



The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan 2012

A coastal management plan
for the northern Bellarine foreshore

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of Management Incorporated.
ABN 12 722 496 556.
PO Box 40, Portarlington VIC 3223.

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recycled paper in a process chlorine free environment under the ISO
14001 environmental management system.

Cover Image by Sue Anderson
'Indented Heads Holiday', 2011
oil on linen
60x70cm
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The northern Bellarine foreshore

– the place and its people

Aboriginal people have a long and enduring connection to the northern Bellarine foreshore. Clans from the Wadawurrung language group have lived along the coast for at least 25,000 years and many archaeological sites are reminders of the foreshore's role in providing access to marine food sources and places of ceremony. Today the Wadawurrung people continue this association as the guardians of Aboriginal cultural heritage along the foreshore.

The foreshore also tells the story of early European settlement. The explorer Matthew Flinders camped at Indented Head in 1802 as a base to explore the You Yangs and reaches of the Bellarine Peninsula. William Buckley who escaped from a convict boat in 1803, lived with the Wadawurrung for over 30 years. In 1835, John Batman's party explored the opportunities for the large pastoral runs that were later opened up on the Peninsula and west of Geelong.

The townships of Portarlington, St Leonards and Indented Head and the hinterland still carry the evidence of early farming and fishing. The Portarlington jetty was built to ship farming and fishing production in 1958. These towns continue to be an important focus for community life and a centre for a local economy built around commercial fishing, tourism and farming.

The beauty of the northern Bellarine foreshore has attracted visitors and holidaymakers for many years. In the 19th century, paddle steamers brought holidaymakers to stay at the Portarlington Grand Hotel, built in 1886, and other holiday venues. The proximity to Melbourne and Geelong and the easy access to affordable camping and caravanning made the foreshore an attractive holiday destination for Victorian working class and rural families. Some of today's holidaymakers have associations with the foreshore that go back generations.

The northern Bellarine foreshore, with its gentle waters, coastal flora and bird life, wetlands, beaches and panoramic views across Port Phillip Bay to the You Yangs and Melbourne skyline, continues to attract people today. The towns along the foreshore have grown over recent years with people seeking out retirement or a coastal lifestyle within easy commuting distance from Melbourne and Geelong. Holidaymakers continue to camp and caravan along the foreshore or stay in the many holiday houses in the townships, enjoying the calm bayside beaches, boating and fishing activities.

The foreshore remains a place that is sought after for relaxed, affordable holidays; a place of retreat and livelihood, and a place where the sea and the foreshore provide opportunities for engagement with the coastal environment. People value this rich heritage, along with the natural ecological values and the serene beauty of the foreshore, and want to see it protected and reinstated where it is threatened or degraded.

Bellarine Bayside formally acknowledges the traditional owners of the northern Bellarine Peninsula land, the Wadawurrung people, and pays respects to their elders past and present.



Wadawurrung elder Uncle Bryon Powell, launches the northern Bellarine foreshore planning process in 2011.

From the Chair, Bellarine Bayside

It gives me great pleasure to present Bellarine Bayside's strategic plan for the foreshore areas of the northern Bellarine Peninsula between St Leonards and Portarlington. This Plan is the first ever attempt to capture our collective aspirations for this significant and much-loved part of Port Phillip Bay.

Our vision of a welcoming, accessible and restored coastal environment, which recognises its Aboriginal past and is protected for future generations, could not have been created without sustained input from people who live, work, visit and holiday on the northern Bellarine. In this way, we are jointly engaged as custodians of our local area in keeping with the Victorian Government's framework for locally based management of coastal reserves.

The purpose of the Foreshore Plan is to provide guidance, in the context of available resources, to address significant issues, challenges and opportunities for the foreshore over the next 15 to 20 years.

The Plan encapsulates our strategy to meet the challenges and progressively realise our shared vision for the foreshore. Achieving our goals requires a collaborative effort by the key agencies that share responsibility for this area of Port Phillip Bay including the City of Greater Geelong, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria.

Bellarine Bayside is a relatively small entity, however we are well positioned to stay attuned to the interests of local communities, interpret relevant government policy and bring other entities together to coordinate our planning, policy making and management activities. We see this as one of the most important challenges over the next three years.

This Plan is the result of the efforts and contributions of many individuals, groups and organisations that have an interest in the northern Bellarine foreshore and its three township communities of St Leonards, Portarlington and Indented Head. The breadth, depth and diversity of this input contribute to its core strength and broader ownership.

The emphasis on organisational development and learning in the Plan reflects our commitment to establishing strong governance, sound management, meaningful community engagement, transparent decision-making and timely reporting to government and community.

The Plan provides a clear sense of direction and priorities that will assist us in aligning planning, design and development on the foreshore so that our vision for the northern Bellarine is realised over time and that we can take advantage of the many benefits of working with others to achieve shared goals.

We will seek to keep abreast of changes and developments along the northern Bellarine including those that are a result of natural coastal processes such as erosion, adapting the Plan over time so that it is a living document.

This is the beginning of our work – work that is not possible without the continued involvement of all of our communities and stakeholders. I look forward to working with you to realise our vision for the northern Bellarine foreshore.



Cathy Whelan
Chair, Bellarine Bayside

On behalf of the Bellarine Bayside Governing Group: William (Bill) Dix, Julie Elterman, David Gray, Hazel Ingram and Amy Paterson

Acknowledgments

Bellarine Bayside wishes to acknowledge the contributions, support and commitment of many people who worked with us on the development of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan.

We thank the members of the northern *Bellarine communities*, including holiday makers, who enthusiastically participated in the consultation process, contributing their visions, ideas and feedback. Their input has been critical to the development of a strategic framework that reflects the aspirations of local communities for the future of the foreshore.

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan *Project Steering Committee* and *Community Reference Group* provided thoughtful strategic advice and feedback at key stages of the planning process and we thank them for their generous commitment of time.

Bellarine Bayside is especially grateful for the willing collaboration, advice and time commitments of our key partner agencies – the *Department of Sustainability and Environment*, the *City of Greater Geelong*, the *Central Coastal Board*, the *Corangamite Catchment Management Authority* and *Parks Victoria*.

We thank the *City of Greater Geelong* for their contribution of \$30,000 towards the Coastal Trail Plan, as part of this planning process. The Coastal Trail project has also benefited from the commitment and input of the *Coastal Trail Community Reference Group*.

The project has also had the advantage of considered input and strategic advice from participants in the *Coastal Strategy Workshop* facilitated by Michael Henry early in 2012 and the *Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation*.

A detailed listing of all contributors to the development of the Northern Bellarine foreshore Plan is attached in appendix 10.1.

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Bellarine Bayside is especially grateful to Kerry O'Neill who worked with the Committee to develop the final draft of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan.

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Executive Summary

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (The Plan) is a strategic framework for the protection, enhancement, development and management of the Crown-land coastal reserve along the northern Bellarine Peninsula over the next 15 to 20 years.



The *Victorian Coastal Management Act (1995)* requires committees of management for Crown land coastal reserves to develop coastal management plans for land under their control. This Plan fulfils that requirement. It also outlines how Bellarine Bayside interprets the Victorian Government's policy for Victoria's coastal areas, the *Victorian Coastal Strategy (2008)*, at the local level.

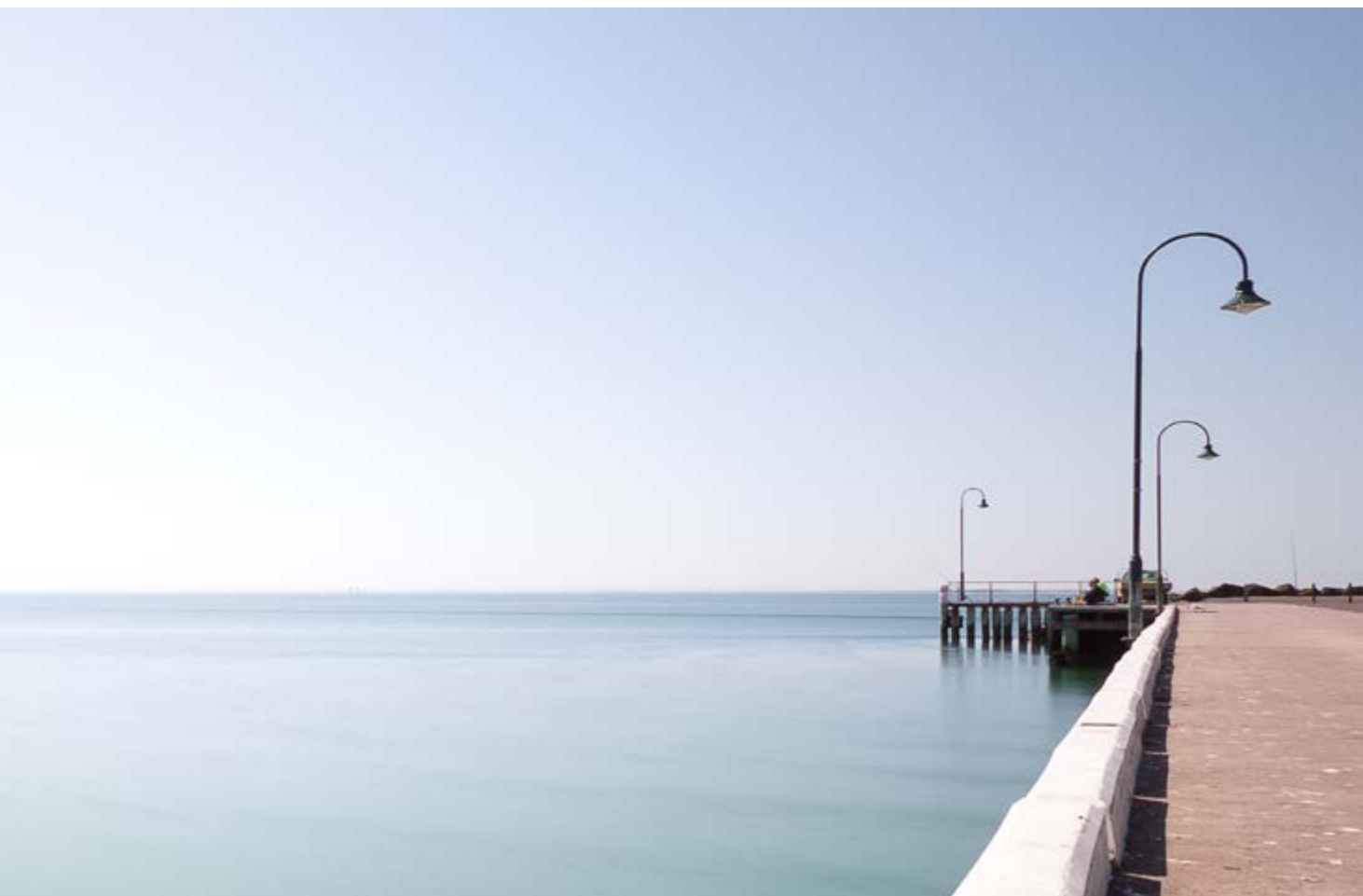
The Plan has been developed after extensive consultation and engagement with communities along the northern Bellarine, visitors and holidaymakers, and agencies with responsibilities and interests associated with the foreshore.

The Foreshore Plan includes a vision, the goals, objectives and actions that will give effect to the vision, and a business plan outlining the work program and budget to implement the first three years of the Plan. A master plan to guide the location and development of specific projects along the foreshore will be produced as an accompanying document.

A vision for the foreshore

The vision is for the northern Bellarine foreshore to be:

- an attractive, tranquil and safe coastal environment that reflects the heritage and distinctive character of Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards
- connected by a well-used coastal trail with opportunities to experience the natural ecology and delight in the beauty and atmosphere of the foreshore landscape
- a rich source of recreational and coastal experiences to engage and enhance the wellbeing of people living and working locally, and visiting the area for affordable holidays
- a place where the need to protect and restore our fragile coast and adapt to the challenges of environmental change is finely balanced with social, cultural and economic opportunities
- a place that is treasured and cared for, where communities have pride, and visitors feel welcome
- a place where local people, community groups, businesses and government agencies work together to plan, care for and enhance the foreshore.



Issues and challenges

The Plan is a response to the issues and challenges identified through community and stakeholder consultation and review of research and trends facing the foreshore over the next 15 to 20 years. They include:

- balancing the impact of population growth, increased visitation and development pressures with protecting and enhancing the foreshore environment and ecosystems
- upgrading ageing infrastructure and improving parking and boating facilities
- adapting and responding to changing coastal processes including erosion, sand drift and the impacts of climate change
- improving the look and feel of the foreshore environment through consistent and responsive maintenance programs and enhancing the design and functioning of stormwater systems
- protecting and conserving biodiversity and the natural environment, reinstating ecosystems and revegetating foreshore areas
- continuing to offer a range of high quality and affordable holiday experiences for Victorians at all times of the year
- improving access to beaches and community facilities along the foreshore, particularly disability access
- developing a coastal trail for pedestrians and cyclists to connect communities along the foreshore and create a high quality recreation experience for visitors
- ensuring local communities, visitors and holidaymakers are informed and have opportunities to participate in shaping the future of the foreshore through effective community consultation, education and stewardship programs
- protecting and valuing the Aboriginal and cultural heritage of the foreshore
- ensuring good governance and management of the foreshore.

Executive Summary (cont.)

Directions for the future

Five goals, with supporting objectives, and 76 actions have been identified to implement the Foreshore Plan over the planning horizon. The Plan will be monitored and reported on annually for progress against these goals, with a major review every three years to take account of changes in the foreshore and broader government policy environments.

Five Goals to implement the Plan	Objectives
1. Understanding, protecting and enhancing the natural environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understand the natural environment and its ecological values.2. Protect and enhance natural environments.3. Respond to the adverse impacts of coastal processes and plan for climate change.4. Improve stormwater design and management.5. Develop best practice environmental sustainability.
2. Connecting communities and the coast	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Strengthen community engagement and participation.7. Support opportunities for partnership, shared use and stewardship of the foreshore.8. Value and express the cultural heritage of the foreshore.
3. Facilitating access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Identify activity and recreation nodes as a focus for consolidating development along the foreshore.10. Develop a coastal trail linking Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards.11. Improve access to, and use of, foreshore facilities.12. Improve and expand use of Crown land caravan and camping grounds.13. Improve boating and fishing facilities.14. Support opportunities for tourism.
4. Improving built environments along the foreshore	<ol style="list-style-type: none">15. Upgrade built environments for the benefit and enjoyment of local communities and visitors to the foreshore.
5. Developing Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, adaptive and accountable organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others	<ol style="list-style-type: none">16. Build organisational effectiveness and capability17. Integrate and co-ordinate interagency planning and delivery.

Major initiatives

Over the next three years Bellarine Bayside will deliver a number of major initiatives through the Foreshore Plan. These initiatives will have a noticeable impact in improving the northern Bellarine foreshore and on Bellarine Bayside's engagement with local communities and stakeholders. They include:

- the development of a Coastal Trail linking communities along the foreshore
- major revegetation of the foreshore
- the upgrade of the Indented Head Hall
- improvements to boating and fishing facilities
- initiatives to improve community engagement
- the development of Holiday Parks and Camping policy and strategy including a master plan and subsequent works for the progressive upgrade and landscaping of Portarlington Holiday Park
- projects to mitigate risk and protect the foreshore and landscape values
- continued work to build a healthy, accountable and transparent organisation.

First year priorities

Establishing plans and policies for long-term capital expenditure and a cyclical maintenance program will be high priorities in 2012–13. There will also be an emphasis on developing plans for the progressive upgrade of infrastructure, undertaking the scoping, planning, design and detailed costing for specific projects and delivering a smaller number of projects that are ready to commence. In years two and three, with much of the groundwork completed, the emphasis will shift to project delivery. Bellarine Bayside has approved a budget of approximately \$814,000 and is seeking additional funding of approximately \$450,000 to support implementation of 26 projects in 2012–13. In addition, a range of actions in the Plan will be undertaken through the annual operational budget.

Implementing the Plan

Delivering the Foreshore Plan will require a high level of interagency cooperation to deliver a seamless approach to protecting, enhancing and managing the coast. While Bellarine Bayside has primary responsibility for the management of the northern Bellarine foreshore, a variety of government agencies (in particular, the City of Geelong, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment) have statutory roles in relation to the planning, management and maintenance of the foreshore and will be important partners in delivering the Plan.

1.0

Introduction

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (The Plan) is a strategic plan outlining a vision for the protection, enhancement, development and management of the Crown land coastal reserve along the northern Bellarine Peninsula over the next 15 to 20 years. It describes the goals and actions that will be undertaken by the Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management (Bellarine Bayside) towards delivering the vision.

This Plan has been developed after extensive consultation and engagement with communities along the northern Bellarine, visitors and holidaymakers, and agencies with responsibilities and interests associated with the foreshore.



2.0

Background to the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan

The Victorian Coastal Management Act 1995 requires that a coastal management plan is prepared and implemented by the responsible committee of management for coastal Crown land reserves and endorsed by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan fulfils the requirements of the Act.

The Plan outlines the strategic directions for the foreshore and includes a work program and budgetary commitments (Business Plan) for the first three years of implementation. The Plan will guide the development of policy, detailed plans and designs, and works to improve and maintain the foreshore. It provides the strategic rationale for future applications for funds from Government and other agencies to support these endeavours. A master plan (that includes the Coastal Trail Project) is being produced as a supporting document to guide the development of more detailed landscape, infrastructure and coastal trail plans and projects. Figure 1 describes the key elements that make up the Foreshore Plan and its relationship to the *Victorian Coastal Management Act* and policy framework.

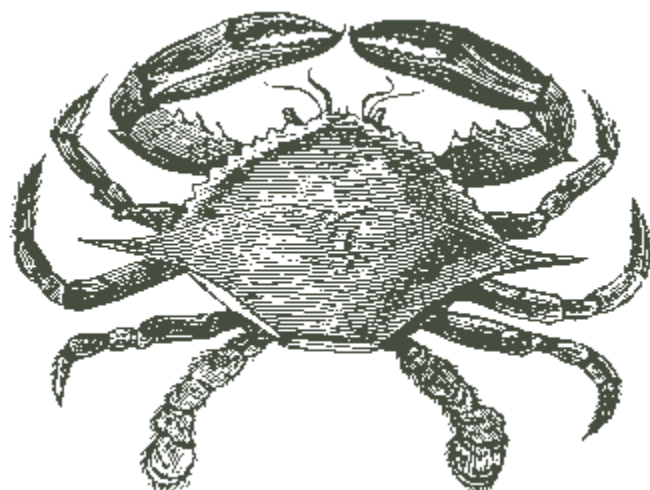
2.1 Purpose of the Plan

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan is a strategic plan for the Crown land reserve along the northern Bellarine Peninsula. In accordance with *Victorian Coastal Management Act*, a coastal management plan must:

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

As described by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), the main objectives of a coastal management and business plan are to:

- provide a vision for the management of the Crown land foreshore/coastal 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
- define the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the management of the reserve and implementation of the actions.



2.0 Background to the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (cont.)

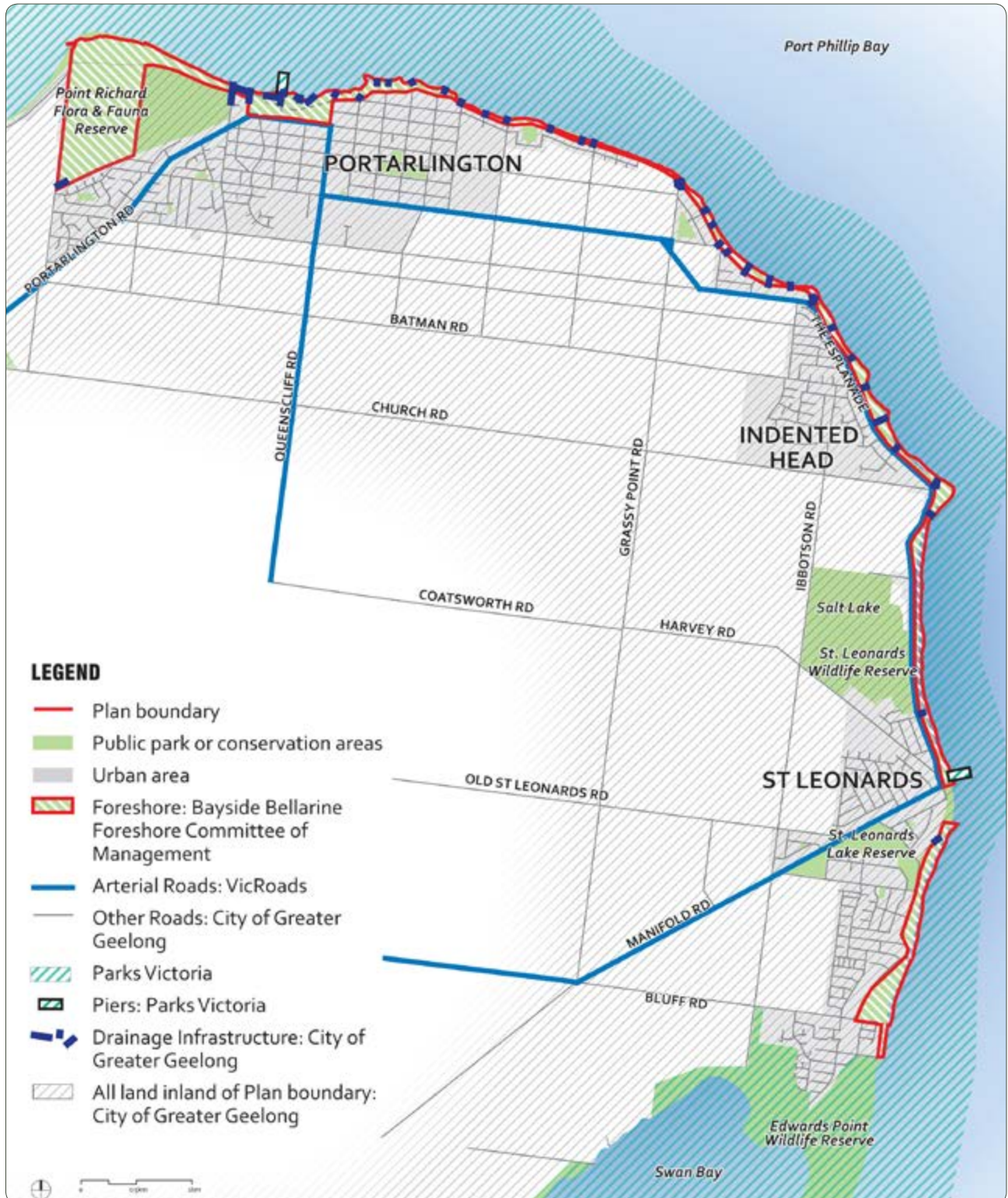
Figure 1. Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan



2.2 The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan area

The northern Bellarine foreshore comprises 17 kilometres of low-lying Crown land along the northern Bellarine Peninsula coast. It has an area of approximately 200 hectares and extends along the south-western rim of Port Phillip Bay between Point Richards, immediately west of Portarlington, to Edwards Point, at the southern edge of the St Leonards township.

Map 1. Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan Area



2.0 Background to the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (cont.)

2.3 Development of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan

The key steps in developing the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan are outlined below. Stakeholder and community engagement have been a fundamental part of this process.

Figure 2. Steps in the development of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan



2.4 Managing the foreshore

Committees of management, such as Bellarine Bayside, are established under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* to manage, improve, maintain and control reserved Crown land across Victoria. Bellarine Bayside is responsible for the planning, management and maintenance of the coastal Crown Land between Portarlington and St Leonards as delegated by the Minister in accordance with the *Coastal Management Act 1995*. Bellarine Bayside (the Committee of Management) has six members, appointed by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change for three years through a formal public application process.

Along the foreshore, Bellarine Bayside is responsible for beaches, public open spaces and parks, flora and fauna, foreshore buildings and infrastructure, coastal trails, boat ramps, public amenities, signage, community facilities, licenses and leases for use of land and buildings, and operating caravan parks and

camping grounds. The Committee of Management employs a Chief Executive Officer with an operational team of 30 people.

While Bellarine Bayside has primary management responsibility for the foreshore, a variety of government agencies have statutory roles in relation to the planning, management and maintenance of the northern Bellarine foreshore. In particular, the City of Geelong, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment have critical complementary and intersecting roles and responsibilities that demand a high level of interagency cooperation to deliver a seamless approach to protecting, enhancing and managing the coast. The key agencies and their roles are summarised overleaf.

Bellarine Bayside also engages with a wide range of local community groups and businesses. These groups provide crucial support and stewardship for Bellarine Bayside where its mission is to protect and enhance the northern Bellarine foreshore.



2.0 Background to the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (cont.)

Agency	Role
Minister for Environment and Climate Change	<p>The Minister for Environment and Climate Change is responsible for action to effectively manage and protect Victoria's natural environment. Key portfolio areas of responsibility include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • driving new investment in waste and recycling programs • supporting local climate change and energy efficiency initiatives • bushfire prevention through the planned burning program • protection and conservation of Victoria's parks and wildlife • management of public land, biodiversity and natural resources.
Department of Sustainability and the Environment (DSE)	<p>DSE is the Victorian Government agency responsible for the management of land, water and natural resources in a sustainable manner. DSE is therefore ultimately responsible for the Bellarine foreshore Crown land. The Department administers the Coastal Management Act and is directly involved in undertaking works to protect and improve Victoria's coast through a range of programs including Beach Renourishment.</p>
Victorian Coastal Council (VCC)	<p>The VCC is the peak body for the strategic planning and management of Victoria's coast. It coordinates the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy and Coastal Action Plans and reports annually to the Minister on the implementation of this strategy.</p>
Central Coastal Board (CCB)	<p>The Central Coastal Board is the strategic coastal planning advisory body to the Minister for the central coastal region. It is able to prepare Coastal Action Plans for the region.</p>
Parks Victoria (PV)	<p>Parks Victoria is a statutory authority responsible for the managing, protecting and improving Victoria's parks and the waterways of Port Phillip Bay, Western Port and the Yarra and Maribyrnong rivers. On the northern Bellarine foreshore, Parks Victoria manages Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve, piers and boating and swimming zones and is also the lead agency responsible for the Portarlington Safe Harbour Plan.</p>
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority	<p>The Authority is responsible for the protection and sustainable development of land, vegetation and water resources in the Corangamite region. It has a major role in the protection and restoration of native vegetation and biodiversity values in marine and coastal environments in the Bellarine Peninsula.</p>
City of Greater Geelong (CoGG)	<p>CoGG is the local government authority responsible for the Greater Geelong municipality. It provides municipal services for foreshore communities (e.g. roads, rubbish, local laws, town planning, emergency management planning, drainage, recreation and community services). However, for communities along the northern Bellarine foreshore, many facilities and open spaces traditionally provided by local councils are on foreshore Crown land and managed by Bellarine Bayside.</p>
Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation	<p>The <i>Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> recognises Aboriginal people 'as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage'. Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs), designated by the Aboriginal Heritage Council, have important roles in managing and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. The Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation is the RAP for the area including the northern Bellarine foreshore.</p>

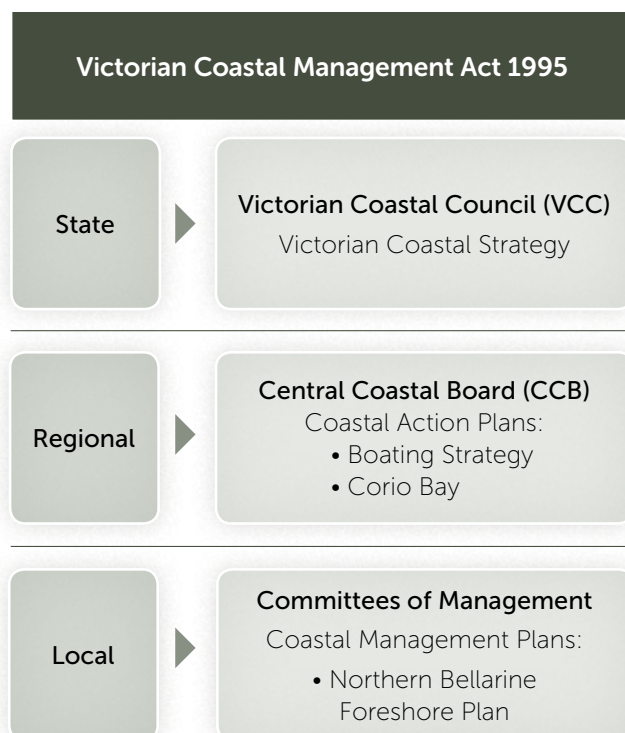
2.5 Broader planning and policy framework

The northern Bellarine coast and marine environments are subject to an extensive array of government legislation and policy. A comprehensive list of the relevant policy is attached in appendix 10.2. Of particular relevance to this Foreshore Plan are the requirements of *Victorian Coastal Management Act (1995)* and *City of Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*.

Consistent with the requirements of the *Coastal Management Act*, a coastal management plan must also give effect to the *Victorian Coastal Strategy (2008)* and any Coastal Action Plan applying to the area.

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan must therefore take into account the *Corio Bay Coastal Action Plan (2005)* and the *Boating Coastal Action Plan (2008)*. These Coastal Action Plans provide strategic direction and actions for coastal management along the northern Bellarine Peninsula. The strategic objectives that influence the development of the northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan are summarised overleaf.

Figure 3. Hierarchy of coastal legislation and plans



The *Victorian Coastal Strategy* seeks to:

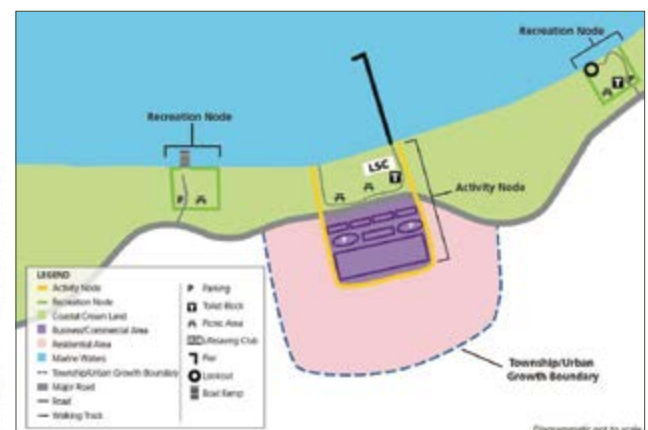
- protect coastal environments
- provide clear direction for the future use of coastal and marine environments
- ensure suitable development of the coast
- ensure sustainable use of coastal resources.

The Coastal Strategy requires the delineation of Activity and Recreation Nodes to assist in the consolidation of urban development in existing settlements and the protection of non-urban landscapes between settlements.

Activity nodes provide a focus area for access to the coast, services, and social interaction within coastal settlements and coastal urban areas, and link and integrate the public and private realms within this area.

Recreation nodes provide access to recreation and water-related activities where a genuine need is identified through a strategic assessment, whilst limiting the scale and intensity of development to that which is appropriate to the area.

Figure 4. Illustrative Example of Delineating Activity Node and Recreation Node



Source: *Victorian Coastal Strategy*, 2008, p.55

The VCS adopts a hierarchy of principles that should be used to guide planning and decision-making about land use and development on coastal land (see appendix 10.3).

2.0 Background to the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (cont.)

The Corio Bay Coastal Action Plan emphasises:

- restricting urban development and intensive recreation activities to existing urban boundaries and identified growth areas
- protecting rural and coastal landscapes, managing coastal erosion and conserving biodiversity and revegetating wetlands, cliffs and primary dunes that have a conservation role
- increased availability of suitable foreshore land for public recreation
- improving boating facilities
- consolidating camping and active recreation uses away from primary dune areas
- improving water quality and the management of waste water and stormwater
- reducing land and marine pests affecting natural habitats
- protecting Aboriginal and historic heritage sites
- supporting sustainable aquaculture
- supporting appropriate tourism
- community involvement in coastal management; and better access to information about the coast and its environmental management.

The Boating Coastal Action Plan emphasises:

- improving the level of service and the efficiency of existing facilities along the northern Bellarine foreshore
- upgrading existing facilities to better meet future demand adding value to the boating network through the provision of new facilities
- decommissioning redundant or poorly sited facilities
- providing a boating destination at Portarlington by significantly upgrading existing boating facilities to meet recreational and commercial boating needs and encouraging a mix of activities for locals and visiting boaters; ensuring any new or upgraded facilities do not negatively impact on the marine national park or Ramsar values by discouraging access to Swan Bay; and that no new boating facilities will be constructed south of the township of St. Leonards due to proximity to the Port Phillip Heads Marine Park.



The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme controls land use and development for the northern Bellarine coastal and marine environments. Its Local Planning Policy Framework states:

The rural and coastal areas on the Bellarine Peninsula form an important non-urban break between settlements. They are highly valued for their scenic attributes, tourism function, environmental function and lifestyle appeal.

The Bellarine Peninsula is one of the fastest growing areas in the City of Greater Geelong. Population growth on the Bellarine Peninsula is being driven by the attractiveness of the peninsula as a relaxed lifestyle destination within close proximity to urban Geelong.

Appropriately managing urban growth on the Bellarine Peninsula will be critical to retaining the peninsula's identity and attributes.

The Council has adopted local structure plans for Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards that promote urban containment and note that the three towns are unsuitable for high future urban growth.

In addition, the Council has developed the Bellarine Strategic Plan 2006–2016 that outlines directions for future land use, development, community infrastructure and services in the Bellarine Peninsula.

3.0

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore

3.1 Communities along the foreshore

The three townships along the northern Bellarine Foreshore – Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards – serve small communities of full-time residents, part-time residents, holidaymakers and visitors to the northern Bellarine Peninsula. In 2012 these townships were estimated to have a combined permanent population of close to 6,900 people, forecast to increase to more than 9,000 by 2031. Portarlington is the largest of these towns with an estimated population of 3,600 (*CoGG Population Forecasts*).

Many people in the communities of the northern Bellarine have long-established and deep connections with the foreshore and coastline, some going back generations. For Aboriginal people these connections are cultural and traditional. There is active engagement in community life and a love for the landscape and townships.

There are also a number of challenges facing these communities including an ageing population, limited employment opportunities, a level of social disadvantage and changes to the character of the area due to new development.

The towns are popular holiday and tourist destinations, especially over the summer months, when visitors flock to the coast to enjoy the scenic and peaceful attributes of the foreshore. For example, in the peak holiday period between December and January in 2010–2011, the combined population of these communities was



more than 31,000 people, with almost 17,000 of these staying in holiday homes and over 9,600 staying in caravans and camping areas (*CoGG Annual Economic Indicators Bulletin 2010–11*).

In the off-season, the occupancy rates for local towns can drop to less than 50 percent, although as these areas increase in popularity for retirees and older people, it is likely that the permanent population will increase.

Table 1. Peak Overnight Population

Peak Overnight Population December 2010 – January 2011					
	Permanent residents	Holiday Homes	Caravan Parks, Cabins and Camping	Hotels, Motels, apartments, BandBs, Units	Total peak overnight population
Indented Head	571	3765	1250	0	5586
Portarlington	3218	6135	6199	39	15591
St Leonards	1903	7001	1235	0	10139

Source: CoGG Annual Economic Indicators Bulletin 2010–11. *Note:* Example of a peak holiday night is New Year weekend.

3.0 The Northern Bellarine Foreshore (cont.)

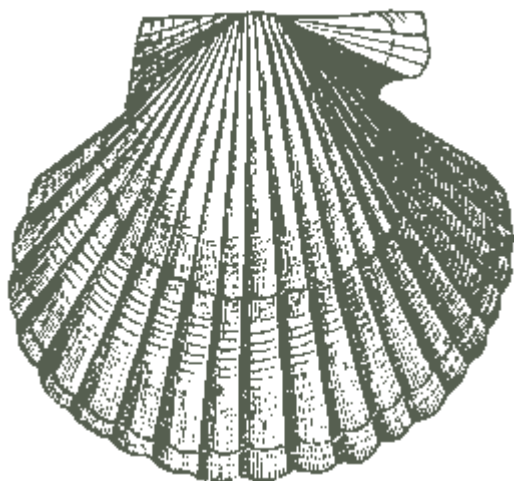
The northern Bellarine coast plays an important economic role in supporting the Bellarine and Greater Geelong regions, generating local economic activity and employment through recreational pursuits, tourism, fishing and aquaculture. Commercial aquaculture, particularly mussel farming, is synonymous with Portarlington and provides one of the few economic activities outside tourism and the service industry. In a 2007 analysis of the value of tourism in the Geelong region, it was estimated that \$155m of tourism related expenditure was spent on the Bellarine Peninsula.

The foreshore is an important social and community space, contributing to sense of place and identity for those communities who live near and people who regularly visit the area. It offers a diverse array of activities and experiences including boating, fishing, swimming, walking, cycling, picnics and passive recreation. It is a significant local open space resource for both the permanent and seasonal communities. Many community facilities are located on the foreshore.

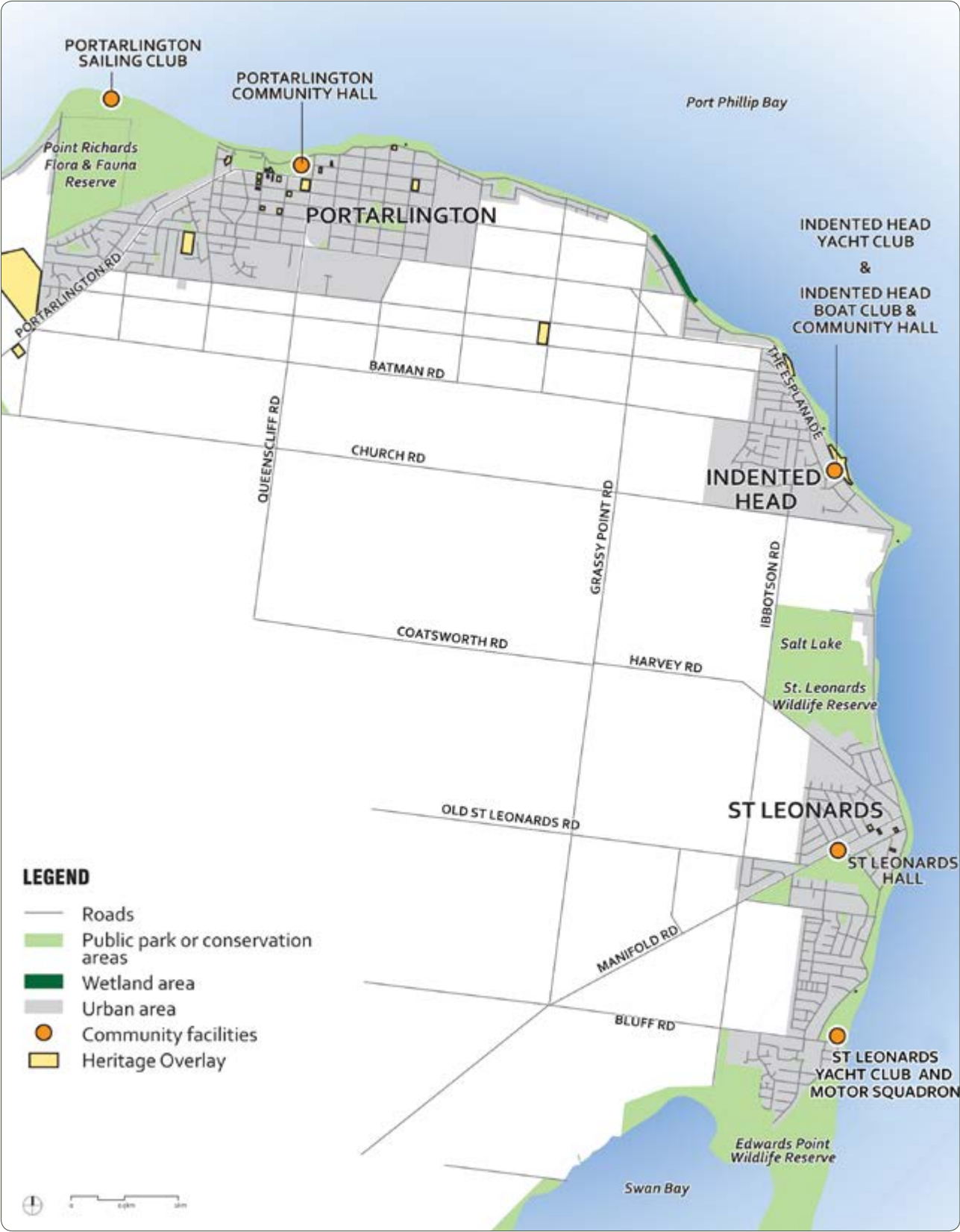
The caravan and camping parks are strong generators of expenditure in the local economy. Important local annual festivals and events including the National Celtic Festival, the Portarlington Mussel Festival, and cycling and triathlon events, attract thousands of visitors each year. Other complementary tourism destinations such as the growing number of vineyard cellar doors are attracting increasing numbers of tourists and raising the profile of the northern Bellarine.



The northern Bellarine coast supports an important aquaculture industry focused on blue mussel and farmed abalone production. Parks Victoria have developed a detailed plan for a Portarlington Safe Harbour as a high quality precinct incorporating commercial aquaculture and recreational fishing, boating, passive and active recreation and tourism activities for the local community and greater Bellarine Peninsula region. The Safe Harbour will be a major visitor attractor, significantly aid the development of the aquaculture industry and act as an economic stimulus for the northern Bellarine coast.



Map 2. Communities on the northern Bellarine foreshore



3.0 The Northern Bellarine Foreshore (cont.)

3.2 Natural and built environments

The 17 kilometre northern Bellarine foreshore and the 52 hectare Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve, possess significant ecological, recreational and tourist values.

The coast of the northern Bellarine has changed since colonial times. Natural vegetation has been reduced with surviving remnants offering small areas of valuable habitat. In many locations exotic trees now grace the skyline. Buildings, piers and roads have been constructed, along with other infrastructure, and houses line almost the entire length of the foreshore. The wide expanses of views across Port Phillip Bay remain, including a distant view to the Melbourne city skyline that provides a unique point of orientation on the horizon. The headlands and cliffs are distinctive and the landscape has evolved a character that is much loved by locals and visitors.

There are important heritage features, places that tell of Aboriginal history and continuing connections, and others that record colonial arrivals, the building of settlements, the development of farming and fishing as livelihoods and the enjoyment of the coast as a place for leisure and recreation.

The Victorian Government's Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (2006) identified two broad landscape character types along the northern Bellarine coast. These correspond very closely to the underlying geology and the vegetation communities and include both native and exotic species:

The Bay Slopes and Flats character area is low-sloping and occasionally gently undulating, with open expansive views east to Port Phillip Bay and Swan Bay. Open paddocks are dissected by exotic conifer windbreaks and native vegetation in roadside reserves which contain views in parts. At the coastal edge, the landform is very flat with low-energy beaches, salt lakes and some minor cliffs no more than five metres high at Indented Head.

Bellarine Hill is the major topographic feature of the peninsula, and this character area forms a significant landscape backdrop to many towns and viewing locations, and offers expansive outviews. While it is largely open and cleared, cultural vegetation patterns of windbreaks, vineyards and established exotic trees around homesteads are important landscape features.



Seven different ecological vegetation classes have been recorded along the northern Bellarine foreshore. However, much of the existing remnant vegetation is significantly degraded or modified and threatened by weed invasion, public access, land fill, clearing and dumping. Large areas of the foreshore are devoid of vegetation. The Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve is one of the few areas of native vegetation along the foreshore. It also has significant habitat values for fauna. The Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve, supported by Bellarine Bayside, play an important role in rehabilitating and maintaining the Reserve.

The northern Bellarine is located in the network of important wetland sites around Port Phillip Bay listed under the Convention on Wetlands (*Ramsar, Iran, 1971*) as providing critical support for the conservation of Wetlands of International Importance (or 'Ramsar sites'). The sites on the Bellarine Peninsula that are part of the Port Phillip Bay Ramsar Site include Swan Bay, Mud Islands, and Lake Connewarre and Reedy Lake. There are also a number of important northern Bellarine wetlands that support species for which the Ramsar site is recognised, including wetlands fringing Swan Bay, Indented Head Wetlands, the Salt Lagoon and Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve at St Leonards.

Natural coastal processes of wind, waves and tides continue to shape the northern Bellarine seashore affecting erosion and the build up of sand in short and long term cycles. Much of the coast is made up of mobile sand. A change in one location, such as the construction of a seawall, can have effects for a great distance along the coast by changing sand movement or wave patterns.

4.0

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

A comprehensive consultation program with local communities, visitors, holidaymakers and stakeholders was undertaken over a fourteen-month period to inform the development of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan. Appendix 10.1 provides a detailed listing of participants and contributors to the community and stakeholder consultation process.

4.1 Community consultation

The consultation for the Foreshore Plan was preceded by a series of six Community Listening Posts that were held between July and September 2010. The Community Listening Posts were an important step in efforts by Bellarine Bayside to re-engage with township communities – both residents and weekenders.

Both of these consultation processes have been critical to developing an understanding and appreciation of the concerns, priorities and aspirations of community stakeholders for the future of the northern Bellarine Foreshore. The steps in the consultation program for the Foreshore Plan are summarised below.

Under the Umbrella (Understanding community values, issues and priorities)	A marquee and stall under beach umbrellas on 26 and 27 January 2011, in six locations across the three townships, caravan/camping parks , main streets and Portarlington Pier (180 people attended)
A Scoping Summit (Identifying issues, challenges and opportunities for the Foreshore Plan)	A scoping summit was held in February 2011 bringing together Bellarine Bayside, NBFP Project Steering Committee and Community Reference Group; the consultant team, other experts and local opinion leaders in an investigation of the study area
Sharpening the Pencil (Key directions and strategies for the Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Round Tables (14 community discussions with over 100 people participating) • Online Survey (129 responses) • A Community Pin-Up (50 attendees).
Draft Plan (Community and stakeholder consultation and feedback on the Draft Foreshore Plan and Master Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your Say Day (73 attendees) • Plan on display in four locations • Postcards • Feedback forms (92 received) • Letters to stakeholder agencies • Submissions (12 received).
Community information bulletins	10 Community information bulletins about the development of the Foreshore Plan

4.0 Community and Stakeholder Consultation (cont.)



4.2 Stakeholder consultation and participation

The development of the Plan also involved community leaders and institutional stakeholders. A summary of consultation and engagement processes is listed below.

A Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan **Project Steering Committee** met six times during the project and included representatives from the partner organisations and the Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management.

A Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan **Community Reference Group** (CRG) was established to engage a wide range of community leaders from foreshore communities and involved a balance of representatives from Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards.

Consultation and discussions with **key institutional stakeholders**, essential to the implementation of the plan, was undertaken in July and August 2011 and early 2012; including the Central Coastal Board, City of Greater Geelong, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Parks Victoria, VicRoads and Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation (RAP).

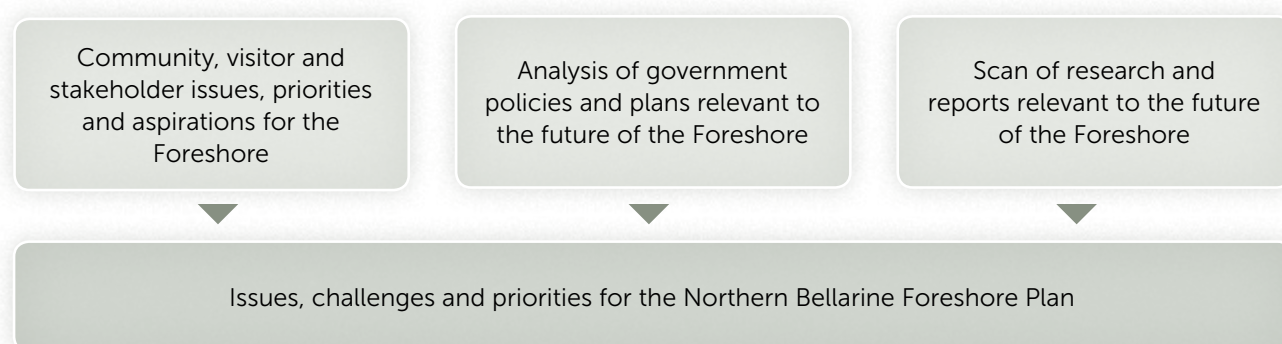
A **Coastal Trail Community Reference Group** (CTCRG) was convened to have detailed input into a project to develop a Northern Bellarine Coastal Trail. This Reference Group engaged a wide range of community views and captured detailed local knowledge about track conditions, issues and opportunities. It involved representatives from Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards.

A **Coastal Strategy Workshop** was conducted in early 2012, bringing together a range of people with expertise and experience in Victorian coastal strategy and management, and representing major stakeholder partners. The Workshop participants provided advice and their perspectives on the strategic directions emerging through the planning process.

5.0

Issues, Challenges and Priorities for the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan responds to the issues, challenges and priorities outlined below. They have been shaped by the outcomes of consultation with communities and stakeholders; an analysis of government policies and a scan of research and trends that have a bearing on the future of the Foreshore.



Population growth, increased visitation and development pressures

Population growth and increased visitation are placing demands on the resources of the northern Bellarine Coast. This is driven by population growth on the Bellarine Peninsula and in the Geelong region, coupled with improved access to the coast, urban development in local towns and a trend toward non-resident ratepayers becoming permanent residents.

People strongly value the peaceful, relaxing atmosphere in the small towns and along the northern Bellarine foreshore, particularly given their less commercial and developed character. However, there is an ongoing tension between continuing urban development pressures, responding to demands for camping and holiday opportunities, and maintaining and enhancing the ecological values of the coast. The potential threat of overdevelopment and the subsequent loss of character is an important issue for local people. There is also the potential for conflict between uses on the water such as jet skis and water craft, and the quieter enjoyment of the beach and foreshore.

Coastal processes

The powerful natural processes of wind, waves and erosion and human activities continue to shape the foreshore. Sea level rises, high tides and storm events associated with climate change will increase the effects of these coastal processes and present a major challenge for the future. These events are expected to occur periodically causing more sudden changes to the beaches, short-term inundation and possibly damage to structures such as seawalls. The Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 requires that a sea level rise of not less than 0.8m by 2100 be adopted for coastal planning. Although sea level rise is expected to have a limited impact on the northern Bellarine foreshore in the short term, any long-term decisions need to consider the potential impacts of the predicted sea level rise on the coast and coastal processes.

Beach and cliff erosion is often identified as a major concern amongst community members. Removal of native vegetation has exposed the coast to greater erosion. Erosion not only impacts on the amenity of the beach and foreshore but also threatens the integrity and functioning of coastal structures such as boat ramps and jetties. While strategies can be used to adapt to or mitigate some of the effects of erosion, the powerful natural forces that cause erosion will largely continue.

5.0 Issues, Challenges and Priorities for the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (cont.)

The long-shore drift of sand sediment affects local beaches with some beaches losing significant amounts of sand, reducing recreational beach amenity and increasing erosion. Structures such as piers, groynes, boat ramps and jetties create an artificial coastal form that interrupts some natural processes that are potentially self-repairing. This can have a significant impact on visitors and holidaymakers. Beach renourishment programs are used to redistribute sand and improve the amenity of beaches but do not provide a lasting remedy.

Conservation and reinstating local ecosystems

There is currently a lack of information and understanding about the characteristics of the natural environment and the ecological values that pertain to the northern Bellarine foreshore. Improving knowledge and community awareness of the ecological values of the foreshore would provide a strong basis for initiatives to reinstate these values and encourage stewardship of the coast.

The natural environment along the northern Bellarine coast has been significantly degraded over many years through the destruction of native flora, weed infestation, heavy recreational use, modification of the landscape by development and coastal processes. The risks and threats to the northern Bellarine Foreshore natural environment include:

- the risks of destabilisation and erosion exacerbated by a lack of indigenous vegetation and general planting
- the reduction in habitats that are important to a variety of native mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians due to a lack of vegetation
- the introduction of exotic plants, environmental weeds and introduced animals that threaten native vegetation and habitat values along the foreshore
- pollution and litter that detracts from the beauty of the environment and has detrimental impacts on beaches, nature and marine areas.

There needs to be a more sustainable approach to the use and management of the foreshore and interventions are required to reinstate more natural ecosystems, mitigate the adverse effects of coastal processes and better manage negative impacts of human settlement.

Ageing and poorly maintained infrastructure

Public infrastructure along the northern Bellarine foreshore, including community buildings, public toilets, seats, bins, and pathways has been developed over many years, often on an ad hoc basis in response to emerging needs. The siting, design and condition of some of these buildings and amenities detracts from the foreshore environment and requires redesign and upgrading. In many areas there is poor access to the foreshore and many facilities do not meet contemporary needs and expectations (e.g. lack of access to toilets for people with limited mobility).

Storm water

Storm water run off from the almost unbroken urban development along the coast, and the domestic and agricultural use of herbicides and pesticides in areas adjacent to the foreshore, present challenges for erosion and can have harmful impacts on the coastal and marine environment.

Drainage structures directly affect the safety, functioning and appearance of the coast. Many storm water outlets along the foreshore are unsightly and in need of repair and redesign. They contribute to problems with erosion, litter and pollutants that pose risks to beach users, and impact on the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists. There are opportunities to improve the design and management of the system by working more closely with the City of Greater Geelong, which is responsible for the storm water management.

Views

The scenery and views along the foreshore (across Port Phillip Bay and to the distant Melbourne city skyline beyond) are highly valued by local communities and visitors. Community feedback has reinforced the value of retaining key elements of this open landscape. This needs to be balanced with the requirement to revegetate and reinstate natural ecosystems and mitigate erosion threats.

Access and parking

Walking and cycling are important recreational activities for local residents and visitors to the northern Bellarine Foreshore. The existing coastal trail is almost continuous and passes nature and recreation reserves, camping and caravan grounds, sports and leisure facilities and culturally significant places along the foreshore. However there are significant issues associated with the existing trail including degraded surfaces, poor compliance with standards, lack of continuous access and potential for conflict with roads, boating and camping activities. Access to the beach and boating facilities has not always been effectively managed resulting in vehicles parking on, or driving over, valuable foreshore landscapes causing damage and creating public safety risks.

Maintenance

The maintenance of infrastructure and the foreshore has not always been well co-ordinated and sustained and is a major concern for local communities. Community feedback highlighted the need for better responses to erosion, general foreshore maintenance, grass and retaining walls, vegetation, sand and soil control. Rubbish has been cited as a general concern with littering along the foreshore, rubbish bins not available, bins overflowing at peak times and people not using recycling bins appropriately.

Exotic trees

The iconic cypress pine trees that define parts of the northern Bellarine foreshore are coming to the end of their natural lifespan. Over the last few years numbers have been reducing due to the potential public safety risk. There will need to be consideration of a replanting strategy and replacing unsafe trees, in accordance with Bellarine Bayside's vegetation and planting guidelines and Tree Management Plan.

Boat ramps

There are eight boat ramps located on the Northern Bellarine foreshore. Bellarine Bayside is responsible for the operation, management and maintenance of six boat ramps, with two ramps being managed and maintained by local boat clubs. There is a need to improve car and trailer parking arrangements at St Leonards and Indented Head boat ramps that impact on traffic movement and safety in the nearby townships. There is also potential to improve the facilities that support boating and fishing at the foreshore's regionally significant boating ramps; ensuring that this is done in a way that protects and enhances the visual amenity, landscape and cultural values of the foreshore. The Boating CAP produced by the Central Coast Board, contains a boating hierarchy for the central coastal region that will be used to guide the improvement of boat ramp areas along the foreshore.

The ongoing maintenance of boat ramps, including regular clearing of sand drift and weed, is a costly and recurrent expense to Bellarine Bayside, accounting for a considerable proportion of the organisation's annual expenditure. The potential future growth in, and around, Geelong is likely to generate significant new demands for boating along the northern Bellarine. There is a need to explore alternative mechanisms to fund the maintenance of boat ramps to ensure a high level of amenity to users. This could potentially include a user pay system for the Point Richards, Indented Head and St Leonards boat ramps.

5.0 Issues, Challenges and Priorities for the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan (cont.)

A contemporary holiday park experience

Caravan and camping grounds make a significant economic and social contribution to the northern Bellarine. There is a trend for camping and caravan parks to become more multi-use with a broader range of accommodation options and facilities.

The *Caravan and Camping Parks on Coastal Crown Land Reference Group Report* (2006) requires Committees of Management to identify growth opportunities for coastal caravan and camping grounds in response to projected changes to the demographic profile of our communities and variations in domestic tourism patterns. There is an opportunity to reconfigure some existing caravan park and camping ground areas in Indented Head and St Leonards to improve access and recreational opportunities on the foreshore.

The consultation process highlighted community concerns about the re-establishment of the former camping area known as Camping Reserve Area 5 (a seasonal unpowered camping area) due to impacts on erosion, parking, local residents and a perceived lack of demand.

There are opportunities to broaden the range of holiday experiences that are available along the foreshore to meet changing community expectations and optimise the use of existing resources whilst maintaining a policy of no net change in the amount of land allocated for caravan and camping.

There is potential to better physically and socially integrate camping and caravan areas into their surrounding communities. The community consultation expressed a strong desire for camping areas to look and feel like parkland in the holiday off-season. This could be achieved through the preparation of landscape plans that provide a framework to enhance the appearance and layout of camping and caravan areas, without detracting from the safety and amenity of campers and holidaymakers.

Government policies that pertain to camping and caravan park areas along Victoria's foreshores include the DSE policy 'Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks', the report on 'Coastal Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks' and the 'Best Practice Management Guidelines' for Committees managing caravan and camping grounds on Crown land. These policies must be applied to the camping and caravan park areas along the northern Bellarine foreshore.

The look and feel of the foreshore

The community consultation stressed the importance of retaining a distinctive look and feel of the northern Bellarine coast, which reflects in part the tradition of the accessible, affordable coastal experience that the area proudly celebrates. The challenges of development and increased visitation need to be carefully balanced with maintaining and enhancing the environmental and cultural values of the foreshore.

The northern Bellarine contains a number of popular swimming beaches including areas east of Portarlington and Steeles Rock boat ramps, at Point George, Half Moon Bay, Indented Head and adjacent to the St Leonards Pier. In some areas, infrastructure for access the beach via stairs and ramps is ageing and inadequate, which inhibits enjoyment of the coast. This needs to be reviewed and improved to ensure a high level of amenity for users whilst protecting coastal environmental values.

A recurrent issue from community consultation relates to noise and safety impacts associated with motorised boats and water-craft. Parks Victoria oversees the management of recreational boating across Victoria and enforces the boating regulations. Parks Victoria is in the process of introducing new boating and swimming zones to improve safety across Victorian waters. The zones are being introduced in stages and will be implemented across the Bellarine Peninsula. Bellarine Bayside continues to liaise with Parks Victoria to improve safety in the waterways along the foreshore.

Foreshore management

Effective management of the northern Bellarine foreshore depends on the governance and organisational capability of Bellarine Bayside and its capacity to work collaboratively with others that have roles in relation to the foreshore, the marine environment, the adjoining urban settlements and rural hinterland.

Consultation with local communities and stakeholders has highlighted the need for Bellarine Bayside to strengthen its governance and management capacity. There is a need to ensure the organisation provides clear strategic direction and good management to protect and enhance the foreshore. The transparency and accountability of the organisation and its engagement with local communities and stakeholders should also be improved.

Bellarine Bayside has an annual budget of some \$5million drawn largely from the fees and charges from the camping and caravan parks but with some revenue generated from leases, licences, permits and grants. This revenue must maintain and improve camping and caravan parks; fund land-based facilities and infrastructure such as boat ramps, public toilets, walking trails; and maintain and improve the natural environment along the foreshore. A key challenge for Bellarine Bayside is to balance existing demand for expenditure with the need to fund new initiatives, reinstate the natural environment and undertake major upgrades of assets. Securing funds from government, gaining support from specialist organisations such as Landcare, and mobilising local community effort will be critical to the successful implementation of the Plan.



Community engagement

Community consultation has identified the need for a renewed commitment to better engage with the various communities along the foreshore – local communities, camping/caravanning and day visitors. This needs to include better access to information about Bellarine Bayside and its activities, increased community awareness of the foreshore environment, expanding opportunities for consultation and participation in planning.

Protecting and valuing natural and cultural heritage

The recent community consultation reinforced that local communities wish to properly acknowledge and celebrate the history and culture of the foreshore and its communities, especially its Aboriginal heritage and the ongoing living culture of aboriginal people in the area.

6.0

The Northern Bellarine Foreshore – Future Directions

In response to the issues and challenges facing the northern Bellarine foreshore, the Plan proposes a vision for the future of the foreshore and outlines the goals, objectives and actions necessary to deliver that vision over the next 15 to 20 years.

6.1 Vision

The northern Bellarine Foreshore will be:

- An attractive, tranquil and safe coastal environment that reflects the heritage and distinctive character of Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards
- Connected by a well-used coastal trail with opportunities to experience the natural ecology and delight in the beauty and atmosphere of the foreshore landscape
- A rich source of recreational and coastal experiences to engage and enhance the wellbeing of people living and working locally, and visiting the area for affordable holidays
- A place where the need to protect and restore our fragile coast and adapt to the challenges of environmental change is finely balanced with social, cultural and economic opportunities
- A place that is treasured and cared for, where communities have pride, and visitors feel welcome
- A place where local people, community groups, businesses and government agencies work together to plan, care for and enhance the foreshore.

6.2 Guiding principles

The following principles will guide planning, development and decision-making related to the northern Bellarine foreshore:

- **stewardship:** protect and care for the significant environmental and cultural values of the northern Bellarine foreshore
- **sustainability:** ensure tourism, land uses and development along the foreshore strengthen, rather than adversely impact upon coastal landscapes, ecosystems, cultural integrity and local identity
- **coordinated planning and management:** work with government, communities and other responsible authorities to coordinate the planning, management and development of the foreshore
- **community engagement:** create opportunities for local communities to be meaningfully involved in the planning, management and care of the foreshore
- **access for all:** facilitate fair and equitable access for all in the allocation of resources, land, services and facilities on the foreshore
- **a sense of belonging:** affirm the identity of local foreshore communities and places that are valued for their Aboriginal, cultural and natural heritage
- **social and economic vitality:** promote, develop and maintain the foreshore as a place that welcomes visitors and is an important contributor to the social and economic life of local communities
- **quality design:** adopt the following guidelines when planning and designing projects to protect, enhance and develop the foreshore:
 - coastal vegetation and topography will be the dominant visual feature throughout the foreshore reserve, even where buildings and structures exist
 - buildings, structures and hard-surfaced areas will be concentrated into a limited number of locations
 - development and landscaping will be designed to maintain significant public views, vistas and sightlines from the land and sea.

These principles support, and are consistent with, the Victorian Coastal Strategy's (2008) hierarchy of principles that guide planning and decision-making on coastal land in Victoria (see appendix 10.3).

7.0

Strategic Directions

It is proposed that the vision for the northern Bellarine foreshore be realised through the five goals (and accompanying objectives and actions) described below.

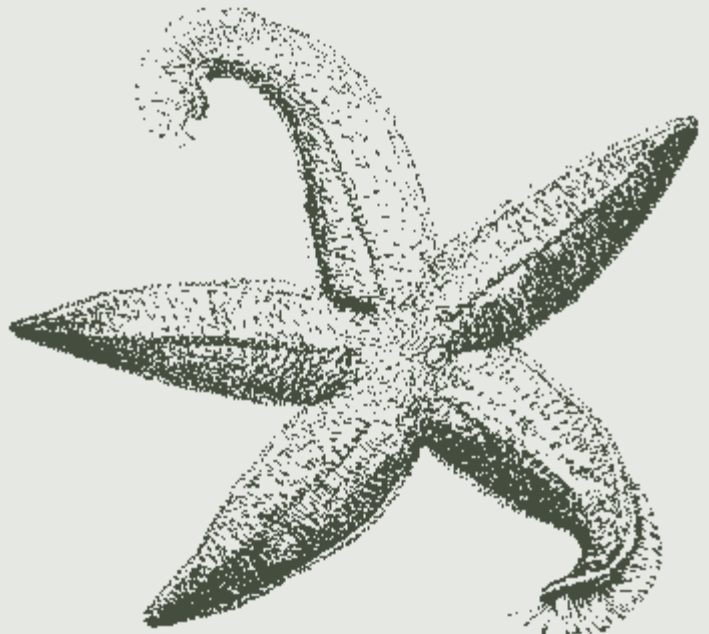
The goals are to:

1. Understand, protect and enhance the natural environment.
2. Connect communities and the coast.
3. Facilitate access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast.
4. Improve built environments along the Foreshore.
5. Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, adaptive and accountable organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others.

The Plan outlines a number of objectives and actions to implement each of these goals. Criteria have been established to assist in ranking the priorities for actions.

Actions are rated High, Medium or Low according to the extent that they:

- are a high priority and should be implemented as quickly as possible
- may carry high risks if not implemented promptly
- reflect community aspirations and needs
- have a high impact and benefit to the community
- are a statutory or regulatory requirement
- have the potential to leverage funds or support from other sources
- are able to be delivered (capacity and resources)
- provide an investment for long term sustainability and value.



Goal 1

Understand, Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

The following objectives will guide Bellarine Bayside's activities in understanding, protecting and enhancing the natural environment:

1. Understand the natural environment and its ecological values.
2. Protect and enhance natural environments.
3. Respond to the adverse impacts of coastal processes and plan for climate change.
4. Improve stormwater design and management.
5. Develop best practice environmental sustainability.

Objective 1. Understand the natural environment and its ecological values

The northern Bellarine foreshore contains highly valued landscapes with areas of ecological significance, as well as areas of open parkland and reserves, often with exotic plantings, that are used by local communities for recreation and enjoyment and attract many visitors to the region.

In some areas, the natural environment is significantly degraded due to loss of native flora and fauna, weed infestation, heavy recreational use, and modification of the landscape by development and coastal processes.

The Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve is an important habitat for flora and fauna and is a source of natural history that can provide a springboard for further rehabilitation along the coast.

Further research is required to gather information and understand the natural environment along the foreshore. This can help to build greater awareness and appreciation of the natural environment and how it can be protected and enhanced, both for Bellarine Bayside, as the land manager, and for local communities and visitors.

Ref #	Actions	Responsibility	Priority
1A	<p>Audit and map the environmental qualities, natural heritage and ecological values of the northern Bellarine Foreshore to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify significant flora and fauna and significant public views • inform management and maintenance of the foreshore • inform programs for revegetation and rehabilitation • improve awareness of the foreshore environment amongst visitors, local communities and Bellarine Bayside management • identify indigenous and local provenance species for revegetation and replanting projects. 	Bellarine Bayside	H

Objective 2. Protect and enhance natural environments

The Foreshore Plan will seek to protect and preserve remnant vegetation and significantly enhance and stabilise landscapes through revegetating and rehabilitating natural environments and removing environmental weeds.

The expansive views across the water, headlands and cliffs are distinctive features of the northern Bellarine. Future foreshore vegetation and plantings should not compromise significant public views to and from the coast.

This Plan proposes to protect and enhance areas of landscape significance, and consolidate and strengthen the foreshore landscape, so that topography, vegetation and the beach are the dominant characteristic. Improved maintenance, cleaning and waste management along the foreshore is also required to enhance the beauty of the northern Bellarine beach and foreshore and reduce negative environmental impacts from pollution and waste.

Ref #	Actions	Responsibility	Priority
2A	Develop a vision and management plan for Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve. The Plan should engage local community and friends groups and schools in stewardship of the Reserve	Bellarine Bayside With CCMA, DSE, BCN, CoGG	M
2B	Develop and implement a Tree Strategy to support risk management, revegetation, replacement and maintenance of trees along the Foreshore	Bellarine Bayside	H
2C	Develop and implement a weed management plan for the foreshore, prioritising the control of weeds of national significance, regionally prohibited weeds and regionally controlled weeds; consistent with the Guidelines and procedures for managing the environmental impact of weeds on public land in Victoria, DSE 2007	Bellarine Bayside With CCMA, DSE, BCN, PV, CoGG	H
2D	Prepare detailed landscape plans for specific areas of the foreshore and implement an environmental and landscape revegetation and rehabilitation program (and guidelines for planting and vegetation with indigenous species), and establish a target to revegetate and rehabilitate at least one prominent site annually	Bellarine Bayside	H
2E	Develop and implement a plan to protect and improve the ecological integrity of local sites that support Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar sites and other coastal wetlands (i.e. Indented Head Wetlands)	Bellarine Bayside	M
2F	Identify opportunities for community groups and members of the public to be involved in planting programs and activities on the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside	H
2G	Develop and implement programs for landscape maintenance, waste management and beach cleaning along the foreshore (see also Actions 15A and B)	Bellarine Bayside	H

Goal 1 Understand, Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment (cont.)

Objective 3. Respond to the adverse impacts of coastal processes and plan for climate change

The form and nature of much of the northern Bellarine foreshore will continue to evolve, with many areas experiencing gradual erosion and beach sand build up.

Bellarine Bayside will continue to play an important role in working with DSE and the City of Greater Geelong and coastal management agencies, to monitor changes to the coastline, improve community awareness of climate change, and in developing adaptive management strategies such as the beach renourishment program, that respond to the adverse impacts of climate change and coastal processes on the foreshore.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
3A	Develop and implement a Coastal Hazard Management Plan that identifies the risks to key coastal infrastructure and assets due to the impact of coastal processes, and actions to mitigate those risks and protect assets	Bellarine Bayside With DSE, CMA, CoGG	H
3B	Develop a Sand Management Plan in conjunction with DSE to monitor and respond to changes along the Foreshore (consistent with the Coastal Hazard Management Plan)	Bellarine Bayside With DSE	H
3C	Work with DSE (the responsible agency) to undertake strategic projects to mitigate the effects of coastal erosion at key locations, (consistent with the Coastal Hazard Management Plan)	DSE With Bellarine Bayside	H
3D	Improve recreational amenity and reduce erosion by undertaking works that support DSE beach renourishment strategy (consistent with the Coastal Hazard Management Plan)	DSE With Bellarine Bayside	H
3E	Work with other spheres of government including the City of Greater Geelong to improve community understanding of the impacts of coastal processes on the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside With DSE, CoGG, CMA	M



Objective 4. Improve stormwater design and management

Stormwater drainage systems are critical to the attractiveness, safety and health of the northern Bellarine foreshore and marine environments.

Bellarine Bayside's role in improving stormwater systems and management includes:

- monitoring problems that cause erosion and pollution, and have negative impacts on the appearance and safety of trails, the foreshore and beach, and waterways
- community education to promote a healthy environment
- working with the City of Greater Geelong to achieve best practice in stormwater system design, maintenance and management to minimise the adverse impacts of stormwater on the foreshore and marine environment.

The City of Greater Geelong is responsible for the design and management of the stormwater system that crosses the foreshore and drains into the Bay. Designing, upgrading and managing stormwater systems to meet environmental standards and ensure an attractive and healthy environment requires a high level of coordination between Bellarine Bayside and the Council.

The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority is responsible for monitoring the quality of water entering Port Phillip Bay along the foreshore.



Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
4A	Develop an agreement between City of Greater Geelong and Bellarine Bayside to ensure best practice stormwater design and management, leading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– the development of a strategy for the design, upgrade or reduction, and maintenance of existing drains along the foreshore– the design and development of wetlands for bio-filtration of stormwater before discharge into the Bay– opportunities for harvesting and recycling stormwater	Bellarine Bayside With CoGG,	H
4B	Support the Corangamite CMA led Waterwatch and community volunteers such as the Indented head Community Association, that monitor water quality and the effects of storm water discharge on the foreshore and associated marine environment	CCMA With Bellarine Bayside	Ongoing

Goal 1 Understand, Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment (cont.)

Objective 5. Develop best practice environmental sustainability

There is a range of ways in which Bellarine Bayside can improve the environmental sustainability of its operations and encourage public behaviours that help to improve, enhance and protect the foreshore environment. At the organisational level this includes sourcing environmental friendly material and supplies, planning for water sensitive urban design and environmental sustainability in all landscapes, encouraging reuse and recycling, developing more

energy efficient public infrastructure and operating with more efficient, lower emission vehicles and equipment. Bellarine Bayside also has an opportunity to improve environmental sustainability through influencing public behaviours, community education and setting performance standards for its holiday parks and camping areas, public events and festivals, markets and other activities that occur along the foreshore.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
5A	Develop a program for progressively improving environmental sustainability practice in Bellarine Bayside's operations including setting targets for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– more efficient and low emission vehicles in the Bellarine Bayside fleet– purchasing policies for materials and supplies– energy efficient lighting in public areas– conservation and reuse of resources	Bellarine Bayside	H
5B	Establish performance requirements for improving environmental sustainability in markets, events, festivals, holiday parks and camping areas, and activities along the foreshore (for example: creating opportunities for recycling and waste minimisation at public events)	Bellarine Bayside	H
5C	Establish benchmarks for environmental sustainability in all planning and design activities and projects; delivered through tender briefs, contracts and agreements. This could include requirements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– new and redeveloped buildings– public infrastructure– landscape design and construction– water sensitive urban design	Bellarine Bayside	H

Goal 2

Connect Communities and the Coast

The following objectives will guide Bellarine Bayside's activities in connecting communities and the coast:

6. Strengthen community engagement and participation.
7. Support Opportunities for Partnership, Shared Use and Stewardship of the Foreshore.
8. Value and Express the Cultural Heritage of the Foreshore.

Objective 6. Strengthen community engagement and participation

Communities along the northern Bellarine foreshore and visitors to the area highly value the appearance and sustainability of the foreshore environment.

Fostering opportunities for community engagement and participation in the planning and management of the coast can improve community understanding of the value and importance of the natural environment,

and can harness community skills and endeavour to build a local culture of stewardship to protect and enhance the foreshore.

The Foreshore Plan will seek to foster community participation through consultation, information, engagement activities and volunteering opportunities.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
6A	Develop a Community Engagement Framework and Plan to guide Bellarine Bayside's approach to consultation, engagement and information activities with local communities and visitors	Bellarine Bayside	H
6B	Develop a Northern Bellarine Foreshore Events Policy to guide and support events and activities that encourage community and visitor engagement with the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside	H
6C	Identify and support opportunities for: community use of facilities; involvement and stewardship in programs to protect and enhance the foreshore environment; and engagement with community activities and events	Bellarine Bayside	Ongoing
6D	In conjunction with partner organisations such as DSE promote an annual program of "all age" educational activities (such as Summer by the Sea, yachting and sailing activities) to foster community understanding and involvement in the protection and enhancement of the Northern Bellarine coast	Bellarine Bayside	H
6E	Develop programs that engage young people, (e.g. through schools, clubs) in learning about, and caring for, the northern Bellarine coastal environment	Bellarine Bayside	M

Goal 2 Connect Communities and the Coast (cont.)

Objective 7. Support opportunities for partnership, shared use and stewardship of the foreshore

There are opportunities to build a model of stewardship and support the establishment of community and *friends* of groups for nature environments and projects along the foreshore.

The Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve undertake a critical role in enhancing and caring for the Reserve and provide a model for community stewardship.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
7A	Foster community volunteers, groups and programs that educate, protect and enhance the foreshore environment	Bellarine Bayside	H
7B	Pilot a community grants and sponsorship program for community initiatives that support Bellarine Bayside's mission	Bellarine Bayside	H
7C	Investigate the feasibility of a foundation/trust that could provide a vehicle for local philanthropy and donations to support the protection and enhancement of the northern Bellarine coast	Bellarine Bayside	M
7D	Develop a leasing, licensing and use policy for foreshore facilities that supports community engagement with the coast; supports the development of clubs and groups; and encourages broad community use, including by people with disabilities; consistent with the Crown Land Leasing Policy 2010	Bellarine Bayside	H

Objective 8. Value and express the cultural heritage of the foreshore

The northern Bellarine foreshore contains sites of natural, Aboriginal and historical significance. The Wadawurrung people have a long history of occupation, resource use and spiritual connection with the northern Bellarine coast. European history of the coast extends back to John Batman's first landing and encampment and Matthew Flinders' exploration of Port Phillip Bay. Heritage sites are designated along the foreshore including at Anderson Reserve and Batman Park at Indented Head. There are also sites that have significance for their ecological and landscape values.

The Foreshore Plan seeks to protect and enhance the cultural values and heritage of the northern Bellarine coastal landscape through acknowledgement, preservation, interpretation, and creating opportunities to understand, learn and celebrate.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
8A	Complete a Cultural Heritage Management Plan that identifies and maps heritage values and sites along the foreshore and provides a framework for the management of these values and sites	Bellarine Bayside	H
8B	Engage with the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– identify and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage sites along the northern Bellarine foreshore– create opportunities for participation in the planning, management, and activities associated with the foreshore environment	Bellarine Bayside, With Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation	Ongoing
8C	Protect and enhance historical cultural heritage sites by developing a program of upgrades and maintenance to existing memorials and historic places along the foreshore and advocating for projects to protect heritage values	Bellarine Bayside	H
8D	Adopt and apply an interpretative framework for Aboriginal and European history along the Coastal Trail to deepen and broaden community appreciation of the values and meanings of the foreshore landscape	Bellarine Bayside	H
8E	Facilitate local festivals, community events and markets to celebrate local history, culture and environment	Bellarine Bayside	Ongoing
8F	Seek opportunities to interpret the northern Bellarine landscape, its peoples and social history and the distinctiveness of each township through appropriate public art, oral and photographic history projects	Bellarine Bayside	M

Goal 3

Facilitate Access, Enjoyment and Sustainable Use of the Coast

The following objectives will guide Bellarine Bayside's activities in facilitating access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast:

9. Identify activity and recreation nodes as a focus for consolidating development along the foreshore.
 10. Develop a Coastal Trail linking Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards.
 11. Improve access to, and use of, foreshore facilities.
 12. Improve and expand use of Crown land caravan and camping grounds.
 13. Improve boating and fishing facilities.
 14. Support opportunities for tourism.
-

Objective 9. Identify activity and recreation nodes as a focus for consolidating development along the foreshore

Appropriately locating and consolidating development and activities on the foreshore and protecting and enhancing the landscape breaks between settlements is necessary for sustainable coastal management. It assists in protecting the environmental values and character of the foreshore and the identity of local townships.

Consistent with the objectives of the Victorian Coastal Strategy, this Plan will seek to concentrate activities and development in defined locations known as Activity and Recreation nodes (see section 8 of the Plan). These nodes should complement existing townships and promote access to the coast and its recreation and water-based activities while preserving and enhancing the natural environment outside activity nodes, so that the balance of the foreshore can be landscape dominant.

The feasibility of the proposed activity and recreation nodes will be assessed through development of the Master Plan that supports the implementation of this Foreshore Plan.

There are opportunities to work with the City of Greater Geelong to improve the sense of place, connections, recreation and community spaces in both Indented Head and St Leonards.

Parks Victoria has developed the Portarlington Safe Harbour Plan (2009) in collaboration with the City of Greater Geelong and Bellarine Bayside. It is a Plan for a high quality precinct incorporating commercial aquaculture and recreational fishing, boating, passive and active recreation and tourism activities for the local community and greater Bellarine Peninsula region. The Safe Harbour Plan will provide a framework for the future development of the Portarlington Activity Node.

Objective 9. Identify activity and recreation nodes as a focus for consolidating development along the foreshore (cont.)

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
9A	Adopt an activity and recreation node policy (a draft policy is outlined in section 8.4 of this plan); and develop guidelines and determine appropriate locations and boundaries for activity and recreation nodes, consistent with the Victorian Coastal Strategy, through the Foreshore Master Plan that is being prepared as an accompanying document to this Plan	Bellarine Bayside	H
9B	Undertake a <i>place making</i> project to enhance the sense of place and improve community amenity at Indented Head (consistent with the Activity and Recreation node policy and guidelines) in partnership with the City of Greater Geelong and in consultation with the local community	Bellarine Bayside, With CoGG	H
9C	With the City of Greater Geelong, support the implementation of a project at St Leonards to refresh and enhance the public spaces, recreation facilities, improve cycle and pedestrian connections and strengthen the inter-relationship between the main street and the pier and foreshore. (The project should be in accordance with the St Leonards Local Structure Plan, involve consultation with the local community and be consistent with the Activity and Recreation Node Policy and guidelines)	Bellarine Bayside, With CoGG	M
9D	Progressively design and implement foreshore projects that support Bellarine Bayside's objectives for the Portarlington Activity Node in partnership with Parks Victoria and the City of Greater Geelong, taking into account the Portarlington Safe Harbour Plan	Bellarine Bayside With CoGG, PV	M

Goal 3 Facilitate Access, Enjoyment and Sustainable Use of the Coast (cont.)

Objective 10. Develop a coastal trail linking Portarlinton, Indented Head and St Leonards



The Coastal Trail and Walkability Project has been part of the planning process for the Foreshore Plan. The Plan proposes to upgrade the coastal trail as a shared walking and cycling path connecting the townships of the northern Bellarine to create a trail of regional significance. The trail would generally follow its present alignment and seeks to optimise opportunities for views and connections to the natural environment and local activity and recreation nodes.

There is also a significant opportunity to create a distinctive trail character, providing signage and information that interprets features of historical, cultural and ecological interest to inform and educate local people and visitors about the foreshore.

The final design and location of the trail will be determined through more detailed planning for specific sections of the trail as funding becomes available for implementation. This will involve further collaboration with the CoGG and consultation with a range of stakeholders including the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation, DSE, VicRoads and community organisations.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
10A	Drawing on the principles and future alignment for the Coastal Trail developed in the Coastal Trail and Walkability Project, develop a program for the progressive detailed design and development of the Coastal Trail in partnership with key stakeholders and commence staged implementation as funds become available	Bellarine Bayside With CoGG, VicRoads, DSE, RAP, local advisory group	H
10B	Establish a maintenance plan outlining standards and protocols for maintaining the Coastal Trail	Bellarine Bayside	M

Objective 11. Improve access to, and use of, foreshore facilities

The northern Bellarine coast is heavily used for a range of water and land-based activities including walking, boating and yachting, fishing, swimming, dog walking and passive recreation on the beach and foreshore. Bellarine Bayside is responsible for the infrastructure and amenities along the foreshore that provide access to these recreation opportunities.

The foreshore is the focus for community life for the northern Bellarine towns. It hosts a range of sporting, recreational and community facilities, parks and playgrounds that are provided and managed by Bellarine Bayside or operate under lease or licence to community-based clubs or individuals. Some of these facilities are coastal-dependent, like sailing clubs and boatsheds, while others such as sporting clubs, have come to be located on the foreshore through circumstance.



This Plan supports the use of the northern Bellarine coast by community-based clubs, including yachting, sailing and boating clubs that provide safe and supervised water activities and promote improved access by the broader community to recreational activities. The Plan seeks to improve access to, and greater use of, the northern Bellarine foreshore and its facilities by local communities and visitors.

A variety of vehicles (including cars, trailers, buses, motor homes, trucks) use the foreshore. It is important that vehicle access to the foreshore is appropriately managed to ensure the efficient movement of vehicles, safety for pedestrians, cyclists and road users, access to the parks, buildings, beach and water along the foreshore, and protection for the environmental, cultural and aesthetic values of the foreshore.

Goal 3 Facilitate Access, Enjoyment and Sustainable Use of the Coast (cont.)

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
11A	Develop an Access for All Abilities Action Plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a program of upgrades for foreshore open spaces and facilities that will improve access for the mobility impaired – requirements for specific consideration of <i>access for all abilities</i> in the development of Activity and Recreation nodes – designated locations along the foreshore that can be promoted as having access for all abilities – advice about compliance with <i>Disability Discrimination Act (1992)</i> standards and regulations in all works to upgrade and develop the foreshore 	Bellarine Bayside	H
11B	Adopt a Vehicle Parking and Traffic Management Policy to guide the development and management of vehicle parking along the foreshore. The policy should provide for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – improvements to the design, landscaping and capacity of existing car parking areas – improvements for access and safety – protection of environmental values – measures to reduce the impact of vehicles on the foreshore environment and to prohibit unauthorised off-road access to the foreshore (e.g. bollards, plantings); consistent with the VCS 	Bellarine Bayside	H
11C	Develop and promote an animal management policy for public foreshore spaces with CoGG (the responsible authority for animal management along the foreshore)	Bellarine Bayside, With CoGG	H
11D	Develop a user survey to monitor community and visitor satisfaction with the Bellarine foreshore experience	Bellarine Bayside	M
11E	Develop and implement a signage strategy for the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside	H
11F	Undertake a review of public toilet provision along the foreshore, assessing location, need, condition, access and maintenance	Bellarine Bayside	H

Objective 12. Improve and expand use of Crown land caravan and camping grounds

Camping and caravanning has been one of the defining activities along the northern beaches of the Bellarine Peninsula for successive generations of holidaymakers, largely due to its accessibility and affordability.

Bellarine Bayside manages an all year round Holiday Park in Portarlington with almost 900 sites, three seasonal camping grounds in indented Head and two seasonal camping grounds in St Leonards. There are also two private caravan parks in Portarlington and one in St Leonards that accommodate many visitors in the holiday season.

Revenue from camping and caravans is the major income source for Bellarine Bayside and underpins the high quality of camping and caravan facilities as well as supports foreshore maintenance and enhancement.

Maintaining and improving facilities and providing an affordable and accessible experience for holiday makers needs to be balanced with strengthening Bellarine Bayside's financial capacity to undertake the full scope of its coastal stewardship role.



Opportunities exist to broaden the range of accommodation options to meet different needs and also to extend the use of facilities beyond the main holiday periods. The amount of land allocated for caravan and camping needs to be carefully balanced with other recreational uses and the need to improve the foreshore's natural environmental values.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
12A	<p>Develop a Holiday Parks and Camping Policy and Strategy to guide the approach to holiday parks and camping along the foreshore; broadening use and enhancing access to affordable holiday opportunities for Victorians. Policy and principles should be established early to provide a framework for priority projects including the Portarlington Holiday Park Master plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– develop and implement a master plan for the Portarlington Holiday Park as a high priority first project to deliver the Holiday Parks and Camping Strategy– investigate the feasibility of reopening Camping Reserve Area 5 at St Leonards	Bellarine Bayside	H
12B	Prepare and implement landscape plans for all foreshore camping and caravan areas	Bellarine Bayside	H

Goal 3 Facilitate Access, Enjoyment and Sustainable Use of the Coast (cont.)

Objective 13. Improve boating and fishing facilities

The Northern Bellarine is one of Port Phillip Bay's most important recreational and commercial boating and fishing precincts, due in part to the availability of boat ramps, boating and yachting clubs, access to the foreshore and other amenities that support water-based activity.

Commercial aquaculture provides one of the few economic activities outside tourism and the service industry. Recreational fishing is also a significant activity and needs to be effectively managed through education, enforcement of regulations and suitable facilities to ensure the sustainability of fishing stocks.



The Victorian Government released the Portarlington Safe Harbour Master Plan in 2009. Funding for implementation is yet to be sourced. The Master Plan envisages significant redevelopment of the Portarlington Pier and surrounds to provide improved access to recreational, commercial and tourism opportunities on both land and water.

Bellarine Bayside will support sustainable recreational fishing and a viable aquaculture industry by improving access to piers, carparks, toilets and fish cleaning facilities and managing boat ramp facilities at St Leonards, Point Richards and Indented Head.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
13A	Review the design and functioning of the Point Richards Boat Ramp and undertake priority works to improve its functioning and minimise ongoing maintenance costs	Bellarine Bayside, With DSE, CoGG, DoT, PV	H
13B	Develop and implement a plan for the progressive upgrade of amenities associated with boat ramps including parking, fish cleaning, safety, landscape and access to support fishing and boating along the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside	H
13C	Investigate the feasibility of introducing a user pays system at boat ramps to provide funding for the upgrade and maintenance of facilities for recreational boating, in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong (consistent with the Central Coast Board Boating Coastal Action Plan)	Bellarine Bayside With CoGG, DoT	H

Objective 14. Support opportunities for tourism

The Northern Bellarine is an important part of a large and growing tourism industry in the Geelong and Bellarine Peninsula region. Over many years, tourism has been (and continues to be) a major contributor to the local economy and the social life of the northern Bellarine, with thousands of annual visitors to local caravan parks and camping groups, fishing and boating activities, festivals and events.

There is an opportunity to broaden year-round access to the foreshore, which is a valuable Crown land asset for all Victorians. An expanded range of accommodation options in caravan and camping areas is needed to meet existing and contemporary demands for holiday accommodation and could help to attract more visitors

across all seasons. This has potential benefits in terms of the vibrancy of the local economy, especially in the off-season months, and contributes to the resources available to protect and enhance the foreshore.

Privately operated caravan parks cater for many holidaymakers each year. There are opportunities to improve access to beaches, infrastructure and overall amenity at locations near these caravan parks, enhancing the coastal experience for holidaymakers.

The Foreshore Plan supports sustainable nature-based tourism and enhanced visitor experiences on the coast and seeks to promote visitor understanding and appreciation of the coast, and how its coastal and marine values can be protected.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
14A	Expand the range of accommodation options and holiday experiences available within foreshore caravan and camping areas to attract a broader range of visitors across all seasons	Bellarine Bayside	Ongoing
14B	Promote increased out-of-season visitation to the coast to strengthen local economies and the sustainability of the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside, With Partner Agencies	Ongoing
14C	Support events and festivals spread between Portarlington, Indented Head and St Leonards	Bellarine Bayside	H
14D	Work with the City of Greater Geelong, Geelong Otway Tourism and relevant stakeholders to identify improved tourism and visitor experiences that promote an appreciation of the coast and bring economic and social benefits to local communities.	Bellarine Bayside, With CoGG, GOT	Ongoing
14E	Develop the northern Bellarine Foreshore Coastal Trail as a regional tourist destination	Bellarine Bayside, CoGG, GOT	H
14F	Investigate ways of improving coastal infrastructure, beach access and amenity in local areas that are used by holiday makers staying in privately operated caravan parks	Bellarine Bayside	H

Goal 4

Improve Built Environments along the Foreshore

The following objectives will guide Bellarine Bayside's activities in improving built environments along the foreshore:

15. Upgrade built environments for the benefit and enjoyment of local communities and visitors to the foreshore

Objective 15. Upgrade built environments for the benefit and enjoyment of local communities and visitors to the foreshore

The degraded nature of the built environment in some areas along the northern Bellarine foreshore detracts from its attractiveness and people's enjoyment and experience. There are opportunities to improve the siting, design and condition of buildings and amenities to better meet the needs of users and enhance the visual amenity of the foreshore.

There are two major buildings on the foreshore, Parks Hall in Portarlington and Indented Head Hall. Parks Hall has been upgraded and renovated in recent years. The Indented Hall building requires functional enhancements.

This Plan recognises the need for upgrades to building and infrastructure and improved maintenance standards and procedures to enhance the appearance, amenity, safety and functionality of the foreshore's built environment.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
15A	Develop and implement a program and protocols for beach cleaning and maintaining the foreshore environment	Bellarine Bayside With DSE	H
15B	Develop and implement a litter reduction and waste management strategy for the foreshore	Bellarine Bayside	M
15C	Upgrade the Indented Head Hall building in line with the Activity Node placemaking project	Bellarine Bayside	H
15D	Develop an Asset Management Plan that includes: – an assessment of the condition and function of all assets on the northern Bellarine foreshore – a long-term capital plan for asset improvements and renewal – a register of built assets – operational and cyclic maintenance standards and procedures – a Furniture and Material Guidelines for use along the foreshore – a program to rationalise and improve 'amenity' infrastructure (e.g. paths, bins, seats, drinking fountains, picnic tables) on the foreshore in accordance with the Furniture and Material Guidelines	Bellarine Bayside, With DSE, CoGG, DoT, PV	H
15E	Work with the City of Greater Geelong and DSE to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of management and maintenance arrangements by determining the most appropriate manager of road and car park assets where there are anomalies or inconsistencies in current arrangements	Bellarine Bayside With CoGG, DSE	H

Goal 5

Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, accountable and adaptive organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others

The following objectives will guide Bellarine Bayside’s activities to:

- 16. Build organisational effectiveness and capability
- 17. Integrate and co-ordinate interagency planning and delivery

Objective 16. Build organisational effectiveness and capability

This Plan is built around a shared vision for the coastal area of the Northern Bellarine Peninsula between Portarlington and St Leonards. Building the vision began with the Community Listening Posts in 2010 when Bellarine Bayside listened to the concerns and aspirations of local communities for the foreshore and Bellarine Bayside as the manager of the foreshore. Realising that vision will rely on key agencies including Bellarine Bayside, the City of Greater Geelong, DSE and Parks Victoria coordinating, and in some cases integrating, their planning and delivery processes. Some of the more complex coastal issues will also require clear policy direction and funding from Federal, State and local governments.

Despite its modest size and limited sphere of influence, Bellarine Bayside has a central role to play in the broader inter-agency effort required to plan for, protect, develop and manage the Northern Bellarine foreshore. In order to take up its role effectively and work with others to deliver on the commitments outlined in this Plan, Bellarine Bayside needs to strengthen its own organisational capacity in a number of areas. The entity has embarked upon a significant organisational review and development process that will continue with some intensity throughout 2012–13. This development and learning process involves the Board, management and staff, and will focus on enhancing Bellarine Bayside’s capacity in the areas outlined overleaf. An overarching continuous improvement process will continue throughout this period.

Bellarine Bayside’s governance framework is being built around clearly differentiated, inter-dependent roles for its governing group (Board) and its management (CEO).

As indicated in the table below, the Board will lead some organisational review and learning processes and the CEO and his management team will lead others.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority	
16A	MISSION and OBJECTIVES: Align Bellarine Bayside's mission and core objectives with its enabling legislation, government policy and community expectations	Bellarine Bayside	H	BOARD-LED ACTIVITIES
16B	STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS and PRIORITIES: Develop a shared vision and strategic directions and priorities for the Northern Bellarine Foreshore	Bellarine Bayside With Partner Agencies: DSE, CoGG, PV and local communities	H	
16C	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Design a community engagement model and embed appropriate engagement in all aspects of organisational activity (governance, management and operations)	Bellarine Bayside	H	
16D	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: Build and implement an effective corporate governance framework for Bellarine Bayside that reflects contemporary governance models and complies with the State Services Authority (SSA) guidelines for the governance of public entities	Bellarine Bayside With DSE	H	
16E	REPORTING TO GOVERNMENT: Design and implement a process for Bellarine Bayside to report to government on its performance against its objectives and on compliance with relevant government legislation, policy, regulations and guidelines	Bellarine Bayside With DSE	H	
16F	ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE HEALTH CHECK: Conduct a 'culture health check' on Bellarine Bayside and develop organisational values and behaviours that reflect the organisation's aspirations for its culture	Bellarine Bayside	M	JOINT BOARD – MANAGEMENT
16G	WORKING RELATIONSHIPS: Strengthen working relationships with key institutional partners and stakeholders including DSE, the City of Greater Geelong, Coorangamite CMA, Parks Victoria, Geelong-Otway Tourism and Bellarine Community Health Where appropriate, develop a framework for inter-agency planning, delivery and evaluation and Memoranda of Understanding to formalise a commitment to coordinating activities on the northern Bellarine Peninsula Explore partnering and resource sharing opportunities with Barwon and Great Ocean Road Committees of Management	Bellarine Bayside With Partner Agencies	H	

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority	
16H	MONITORING AND EVALUATION: Develop systematic processes for monitoring and evaluating the performance of Bellarine Bayside against annual performance indicators. Report to local communities and stakeholder agencies annually on the activities and progress of the organisation	Bellarine Bayside	H	MANAGEMENT-LED ACTIVITIES
16I	CORPORATE PLANNING: Introduce a Corporate Plan that identifies actions and resources to achieve Bellarine Bayside's objectives; and indicators against which to evaluate organisational performance	Bellarine Bayside	H	
16J	MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS REVIEW: Conduct a review of Bellarine Bayside's management and operations with the aim of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) developing the organisational capability needed to deliver on the commitments contained in this Plan b) working with staff to build on our organisational strengths to improve effectiveness and efficiency across the organisation c) ensuring compliance with relevant government legislation, policy and procedures Areas for review will include management structures and capability; financial planning, budgeting and reporting; audit (internal and external); staff employment arrangements; information and communication technology; plant and equipment; risk management; project planning and management; procurement; operations evaluation and reporting, environmental sustainability	Bellarine Bayside	H	
16K	MARKETING AND PROMOTION: Develop a marketing strategy that reflects Bellarine Bayside's culture and mission, and assists in promoting its identity and activities to all its stakeholders	Bellarine Bayside With DSE		
16L	RISK: Undertake a risk assessment of Bellarine Bayside land and facilities to identify and address high priority risks associated with use and access	Bellarine Bayside	H	

Goal 5 Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, accountable and adaptive organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others. (cont.)

Objective 17. Integrate and co-ordinate interagency planning and delivery

While stewardship of the northern Bellarine coast is primarily the responsibility of Bellarine Bayside, other government agencies and authorities are integrally involved with planning, regulation, remediation and development of the foreshore. For instance, Parks Victoria has responsibility for piers and jetties, DSE manages beach renourishment processes, and the City of Greater Geelong is the responsible municipal authority and is also responsible for emergency management planning. These responsibilities overlap and interface with the Crown land that falls within Bellarine Bayside's responsibilities.

In some particular circumstances, there are opportunities to arrange land swaps or to rationalise responsibilities for planning and management to improve efficiency and better use existing resources.

For example, whilst CoGG is generally responsible for the management and improvements to roads along the foreshore there are a few local roads that have evolved as the responsibility of Bellarine Bayside, although Bellarine Bayside is generally not equipped to manage and maintain roads.

It is in the interests of all these organisations, local communities, visitors and other stakeholders, that these responsibilities are clearly understood and that there is a high level of coordination between agencies in planning, managing and developing the foreshore.

The agencies and authorities involved with the foreshore have contributed to the development of this Foreshore Plan. This interagency communication, co-operation and co-ordination need to be built upon to successfully deliver the Plan over the coming years.

Ref #	Action	Responsibility	Priority
17A	Collaborate with partner and stakeholder agencies to develop a northern Bellarine Partnership Implementation Plan to support delivery of key actions in this Foreshore Plan including planning and land management, the Coastal Trail, major events, ongoing environmental and coastal programs (refer also to Action 16G)	Bellarine Bayside With DSE, CoGG, PV	H
17B	Improve management efficiency by investigating land transfers to redress anomalies in statutory alignment and Crown land management responsibilities	Bellarine Bayside, With DSE, CoGG	M
17C	Confirm accountability and lines of command in the event of emergencies and develop a communication protocol between relevant agencies and community groups.	Bellarine Bayside, With DSE, CoGG, CFA, Victoria Police, Community groups	M

8.0

Activity and Recreational Nodes

In line with the objectives of the Victorian Coastal Strategy, this Plan proposes to delineate activity and recreation nodes to concentrate new development and activities in defined locations so that the balance of the foreshore can be landscape dominant. The design, siting and construction of new development should limit impacts on the natural environment, landscape and heritage values and should be sensitive to the coastal context.

A foreshore master plan is being prepared as an accompanying document to this Plan. The master plan will further develop the policy and guidelines for activity and recreation nodes and assess the proposed locations (identified in appendix 10.4) in terms of their appropriateness and boundaries.

8.1 Activity nodes

Activity nodes will delineate an area that provides a focus for consolidating development, access to the coast, services and linking public and private realms in existing urban areas, thereby helping to protect non-urban breaks and environmental areas between settlements.

Three activity nodes are proposed along the northern Bellarine foreshore in areas that adjoin the town centres of Indented Head, St Leonards and Portarlington (see appendix 10.4). Activity nodes have been proposed along the northern Bellarine foreshore areas on the basis that nodes:

- comprise public and private land
- complement and benefit from the adjacent private land use and development
- provide a focus for activities and services for local residents and visitors to the northern Bellarine
- do not possess outstanding ecological, cultural or historical values
- contain existing or proposed commercial development as well as community and recreational facilities and infrastructure.

8.2 The Portarlington Safe Harbour Master Plan

The Portarlington Safe Harbour Master Plan (See Appendix 10.5) provides a long-term vision for harbour and landside use and development in Portarlington. The precinct will be revitalised to incorporate commercial and recreational fishing, boating, passive and active recreation and tourism activities for the local community and Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong region. An activity node is proposed at Portarlington, and it is intended that the Portarlington Safe Harbour Master Plan project will guide the future development of the Portarlington Activity Node.

8.3 Recreation nodes

The northern Bellarine foreshore provides a diverse range of recreational experiences: fishing, boating, swimming, playgrounds, picnics and barbeques to more structured activities such as tennis and lawn bowls. The areas supporting these activities range from large recreation reserves with multiple facilities, to smaller areas that comprise a toilet block, picnic table and coastal views. This Plan will continue to provide for a variety of recreational experiences.

Recreation nodes are proposed along the northern Bellarine foreshore areas on the basis that nodes:

- are located on coastal Crown land, outside, or sometimes within, activity nodes
- exhibit a high level of use for recreation and water-based activities by local residents and visitors to the area
- provide foreshore and marine access, and may contain boat ramps
- do not possess significant ecological values
- contain recreation infrastructure including walking tracks, picnic areas, camping grounds, community halls and club rooms.

8.0 Activity and Recreation Nodes (cont.)

As outlined below, four types of recreation nodes are proposed for the northern Bellarine foreshore.

Type of Recreation Node	Description
Camping node	Provides opportunities for holiday accommodation and camping activities along the foreshore
Boating node	Provides opportunities for boating activity
Community node	Provides opportunities for community gathering and meeting
Access node	Provides opportunities for beach access for passive and active recreation and play

These recreation node types are based on the principle that the level of amenity provided at the foreshore's recreation nodes should correspond to the intensity of activity at that location. Future development and activities at each proposed location should be based on the sustainable carrying capacity of the foreshore in that area. For each of these types of recreation nodes, guidelines will be developed that specify:

- the locational attributes of the node
- access for walking, cycling, vehicles and parking
- information and signage
- appropriate development and facilities.

The proposed locations for recreation nodes are illustrated in appendix 10.4.

8.4 Proposed activity and recreation node policy

The establishment of any new uses and development on the foreshore must be located within the designated activity and recreation nodes and be consistent with Victorian Coastal Strategy, particularly the 'Criteria for use and development on coastal Crown land', as well as the Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast.

The following principles should also be applied to reflect the northern Bellarine context:

- Activity nodes are the preferred location for commercial development on the foreshore, unless the proposal is dependent on existing uses and infrastructure located in a Recreation Node (e.g. boat ramp facilities)
- New activities and development should maintain reasonable public views to and from the coast
- New activities and development should not significantly impact on ecological, cultural or historic values
- The establishment of new activities and development must allow for the sustainable use of, and access to, the foreshore.

9.0

Business Plan

In accordance with the requirements of the Coastal Management Act 1995, this Foreshore Plan includes a three year Business Plan. The Business Plan will be used to guide Bellarine Bayside's budget for capital works and operational expenditure to implement the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan.

The Business Plan describes:

- the Bellarine Bayside Mission Statement to be adopted by Bellarine Bayside to guide its future operations
- a budget for implementing the first three years of the Plan in terms of income and capital and operational expenditure
- the major initiatives that will be undertaken by Bellarine Bayside (including those undertaken in partnership with other agencies) to implement the Plan in the first year
- the processes for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Plan.

Bellarine Bayside has invested significant organisational resources in the development of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan – the first major strategic plan for the foreshore. The planning process has identified gaps in policy and planning and a backlog in maintenance and capital works projects. There are no current plans or strategies upon which to build, and consequently much of the preparatory work that provides the basis for future project delivery will need to be undertaken during the first year of implementation.

The Foreshore Plan is a critical step towards being able to raise funds from other sources to complement the income generated by Bellarine Bayside to protect, enhance and improve the foreshore.

Priorities for the Business Plan

This Business Plan focuses on the first year of implementing the Foreshore Plan. Establishing plans and policies for long-term capital expenditure and a cyclical maintenance program will be high priorities in 2012–13. There will also be an emphasis on developing plans for the progressive upgrade of infrastructure, undertaking the scoping, planning, design and detailed costing for specific projects and delivering a smaller number of projects that are ready to commence. In years two and three, with much of the groundwork completed, the emphasis will shift to project delivery.

All proposed operating and capital works estimates are subject to Bellarine Bayside's annual budget approval process. Bellarine Bayside will seek to maintain (in real terms) the funds that are available to implement the Plan in each of the three years of the Business Plan.

Implementation also relies on the collaborative efforts between Bellarine Bayside and other agencies that have a role in the management of the northern Bellarine foreshore including the City of Greater Geelong, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment. In particular, many of Bellarine Bayside's foreshore management responsibilities intersect with the City of Greater Geelong's municipal roles as the planning authority for the foreshore, the regulator of local laws and in ensuring access to public open space and community infrastructure for local communities along the foreshore. The working relationship between Bellarine Bayside and the City of Greater Geelong will therefore be critical in progressing key initiatives in this Plan.

Initiatives in the Business Plan sometimes depend on funding from various government grants programs and partner agencies. The availability and extent of grant funding, both from government or other sources, varies from year to year and cannot always be predicted. Bellarine Bayside will use its best endeavours to obtain funds from other sources to complement its budget allocations and optimise the benefits for project outcomes in this Plan.

9.0 Business Plan (cont.)

9.1 Bellarine Bayside

Mission and Outcomes

Bellarine Bayside has developed the following statement to describe its organisational mission and outcomes:

Mission

Bellarine Bayside Committee of Management (Bellarine Bayside) has developed the following new Mission statement to guide its future operations:

Bellarine Bayside sustainably protects, restores and enhances the Northern Bellarine natural and built coastal environment, for the benefit and enjoyment of local communities, holidaymakers and visitors.

Key Outcomes:

1. The coastal foreshore between Portarlington and St Leonards is managed, maintained and improved for the benefit of the coastal environment, local communities and visitors.
2. Bellarine Bayside is a responsive, healthy and innovative organisation, whose activities are framed by a well-supported Foreshore Plan, good governance, clear policy and regulation, consistent with the Victorian Coastal Strategy.
3. A high standard of affordable camping and recreational facilities supports an enjoyable visitor experience and underpins Bellarine Bayside's financial sustainability and management of the foreshore environment.
4. The coastal foreshore – its environments, facilities and activities – is accessible for all and contributes to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the Northern Bellarine communities.
5. The environmental and cultural values of the coastal foreshore are protected and promoted through community education and information, and activities that engage visitors and locals in active stewardship.
6. Strong partnerships with CoGG, DSE and Parks Victoria, and with local businesses and community organisations, support integrated planning, and the promotion of year round coastal tourism and recreation opportunities.

9.2 Three year financial plan

After several years of rebuilding its finances, Bellarine Bayside is well placed to support the implementation of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan in collaboration with its partners.

Bellarine Bayside is now debt free, having retired a loan of \$1,750,000 from the Victorian Government in May 2011 for capital works undertaken between 2000 and 2002.

Income

Apart from project-related grants, approximately 97% of Bellarine Bayside's income was generated from holiday parks and camping in 2011–12, with the remainder coming from grants, fees and leases.

Based on anticipated operating revenues (excluding any Government Grants) of around \$5 million, the 2012–13 budget has allocated funding in the order of \$800,000 (excluding grants) to commence work on the highest priorities in the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan. In addition, projects to the value of approximately \$490,000 will also be completed from 2011–12 budget allocations.

Leases, licences and other income

Bellarine Bayside has a range of leases and licences with community organisations and local businesses for use of its facilities. These include two commercial leases for use of a café and boat hire facility; leases with four yachting and boat clubs, and permits for use of the boatsheds at Indented Head. This Foreshore Plan will consider the costs and benefits of introducing a user pay system for use of boat ramps along the foreshore to fund upgrades to improve the quality and amenity of boating and fishing facilities at boat ramps for users.

Grants

Grants are an important source of income for projects to protect and enhance the foreshore. Potential sources of grants include the Department of Sustainability and Environment, the City of Greater Geelong, the Department of Planning and Community Development, Parks Victoria and Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, as well as from philanthropic and business organisations.

Bellarine Bayside will be seeking to optimise funds available from grant sources in future years. In 2012–13 applications have been approved or are in progress for grant contributions for the projects listed below. The final scope of these projects will depend on the success of these applications and the extent of funding that is available. The projects include:

- cliff protection works
- the Coastal Trail
- coastal risk mitigation and sand monitoring
- tree management program (including risk mitigation works)
- oral and photographic history
- Indented Head Placemaking
- Landcare at Point Richards
- Various foreshore enhancement works.

In total, these projects will cost \$562,962 of which Bellarine Bayside will directly fund \$112,503 and \$450,459 is being sought from grants. In addition, DSE provides a recurrent grant for beach cleaning each year and will carry out a beach renourishment project on the Portarlington foreshore to the value of \$300,000 in 2012–13.

9.0 Business Plan (cont.)

9.3 Income and expenditure

The following table provides an estimate of income and expenditure for the first three years of implementing the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan. A number of initiatives in the Plan will be incorporated within the normal operating budget including the instigation of a new cyclical maintenance program, planning and policy development, and organisational development.

	Description	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Income	Indented Head Holiday Parks	622,189	640,855	660,081
	Portarlington Holiday Park	3,666,640	3,776,639	3,889,938
	St Leonards Holiday Parks	310,407	319,719	329,310
	Villas	389,206	410,152	422,457
	Foreshore Reserves	112,465	115,839	119,314
	Halls	20,734	21,356	21,997
	Administration	27,480	28,304	29,154
	Total Income	5,158,121	5,312,864	5,472,250
Operating expenditure	Indented Head Holiday parks	226,206	232,993	239,982
	Portarlington Holiday Park	1,224,882	1,261,567	1,299,414
	St Leonards Holiday Parks	119,521	123,106	126,799
	Villas	149,348	153,828	158,443
	Foreshore Reserves	565,737	582,709	600,191
	Halls	29,600	30,488	31,403
	Administration	1,406,726	1,448,928	1,492,396
	Boat Ramps	191,000	196,730	202,632
	Trees	100,000	100,000	106,090
	Governance	65,000	66,950	68,959
	Plant	216,521	223,017	229,708
	Renewals	159,696	–	–
	Total operating expenditure (without depreciation)	4,454,178	4,609,126	4,769,723
	Cash surplus (deficit)	703,943	703,738	702,527
Capital projects	Funds available for capital projects (after adjustments for depreciation, reserves and balance sheet)	1,302,866	765,255	790,288
	Less allocations to carry forward projects, contingencies and organisational development	(488,939)		
	Total funds available for new projects in 2012/13	813,927 (plus \$450,459 in grant income)		

9.4 Implementing the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan

Over the next three years Bellarine Bayside will deliver a number of major initiatives that will have a noticeable impact in improving the northern Bellarine foreshore and on Bellarine Bayside's engagement with local communities and stakeholder agencies. The major initiatives include:

- the development of the Coastal Trail to link communities along the foreshore
- major revegetation of the foreshore
- the upgrade of the Indented Head Hall
- initiatives to improve community engagement
- the development of a Holiday Parks and Camping Policy and Strategy including a Portarlington Holiday Park Master Plan and subsequent works for the progressive upgrade and landscaping of Portarlington Holiday Park
- a range of projects to mitigate risk and protect the foreshore and landscape values (including trees)
- continued work to build a healthy, accountable and transparent organisation.

The projects below have been approved by Bellarine Bayside to implement the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan in 2012–13. Bellarine Bayside has approved a budget of approximately \$814,000 and is seeking additional funding of approximately \$450,000 to support implementation of these projects. As noted above, a range of actions in the Plan will also be undertaken through the annual operational budget.

The estimated budget to implement key initiatives in the Plan is outlined below. It includes potential funds from grants and other sources. It does not include activities that will be undertaken through the operational budget.

9.0 Business Plan (cont.)

Initiative		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Goal 1	Understand, protect and enhance the natural environment	\$717,000	\$175,000	\$100,000
Year 1 – Key Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Audit and mapping of environmental values along the foreshore – Foreshore landscape plans – Foreshore weeding and revegetation program – Tree Strategy – Climate change adaptation projects – Sand Management Plan – Coastal erosion mitigation – Point Richards landscape plan and revegetation – Beach renourishment – Stormwater improvements with CoGG 				
Goal 2	Connect communities and the coast	\$65,000	\$60,000	\$20,000
Year 1 – Key Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Community engagement strategy – Cultural Heritage Plan and projects – Art and oral history projects – Community grants program 				
Goal 3	Facilitate access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast	\$393,000	\$342,000	\$727,000
Year 1 – Key Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Holiday Parks and Camping Policy and Strategy including a Portarlington Holiday Park Master Plan – Boat ramps – improved management and facility upgrades – Tourism promotion – Coastal Trail detailed design and first stage commencement – Indented Head placemaking project 				

Initiative		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Goal 4	Improve built environments along the foreshore	\$230,000	\$865,000	\$265,000
Year 1 – Key Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Indented Head Hall redevelopment plan – Asset management plan and foreshore improvements – Foreshore furniture upgrades 				
Goal 5	Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, adaptive and accountable organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$15,000
Year 1 – Key Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Governance model building project – Management and operations review – Equipment upgrade – Community engagement 				

9.5 Monitoring and reporting

Bellarine Bayside will report to Government, the community and stakeholders on its progress in delivering the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan through its annual reporting processes, including the annual report.

The successful implementation of the Plan will require close collaboration with other agencies involved in the management of the northern Bellarine foreshore including the City of Greater Geelong, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and the Environment, as well as local community organisations, schools and businesses.

Regular updates on major initiatives in the Plan will be available through community bulletins and the Bellarine Bayside website.

The Plan will be reviewed and further developed annually. This will be particularly relevant at the end of its first year of implementation, as work on the scope and costs of specific initiatives in the Plan are detailed over the next 12 months. In accordance with the requirements of the *Coastal Management Act 1995*, a major review of the overall Plan will occur every three years. The review will assess the progress of the Plan against its objectives and, where required, update the Plan according to changes in government policy and legislation and emerging trends that impact on the foreshore environment. The review will involve engagement with local communities and other stakeholders.

10.0

Appendices

10.1 Acknowledgments

Bellarine Bayside acknowledges the contributions of the following people and community organisations to the northern Bellarine foreshore planning process.

Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan Project Steering Committee

- Cathy Whelan, Bellarine Bayside Chairperson and Committee Member (Chair)
- Bill Dix, Bellarine Bayside Committee Member
- Julie Elterman, Bellarine Bayside Committee Member
- David Gray, Bellarine Bayside Committee Member
- Hazel Ingram, Bellarine Bayside Committee Member
- Amy Paterson, Bellarine Bayside Committee Member
- Michael Noelker, Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Tim Hellsten, Central Coastal Board
- Gareth Smith, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
- Paul Jamieson, City of Greater Geelong
- Kerry O'Neill, Consultant, Strategy and Engagement
- Una McAlinden, Director, National Celtic Festival

Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan Community Reference Group

- Cathy Whelan (Chair)
- Joan Pratt
- Wendy Allen
- Jenny Macaulay
- Des Badrock
- Jenny Wills
- Dalis Law
- Ingrid Novosel
- Phil Walters
- Sarah Crisp
- Peter Dalton

Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan Coastal Trail Community Reference Group

- Ingrid Novosel
- Monica Hayes
- Una McAlinden
- Dennis Smith
- Moira Gibson
- Cheryl Hilton
- Terry Power
- Leanne Barnes
- Joan Kelly
- Jenny Macaulay

Coastal Strategy Workshop

(facilitator: Michael Henry)

- Matt Boland, member Victorian Coastal Council and former Ministerial Adviser
- Allister Drysdale, former Advisor to Premier Kennett, now retired in Apollo Bay
- Steven Griffin, Chief Executive Officer and Ralph Roob, Senior Environmental Engineer, City of Greater Geelong
- Dick Gross, former President Municipal Association of Victoria and City of Port Phillip Mayor and Councillor
- Janine Haddow, former Executive Director, Natural Resources Division, DSE
- Liz Johnstone, Manager Planning, Policy and Projects, Municipal Association of Victoria; former Chair, Central Coastal Board
- Gerard O'Neill, Chief Executive Officer, Nature Trust and former Deputy Chief Executive Director, Parks Victoria
- David Ritman, Team Leader, Maritime Planning and Strategy, Parks Victoria
- Gareth Smith, CEO, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
- Geoff Wescott, Deakin University, designer of Victorian Coastal Governance System
- Nick Wynn, Senior Policy Officer, DSE
- Beverley Smith, Manager Adaptive Communities, DSE

Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation

- John Young, RAP Manager
- Bryon Powell, Elder of the Wadawurrung people

Central Coastal Board

- Liz Johnstone, former Chairperson
- Annette Hatten, Executive Officer

Northern Bellarine Community Organisations

The National Celtic Festival, Coastcare Group, Drysdale Rotary Club, Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve, Indented Head Boat Club, Indented Head Boatshed Association, Indented Head Community Association, Indented Head Yacht Club, Locomote Walkability Action Group, Portarlington Mussel Festival, Port Arts Network, Portarlington Bowls Club, Portarlington Business Development Association, Portarlington Community Association, Port Peddlers, Portarlington RSL, Portarlington Sailing Club, Staying in Port, St Leonards Progress Association, St Leonards Yacht and Motor Squadron, Woofers and Walkers Group and the Friends of Bellarine Hills.

Bellarine Bayside Committee of Management

- Cathy Whelan (Chair)
- Bill Dix
- Julie Elterman
- David Gray
- Hazel Ingram
- Amy Paterson

Bellarine Bayside CEO and officers

At the start of the project the organisation was represented by its then Chief Executive Officer, Tim Page-Walker. Vin McKay, was appointed Chief Executive Officer in May 2011.

10.2 Legislative and Policy influences



10.3 Victorian Coastal Strategy Principles

The *Coastal Management Act* 1995 directs the development of the Victorian Coastal Strategy which provides for the long term planning of the Victorian Coast. Specifically the VCS seeks to:

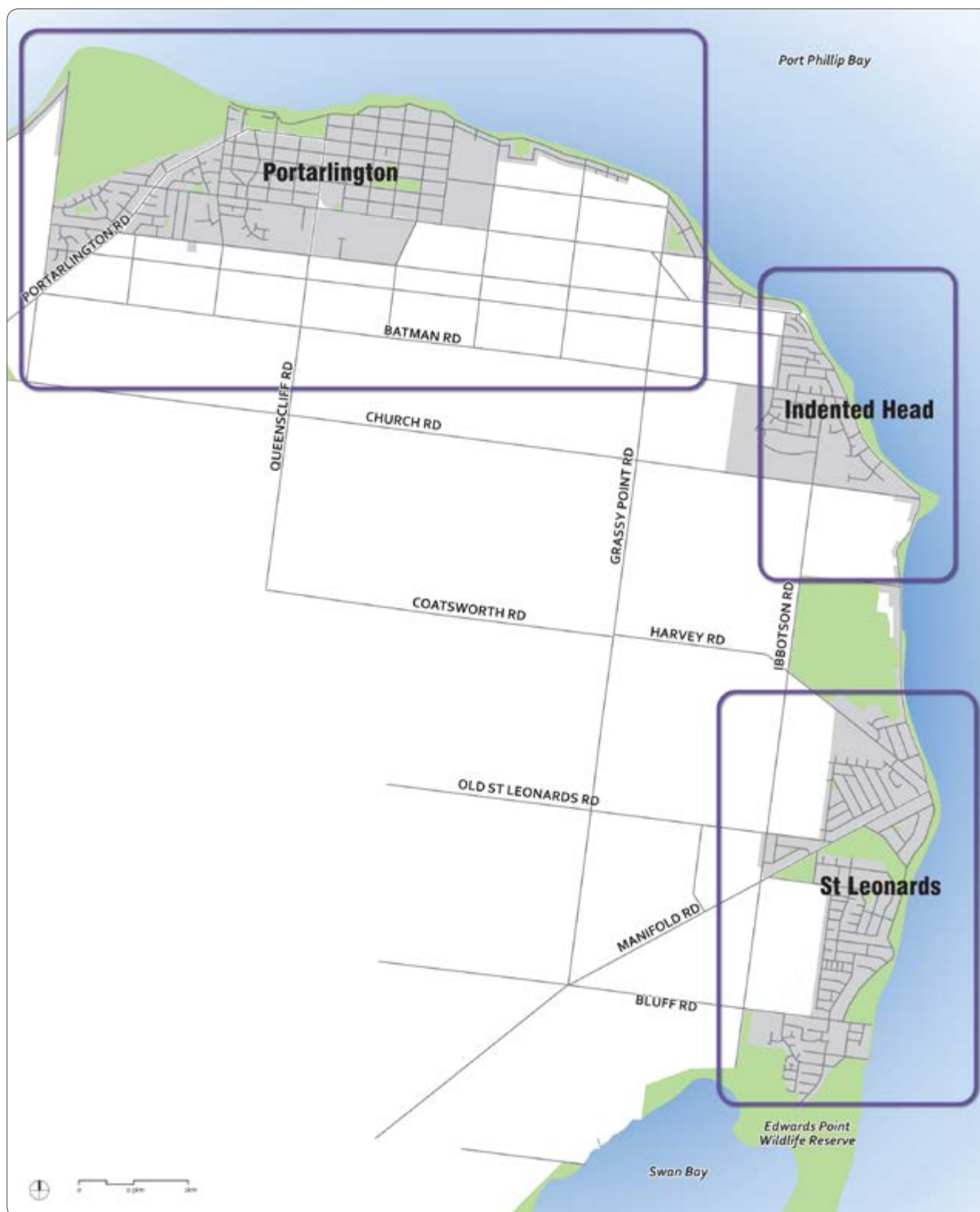
- ensure the protection of significant environmental features of the coast
- provide clear direction for the future use of the coast including the marine environment
- identify suitable development areas and development opportunities on the coast
- ensure the sustainable use of natural coastal resources.

The VCS adopts a hierarchy of principles as the foundation of the strategy to guide planning and decision-making about land use and development on coastal land. These principles are to:

- provide for the protection of significant environmental and cultural values. (PROTECT)
- undertake integrated planning and provide clear direction for the future. (DIRECT)
- ensure the sustainable use of natural coastal resources. (USE)
- when the above principles have been considered and addressed:
- ensure development on the coast is located within existing modified and resilient environments where the demand for development is evident and the impact can be managed. (DEVELOP).

10.4 Proposed activity and recreation nodes

Map 3 Activity and Recreation Nodes are identified in following maps for each of the foreshore areas outlined in the key map below.



Map 4 Proposed Activity and Recreation Nodes in Portarlington



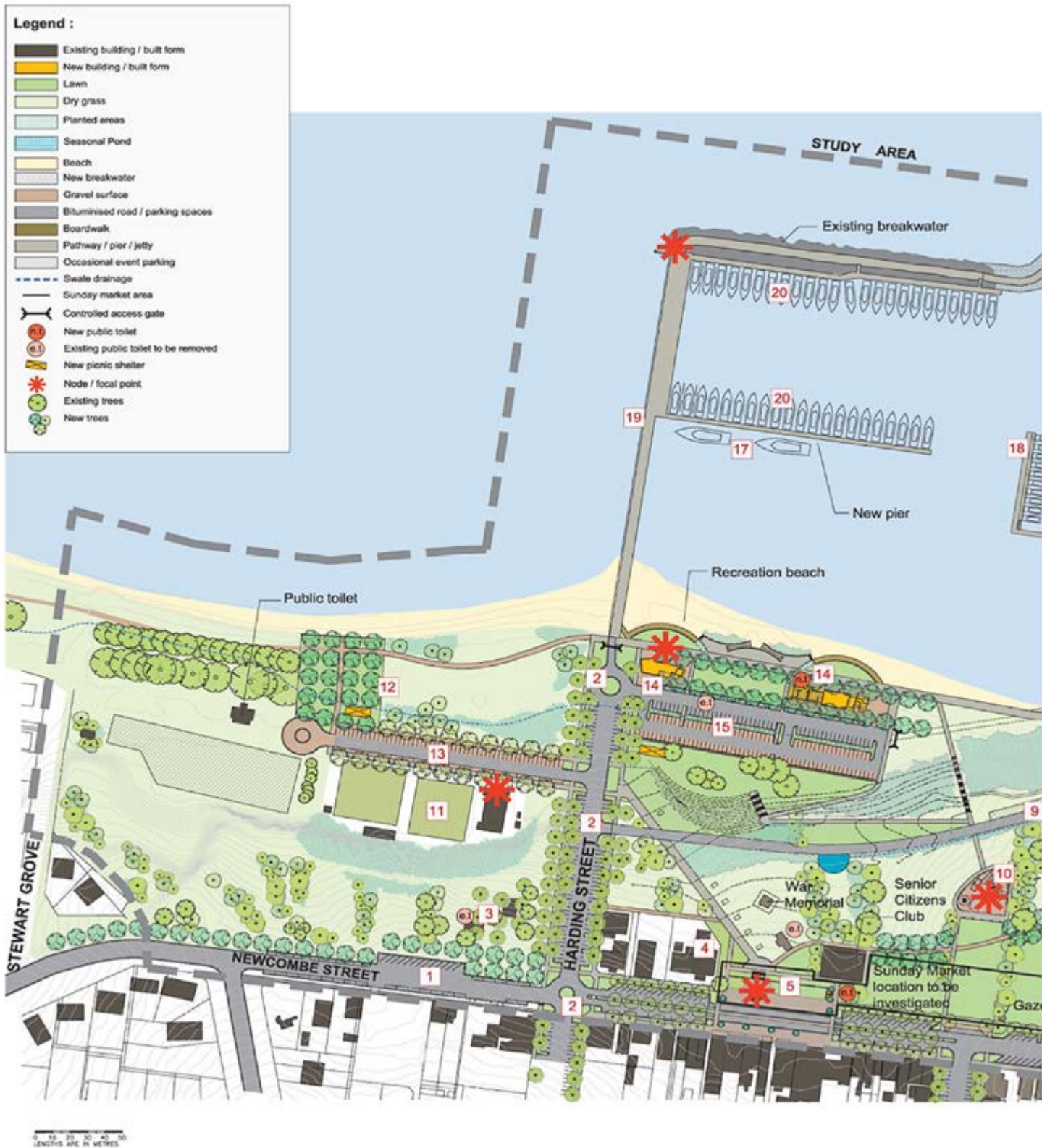
Map 5 Proposed Activity and Recreation Nodes in Indented Head

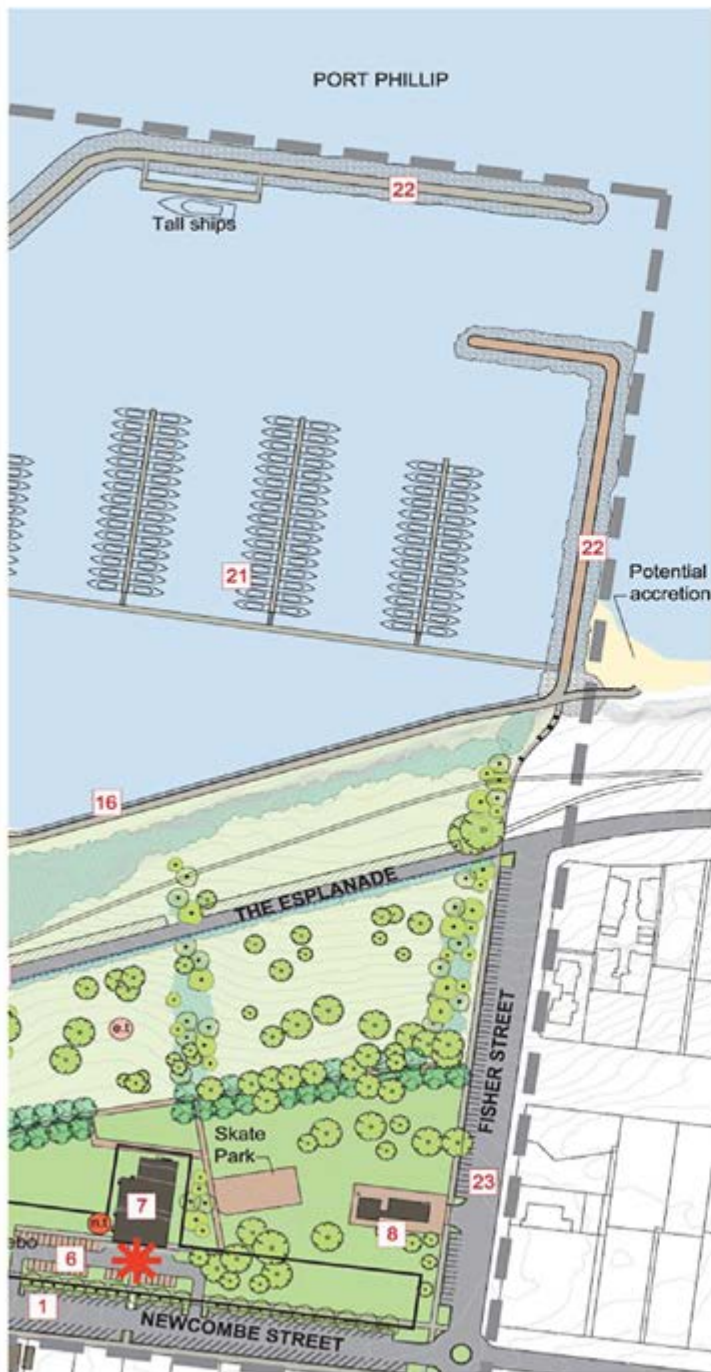


Map 6 Proposed Activity and Recreation Nodes in St Leonards



10.5 Portarlington Safe Harbour Master Plan





Key Elements :

- 1 **Newcombe Street** - Additional angle parking spaces (up to 20 car spaces) to be provided West of Harding Street along park edge. Maximise parking capacity east of Town Square with angle parking.
- 2 **Harding Street** - Provide clear access to and within the Safe Harbour Precinct, maximise parking and formalise footpaths.
- 3 **Scouts Hall** - Remove the hall and nearby toilet block, subject to successful relocation of the Scouts and heritage assessment of the building.
- 4 **Kindergarten** - Kindergarten to remain within existing footprint.
- 5 **Town Square / Pier Street** - New town square focused on Rotunda with key views towards the Bay along Pier Street, connecting the Pier and town centre. Pier Street to be closed to vehicular traffic. Parking for Senior Citizens Club and mobile library to be incorporated into the Town Square. Opportunity to include public toilet at Town Square.
- 6 **Shared Parking Spaces** - Provide 33 car parking spaces in front of Parks Hall.
- 7 **Parks Hall** - No change envisaged in the short term. In the long term, assess the potential to refurbish and extend Parks Hall for new community activities.
- 8 **CFA** - CFA to remain within existing footprint. Improve fencing around the site.
- 9 **The Esplanade** - Existing road alignment to be retained between Fisher Street and Pier Street. Construct a new section of road between Pier Street and Harding Street. Provide a planted swale along the southern side of The Esplanade and overflow car parking along the northern verge.
- 10 **Park Playground** - New configuration is suggested for the existing playground at this focal point in the park.
- 11 **Portarlington Bowls Club** - Bowls Club to be retained within existing footprint for the medium term. In the long term, the site offers a strategic opportunity for development as a tourist accommodation node, subject to resolving the locational needs of the Bowls Club, financial viability, development of detailed design criteria and assessment against relevant State and Local Planning Policies.
- 12 **Foreshore Landscape** - Remove car parking and landscape the area with a combination of formal lawns and informal open space.
- 13 **West Foreshore Road / Parking Spaces** - Existing parking area in front of the Bowls Club to be developed as formal 90 degree parking on the foreshore side and parallel parking on the south side. This new area is to accommodate up to 80 car spaces.
- 14 **Beachfront Promenade and Commercial Development** - Redevelop the existing harbour side car park to provide a tree lined promenade and two new commercial buildings that include uses such as cafe / seafood restaurant, ferry ticketing, chandlery, toilets and change rooms.
- 15 **East Foreshore Parking Spaces and Landscape** - Remove existing public toilets and Port Pier Cafe. Provide 160 parking spaces with landscaped edges to the south of beachfront development. Grassed or stepped amphitheatre to be established south of the car park.
- 16 **Recreational Berthing Maintenance Access Road** - New access road / pedestrian path to be constructed connecting the beachfront commercial area with the recreational marina. Embankment to be stabilised.
- 17 **Ferry Berthing** - Proposed location of the two ferry berths with safe separation from commercial activities and within walking distance to beachfront commercial development. Subject to viability and providing safe separation between the ferry and beach users.
- 18 **Refuelling / Sewage Pump Out** - Opportunity to provide shared service berth facility for recreational and commercial vessels.
- 19 **Portarlington Pier** - Demolish the existing concrete Pier and replace it with a wider Pier that allows for separation of pedestrian and vehicle movements. Wave protection will be incorporated along Western edge of Pier, which will prevent sand from entering the harbour. In the long term, provide a covered walkway for pedestrians from the beachfront area to ferry berths.
- 20 **Commercial Berths** - Provide for up to 45 commercial berths off the existing Pier to service the aquaculture industry. Reconfigure the layout to comply with Australian Standards 3962 for waterway clearances.
- 21 **Recreational Berthing and Boating Facilities** - Proposed area for recreational berthing and boating facilities, with capacity for approximately 100 berths.
- 22 **New Breakwaters** - Provide an extension to the northern breakwater and establish a new eastern breakwater aligned with Fisher Street to create a safe harbour. Investigate the potential and need for a Tall Ships berth.
- 23 **Fisher Street** - Provide for a shared pathway and 90 degree parking along the park edge.

10.0 Appendices (cont.)

10.6 Abbreviations

AAV	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria
Bellarine Bayside	Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management
CAP	Coastal Action Plan
CCB	Central Coastal Board
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CoGG	City of Greater Geelong
Corangamite CMA	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
CMP	Coastal Management Plan
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
PV	Parks Victoria
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
VCC	Victorian Coastal Council
VCS	Victorian Coastal Strategy

