to its Commercial and Tourist Accommodation properties. The differential rate applied to Tourist Accommodation properties is a premium of 10% on the General (residential) rate. This differential rate includes properties that have five or less bedrooms rented out as holiday accommodation, at any stage and for any length of time throughout the year.

The objective of the Tourist Accommodation differential rate is to ensure that all smaller scale rateable tourist accommodation properties make an equitable financial contribution, which reflects capacity of the property and for which Council may provide additional services, to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council including but not limited to the:

- Costs associated with the Visitor Information Centre service and tourism promotion.
- Construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets
- Development and provision of community services
- Provision of general support services

In summary, given the additional funds that Council allocates to visitor information services and tourism promotion and the lesser benefits that flow to smaller scale tourist accommodation properties, it is recommended that Council continue to apply a 10% differential rate to properties providing tourist accommodation that have five or less bedrooms rented out as holiday accommodation, at any stage and for any length of time throughout the year.

7.5 Cultural and recreational land

The *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963* provides for Councils to grant a rating concession to any recreational lands which meet the test of being 'rateable land' under the Act.

The Borough has five properties which are rated under the provisions of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*. The rate in the dollar currently charged to these properties is 25% of the general rate (ie. the rate concession for recreational land is set at 75% of the residential rate and is treated as a contribution in lieu of rates).

Council has applied this rating concession in recognition of the voluntary nature of the not for profit sport and recreation clubs operating on the rateable land and the limited revenue streams available to these community organisations. It is proposed that the current practice of applying a rating concession continues to be applied to those volunteer managed and operated, not for profit clubs that are located on rateable land.

In summary, given the voluntary nature of the not for profit sport and recreation clubs operating on the rateable land and the limited revenue streams available to these community organisations, it is recommended that Council continue to apply a rating concession of 75% (ie. require payment of 25% of the general rate) to those volunteer managed and operated, not for profit community clubs that are located on rateable land.

7.6 Additional Pension Rebate

Council has the discretion to offer an additional pension rebate, above that level funded by State government, should it choose to do so. The Borough currently has 411 ratepayer properties eligible to receive a pension concession on rates. The pension concession

applies to holders of a Centrelink or Veteran Affairs Pension Concession card or a Veteran Affairs Gold card which stipulates TPI or War Widow, on their sole or principal place of residence, with only one rebate per property.

Council currently applies a rebate of \$20 per eligible ratepayer property, above that funded by other levels of government, resulting in a reduction of \$8,220 in total rates and charges collected by Council. It is proposed to increase this additional pension rebate from \$20 to \$40, effective from the 2016/17 rating year.

In summary, given the financial pressures impacting on pensioners with fixed incomes, including the proposed introduction of fixed charges for public waste collection and disposal, it is recommended that Council increase the pension rebate from \$20 to \$40 per eligible ratepayer property, which is in addition to the pension concession funded by State government under the Municipal Rates Concession Scheme and that this be applied consistent with applicable pensioner definition used by other levels of government (noting that this definition may be subject to change from time to time).

More information regarding the government funded pension concession is included at Section 9.3 of this document.

7.7 Other rebates

A rebate is a mechanism through which a targeted group receives a discount or concession to achieve certain objectives.

Essentially rebates are funded through the general rate pool. More specifically, the amount required to fund the rebate is calculated and is incorporated into the total rates and charges calculation. For transparency, the amount of any rebate or concession funded by ratepayers should be declared on an annual basis.

Council may grant rebates or concessions in accordance with the LGA to assist the proper development of the municipal district, to preserve, maintain and restore historical, environmental, architectural or scientific buildings or places of interest important within and to the municipality, to generally assist the proper development of all or part of the municipal district. Generally, conditions or undertakings are required and if not met require the rebate or concession to be repaid in part or in full as the case may be.

Council currently applies a rebate to residential properties which are deemed to be of significant environmental benefit to the community and has entered into a 'Trust for Nature' covenant. A rate rebate of 100% on covenant areas 1 hectare or greater is applied to the residential rates for the area which falls within the covenant for this property. Smaller land areas are considered on a case by case basis based on the property's unique environmental value. This approach is established under the Council Policy CP019 Rate Incentives for Conservation and Land Management.

It is recommended that Council continue to regularly review the approach to the rebate available under adopted under Council Policy CP019 Rate Incentives for Conservation

and Land Management to ensure that it meets Council's objectives, in accordance with the Policy requirements.

8. Other rating options available to Council

Local government's rating policy options include:

- Choice of valuation base (CIV, NAV or SV)
- General rates (uniform or differential rates)
- Municipal charges (not more than 20% of total rate revenue)
- Service rates or charges (to defray costs of collection and disposal of waste)
- Special rates and charges/rebates/waivers (to defray costs of functions with a special benefit to those who pay)

Those options to be considered by Council, with regard to the above, are described in further detail below.

8.1 Municipal charge

The Local Government Act enables councils to levy a municipal charge. The municipal charge is a flat charge that can be used to offset some of the administrative and or compliance costs of the council. The total amount raised from the municipal charge cannot be more than 20% of the total raised from the combination of municipal charge and general rates.

On one hand, applying a fixed municipal charge can be a way of ensuring that all properties make a standard contribution towards a council's administrative costs. On the other hand, it will result in lower value properties being charged a higher level of rates.

The Borough of Queenscliffe does not currently levy a municipal charge , whereas other G21 councils do (City of Greater Geelong: \$94.30; Colac-Otway: \$178; Surf Coast: \$195; and Golden Plains: \$225) .

It is recommended that the Borough of Queenscliffe does not levy a municipal charge on rateable properties and that the current practice continues.

8.2 Service rates and charges

Section 162 of the Act enables Council to establish waste management charges to recover the costs of collection and disposal of waste (service rates and charges). Council has powers to establish a fixed (for example, Public and Green Waste charges or Additional bin charges) or variable charges (for example, CIV-based Kerbside Waste Charge) to recover the cost of collection and disposal of waste from those who have access to these waste services. The objective is that only those ratepayers who are eligible to access services take full responsibility for the cost of the service provided to them.

8.3 Kerbside Waste Charges and the State Government Landfill levy

The Borough currently recovers the cost of residential kerbside waste collection and disposal, including the State government imposed landfill levy, from the general rate. Council does not separately charge residential ratepayers to recover the costs of kerbside waste collection and disposal, except where a Green Waste service applies or an additional bin has been requested and approved.

Council proposes to introduce a CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge in the 2016/17 financial year. Annual cost increases generally exceed CPI and would not be fully recoverable if it remains within the general rates, which is subject to the new rate capping regime effective from the 2016/17 rating year. This CIV-based charge will apply to residential premises rated as General rate or Tourist Accommodation rate that are capable of being occupied, excluding:

- vacant residential land; and
- residential premises attached to a Commercial rated property where there is no suitable access to the property to provide the service in a safe and practical manner.

It is recommended that Council introduce a CIV-based residential Kerbside Waste charge in 2016/17 applied to all residential premises rated as General rate and Tourist Accommodation properties that are capable of being occupied.

8.4 Public Waste Charge

The Borough currently recovers the full cost of public waste collection and disposal from general rate revenue. Public waste services include street and park bins collection, street cleaning, street sweeping and beach cleaning services. Council does not separately charge ratepayers to recover the costs of public waste collection and disposal.

Council proposes to introduce a fixed Public Waste charge in the 2016/17 financial year. Annual cost increases generally exceed CPI and would not be fully recoverable if it remains within the general rates, which is subject to the new rate capping regime effective from the 2016/17 rating year. This fixed charge will apply equally to all rateable properties in the Borough.

Establishing a fixed charge for public waste collection and disposal establishes a principle whereby those who receive the benefits of public waste services provided in the Borough will fundamentally receive the same service or share similarly in the benefits of that service and therefore should contribute equally to the cost of that service.

It is recommended that Council introduce a fixed Public Waste charge in 2016/17 applied to all rateable properties in the Borough for the collection and disposal of public waste.

8.5 Green Waste charges

As discussed in Section 6 above, Council is permitted to apply a fixed rate charge to its Green Waste service, which it did so when the service was introduced in the 2015/16 financial year. The cost of this service is expected to increase due to expenditure budgeted at a lower cost/tonne than actual costs and some variation in volumes collected/disposed. This fixed charge applies to residential premises rated as General rate or Tourist Accommodation. Charges were also previously applied to vacant residential land, however it is proposed that vacant residential land not be subject to the Green Waste charge from 2016/17 (unless specifically requested). The 2015/16 Green Waste charge is \$36.90.

It is recommended that Council continue to apply the fixed rate Green Waste charge to residential premises rated as General rate or Tourism Accommodation rate, however exclude vacant residential land from 2016/17, to recover expenditure incurred in the provision of this service.

8.6 Additional bin charges

The *Local Government Act 1989* enables a council to impose a service rate or an annual service charge (or a combination of these) for certain purposes such as collecting and disposing of refuse. Council may apply a service rate (based on criteria determined by Council), or a fixed service charge to recover the costs associated with waste collection and disposal (including kerbside, public and green waste) with a service charge being the more common approach currently used in the sector.

A unit charge may be levied on each property that may access the service and commonly appears as a separate amount on the Valuation and Rates Notice. A different amount may be charged for these services depending on the criteria set by Council, which might include the property type, the nature of the service or different sized bins.

Requests for an additional set of waste and recycle bin(s) (ie. over and above the first provided recycle and general waste bins for residential kerbside collection) are considered on formal application, where exceptional circumstances exist. In 2015/16 this service attracts an additional charge of \$210 per set of additional bins.

Requests for an extra waste or recycle bin, where the bin is additional to the first provided recycle and general waste bins for residential kerbside collection, are considered on formal application, where exceptional circumstances exist. In 2015/16 this service attracts an additional charge of \$105 per additional bin.

Requests for a green bin, where the bin is either additional to the first provided green bin for residential kerbside collection, or for vacant residential land, are considered on formal application where exceptional circumstances exist. In 2015/16 this service attracts an additional charge of \$36.90 per additional bin.

It is recommended that Council, on receipt, review and acceptance of a formal application, apply additional fixed charges (as detailed in the fees and charges schedule of the 2015/16 budget) for any additional bin provided for the purposes of kerbside collection of general waste, recycling and green waste and disposal.

9. Collection and administration of rates

Collection and administration of rates is undertaken by Council officers, with assistance provided by the independent valuer and a debt collection agency as required.

All rates are deemed collectible, with no provision for doubtful debts. Interest is charged accordingly (see 9.2 below.). When rates are not paid Council officers seek to negotiate a payment plan. If rate payments are not paid for extended periods without suitable agreed repayment arrangements, Council uses Great Southern Credit Management to coordinate debt collection as required. This is usually on an annual basis at the end of each financial year.

During the year, reminder notices are sent out after the second and third instalments, and final reminders after the fourth instalment, with instruction that non-payment (or no payment arrangement instigated) will result in debt collection proceedings.

9.1 Payment options

Council offers a range of payment options, including direct debit, BPay, internet (directed to Australia Post Billpay), mail, telephone (credit card payments) and over the counter services at the Council Office in Queenscliff.

Council incurs costs of collection via agency and merchant service fees. The cost of collection is included in Council's expenditure budget each year. Council has not adopted a cost recovery principle for these costs.

9.2 Interest on arrears and overdue rates

Interest is charged on all overdue rates in accordance with Section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. The interest rate applied is fixed under Section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*, which is determined by the appropriate State Government Minister and published by notice in the Government Gazette. The interest rate for the 2015/16 financial year is 9.5%.

Council cannot apply an alternative interest rate, however it does have the power to exempt any person from paying the whole or part of any interest amount. Council Policy CPO31 Rates Assistance establishes a mechanism by which Council can offer some form of financial relief to ratepayers experiencing financial difficulty in meeting rates and charges payments.

9.3 Pension concession/Additional Pension Rebate

Holders of a Centrelink or Veteran Affairs Pension Concession card, or a Veteran Affairs Gold card which stipulates TPI or War Widow (excludes Health Care and DVA all conditions, POW, EDA and dependent cards), may claim a rebate on their sole or principal place of residence.

The government-funded indexed rebate is provided under the Municipal Rates Concession Scheme. The pension concession is currently \$213.00 or 50% of the rate payment, whichever is the lesser amount. The government has also funded a concession for eligible pensioners of \$50.00 to partially offset the introduction of the Fire Services Property Levy in 2013/14.

Upon initial application, ongoing eligibility is maintained, unless rejected by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran Affairs during the annual verification procedure. Upon confirmation of an eligible pension concession status, the pension concession is deducted from the rate account before payment is required by the ratepayer.

With regards to new applicants, after being granted a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC), pensioners can then apply for the concession/rebate at any time throughout the rating year. Retrospective claims for the past two rating years can be applied for through Council, and will be granted on verification of eligibility back to the appropriate date. Any claim for concessions/rebates prior to this period are at the discretion of the relevant government department.

Council has the discretion to offer a rebate to pensioners, in addition to the pension concession funded by the State government under the Municipal Rates Concession Scheme. Council currently applies a pension rebate of \$20 per eligible ratepayer. Council is proposing to increase this Additional pension rebate from \$20 to \$40, effective from the 2016/17 rating year. This is discussed in more detail in section 7.6 of this Rating Strategy.

9.4 Deferred payments

Councils have the power to defer payment of rates and charges, for those people who are experiencing financial difficulties. Where deferment of rates and charges is approved, interest continues to accrue on outstanding payments.

The Borough currently has one ratepayer on a deferred payment arrangement.

9.5 Financial Hardship

Councils have the power to waive part or all of any rates and charges, under financial hardship provisions. The Borough has not approved any waiver of rates and charges to date as any rates and charges forgone would be redistributed to the balance of ratepayers in the Borough. All financial hardship applications are assessed on an individual basis with the aim of establishing an agreed payment arrangement. Council has a comparatively low number and percentage of hardship applications.

9.6 Rate payment collections

Council, in accordance with the LGA section 167 (1) must allow for the payment of rates by four instalments per annum. The Act permits Council to allow a person to pay a rate or charge in a single lump sum payment per the LGA section 167 (2).

The Borough offers payment by instalments, with the following due dates: 30 September, 30 November, 28 February and 31 May in each financial year, or the next working day thereafter should these days fall on a weekend or public holiday. These payment dates for instalment are fixed by the Minister for Local Government and published in the Government Gazette. This practice provides a clear structure for paying rate instalments and a predictable cash flow to support Council's financial management (aimed at better matching between when Council receives its rate revenue and when Council needs to expend these same amounts, which is consistent with most other utility service providers).

The option for residents to pay in a single payment is already available – ratepayers may pay all instalments at the date of the first instalment (30 September).

Under the mandatory instalment option, interest penalties are only backdated to the due date of the instalment.

Some councils offer both lump sum (payment in full) and instalment payment options and, for lump sum, some councils also offer early payment discount. An increasing number of councils are considering a move from lump sum to instalments only to improve cash flow, while others are considering a move from instalments only to lump sum due to increasing postage costs. Maintaining an adequate cash flow throughout the year is an essential consideration for the Borough of Queenscliffe. For this reason, lump sum payments in each year are not available at the Borough.

9.7 Summary

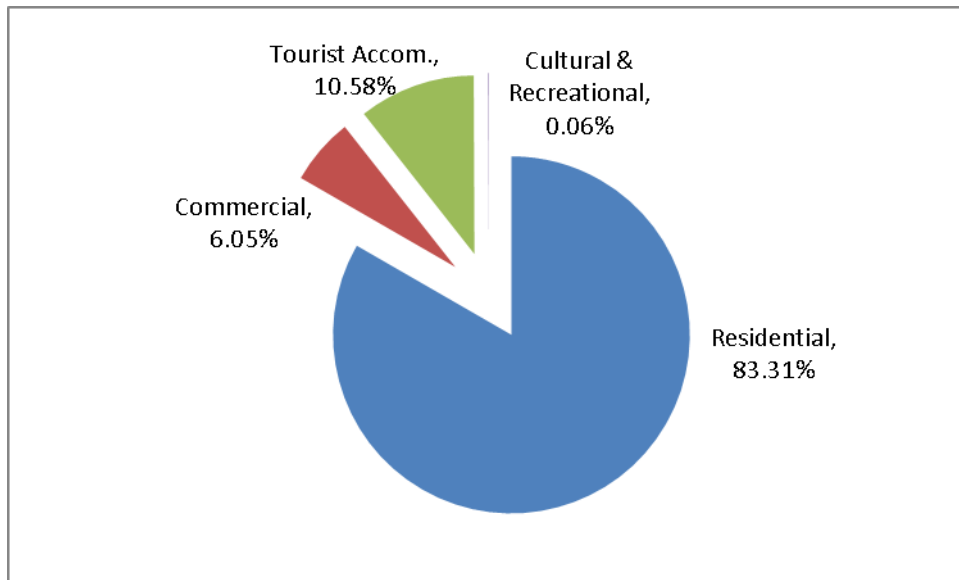
It is recommended that Council continue the current practices in respect to collection and administration of rates including its present approaches to repayment of outstanding rates, payment options, interest on arrears and overdue rates, deferred payments, financial hardship and rate payment by instalments.

10. Rate Contributions

Following introduction of CIV-based Kerbside and fixed Public Waste charges from the 2016/17 rating year, the General (residential) rate comprises 84.7% of the total CIV and contributes to 83.4% of the total rate revenue. The Commercial rate comprises 5.2% of the total CIV and contributes 6.0% of the total rate revenue. The Tourist Accommodation rate comprises 9.8% of total CIV but contributes 10.5% of rate revenue. The Cultural and Recreational rate comprises 0.3% of total CIV but contributes 0.1% of rate revenue due to the concession applied.

The following chart provides a snapshot of the current 2015/16 financial year's rate revenue by property type.

2015/16 Rate Revenue by Property Type



11. State Government imposed Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL)

Following a recommendation of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, the State Government changed how it collects revenue to pay for fire fighting services. This means residents no longer pay for a fire services levy through their property insurance. Instead, property owners see a separate charge on their Council Valuation and Rates Notice for this State Government tax.

The Fire Services Property Levy, which came into effect on 1 July 2013, resulted in a significant change to the role of local government in collecting the State government imposed levy. Under State legislation, Council has no choice but to collect this State Government levy on behalf of the State Government via its rating system.

It is important to note that the levy is payable by all rateable and non-rateable property owners as determined by the State Government. The Fire Services Property Levy is not subject to the rate cap. It currently comprises fixed and variable components and the levy has typically increased at a rate that has been significantly above the level of increase imposed by the rate cap on general rates.

The Fire Services Property Levy is shown separately on the Valuation and Rates Notice, clearly indicating that it is a State Government imposed levy.

12. Conclusion

In preparing this rating strategy, Council endeavours to balance service levels in accordance with the needs, means and expectations of the community with rating options and levels to

adequately resource Council's role, functions and responsibilities. In setting rates, Council gives primary consideration to its strategic objectives, sound financial management principles, annual budget considerations, the legislative framework, the current economic climate, other external factors and the overall impacts upon the community. Council has reviewed all rates (including differential rates) and charges and compared with those charged by other neighbouring G21 region councils.

This Rating Strategy includes a set of recommended directions in relation to future rating principles and practices.

The summary of recommendations, as defined in this document, are as follows:

- ***Continue to use Capital Improved Value (CIV) as the methodology for valuing properties;***
- ***Continue its practice of applying the general or residential rate to residential vacant land given the comparatively low number of vacant lots and the comparatively high land values within the Borough;***
- ***Continue to apply a 130% differential rate to commercial properties including those with six or more bedrooms rented out as holiday accommodation, given the additional funds that Council allocates to visitor information services and tourism promotion and the benefits that flow to commercial properties;***
- ***Continue to apply a 110% differential rate to properties providing tourist accommodation that have five or less bedrooms rented out as holiday accommodation, given the additional funds that Council allocates to visitor information services and tourism promotion and the lesser benefits that flow to smaller scale tourist accommodation properties (rate payers);***
- ***Continue to apply a rating concession of 75% (ie. require payment of 25% of the general rate) to those volunteer-managed and operated, not for profit community clubs that are located on rateable land.***
- ***Continue the current practice of not applying a municipal charge on rateable properties.***
- ***Continue to apply the fixed rate Green Waste charge to residential premises rated as General rate or Tourism Accommodation rate, however exclude vacant residential land from 2016/17, to recover expenditure incurred in the provision of this service.***
- ***Introduce a CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge applied to all residential premises rated as General rate and Tourist Accommodation properties that are capable of being occupied. This is in response to the new rate capping legislation, whereby the recovery of costs associated with providing residential kerbside waste collection and disposal would be achieved by way of a CIV-based Kerbside Waste charge. Note the Commercial rated and Cultural & Recreational rated properties will no longer contribute to the cost of the service, as these particular properties do not have access to the service.***
- ***Introduce a fixed Public Waste charge applied to all rateable properties in the Borough for the collection and disposal of public waste. This is in response to the new rate capping legislation, whereby the recovery of costs associated with providing public waste collection and disposal would be achieved by way of a fixed Public Waste charge.***

- *Apply additional fixed charges (as detailed in the Council budget fees and charges schedule) for any additional bins for the purposes of kerbside collection of general waste, recycling, green waste and disposal.*
- *Increase Council's pension rebate from \$20 to \$40 per eligible ratepayer property, which is in addition to the pension concession funded by State government under the Municipal Rates Concession Scheme, and that this be applied consistent with applicable pensioner definitions used by other levels of government (refer definitions in this report), given the financial pressures impacting on pensioners with fixed incomes;*
- *Continue the current practices in respect to collection and administration of rates including its present approaches to payment options, interest on arrears and overdue rates, deferred payments, financial hardship and rate payment by instalments.*