



Camping and Accommodation Strategy



**Bellarine
Bayside**
Coastal Management



Who we are and what we do

Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management is appointed by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change to manage 17km of foreshore reserves between Pt Richards in Portarlington to St Leonards. We manage the Portarlington Holiday Park, five popular seasonal campgrounds, the beaches, parklands, flora and fauna, coastal infrastructure including boat ramps, community facilities, and a range of leases and licences.

Resources generated from delivering affordable and enjoyable holiday experiences to Victorians at our Holiday Park and campgrounds are reinvested back into the foreshore reserves and our camping operations.

Why do we need a Camping and Accommodation Strategy?

It is critical for Bellarine Bayside to generate adequate and ongoing revenue to reinvest into the maintenance and improvement of our natural and built assets and the renewal of our foreshore facilities.

Recent financial modelling has identified that increased investment is required in Bellarine Bayside's operations over the long-term, especially relating to asset replacement. While there is high seasonal demand for our accommodation, there is currently inadequate revenue to manage and improve the coastal reserves and assets to expected community standards, as well as investing in holiday park accommodation and facilities.

Opportunities exist to broaden Bellarine Bayside's accommodation options to better utilise the off-peak season, increase income and diversify our revenue-generating sources.

The Strategy, which has been prepared in consultation with our partners, community and campers, provides us with a plan that aims to achieve long-term financial sustainability.

Tourism in the Greater Geelong and Bellarine Region

Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula was named in 2017 as one of Lonely Planet's top 10 worldwide 'Best Value Destinations' who described it as "a laid-back escape with inexpensive tours and tastings".

Geelong is Victoria's largest regional centre and its fastest growing region. Major events, proximity to Melbourne, the growing food and wine sector, and coastal, boating and fishing activities will continue to drive growth in demand.

The Greater Geelong and The Bellarine Tourism Development Plan 2016 forecasts that the current estimate of 5 million visitors per year to the Geelong and Bellarine region is expected to grow significantly over the next 15 years, with a forecast of an additional 1.2 to 1.7 million visitors to be attracted to the region by 2030.

Bellarine Bayside's holiday parks are a significant contributor to the region's economy and social fabric. Research conducted by the Caravan and Camping Industry Association in 2013 indicated that "additional economic income" to the region, generated from Bellarine Bayside campgrounds, was in excess of \$10 million a year.

How has the Strategy been developed?

The Strategy is the culmination of a 12-month planning process, which has drawn from a range of inputs including:

- **Camper and community engagement;**
- **Recommendations from specialist consultants;**
- **Analysis of Bellarine Bayside's finances, assets and business model;**
- **Analysis of the regional visitation and tourism market and trends;**
- **Advice from industry experts and leaders; and**
- **Consultation with local government and partners.**

Importantly the Strategy has been informed by a broad range of community views and aspirations that reflect the diverse users of our local assets. Data generated through numerous camper surveys and an extensive consultation program have been used as a foundation for the Strategy.





The Strategy

In summary, the Strategy consists of four Key Strategic Priorities.

Strategic Priority 1:

Build Our Brand

Improve the exposure and positioning of Bellarine Bayside's accommodation offer to attract new markets and broaden the customer base.

Key Initiatives:

- Move to online bookings;
- Prepare and implement a commercial marketing plan to guide the organisation's marketing activities;
- In partnership with the City of Greater Geelong, invest in the promotion and facilitation of new public events and coastal activities on the foreshore reserves to stimulate the local economy, increase exposure and visitation rates; and
- Develop accommodation packages in partnership with regional attractions and businesses i.e. wineries, restaurants, event facilitators, Port Phillip Ferries, various clubs.

Strategic Priority 2:

Improve Visitor Experience

Continue to improve and add to our services and facilities to capitalise on the northern Bellarine's stunning natural attributes and coastal attractions.

Key Initiatives:

- Develop new and innovative products and services for our visitors i.e. personalised glamping;
- Understand and respond to customer needs as a key to providing services;
- Continue to replace aging infrastructure with modern and environmentally sustainable facilities; and
- Develop facilities and services to attract off-peak season markets i.e. high-quality, well-designed accommodation.



Strategic Priority 3:

Develop Low Season Products

Focus on delivering products and experiences which increase low season yield and occupancy rates

Key Initiatives:

- Develop facilities and services such as meeting rooms to attract 'niche' markets such as community clubs and associations;
- Investigate the provision of quality roofed accommodation options; and
- Optimise the extensive beachfront and under-utilised land for a variety of accommodation options.

Strategic Priority 4:

Sustainable Business

Work within our unique business model to find innovative ways to diversify revenue streams while maintaining our core legislative functions.

Key Initiatives:

- Establish and grow an investment fund for capital works projects;
- Investigate options for relocation of administration and consolidation of back-of-house operations;
- Investigate the feasibility of partnerships within the private sector;
- Work in partnership with other agencies to develop the Portarlington Foreshore Harbour Precinct; and
- Investigate opportunities for increased user-pay services.

*"Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula was named in 2017 as one of **Lonely Planet's top 10 worldwide Best Value Destinations**"*



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