



I have read and agree with the submissions from Geelong Environment Council, the Point Lonsdale Civic Association and the Queenscliff Community Association.

Safe carrying capacity, and safe evacuation in an emergency

I have particular concerns around the (lack of) ability of our townships, particularly within the Borough of Queenscliffe, to be able to evacuate the residents and visitors in the event of a fire emergency on days of high and extreme fire danger. Located as we are on the tip of a peninsula, with just two exit points, (1) the PL - Ocean Grove Road, and (2) the Bellarine Highway, our townships are extremely vulnerable on those days of high fire danger. Such days as are predicted to increase under climate change conditions. Days when families are often enjoying different recreational activities, in different locations within the townships. Kids at the beach, mums at home, Dads on the golf course, or out boating.

In recent decades, the stated number of visitors to the borough over summer is anything between 17,000 and 22,000 people on any one day. More recently the additional 600 homes on our boundary (*Moremac development*), add to that permanent resident numbers and the potential visitor numbers over summer, as does the increased traffic using an improved ferry service, all with the ability to further slow any evacuation. You can only guess at the number of vehicles and caravans in the area on any one day in summer, each with a fuel load that can only further hamper emergency services personnel in containing a potentially out of control fire.

Roughly 20 years ago, in the off season, a large influx of visitors to view a new ship through the heads, put organisational pressures and extreme time delays when all the vehicles tried to leave at much the same time. In a fire emergency there would be panic, and a far greater number of vehicles, all trying to evacuate at the same time, on potentially just one or two exit points. **A Distinctive Area Landscape Plan, must address these serious issues of timely evacuation of potentially a very large number of people in a fire emergency.**

While it is acknowledged that we are not located adjoining a large forrest area, our Buckley's Park dune area, within the borough where it is heavily overgrown with invasive species, and within COGG, where it adjoins our boundary, has the potential for a fire to enter the borough, from the west. **But any fire type, household or bush, starting within the borough, on the worst of extreme fire days will, could, and will, be catastrophic for the borough residents. Evacuating large numbers of cars, caravans, and young (who are often at the beach alone), or the elderly (who may have special contact requirements).** Added to this will be the need for emergency vehicles to enter the township (s), at the same time as a large number might be trying to exit.

I was pleased to find reference to the carrying capacity of our popular tourism townships in the Draft Victorian Coastal Strategy, (Screenshot attached) but note that strategy relates to the impacts On Country, of large visitor numbers. **Serious consideration must be given to safe carrying capacity of townships as it relates to the personal and (ultimately) property safety of the permanent residents, and the safe and timely evacuation of all people in such an emergency. This will require in-depth conversations with all branches of Emergency Services, local councils, health providers (contact lists), Police, roadwork providers, and others.**

<p>3.6 a) Pilot a system to assess and monitor the carrying capacity and visitor experience in high-use areas of the Great Ocean Road, include factors such as visitor numbers and behaviour, and impacts of visitation on the values of these areas.</p> <p>b) Evaluate the piloted system for application in planning and management of other high use marine and coastal areas in Victoria.</p>	<p>a) Lead: GORCAPA Collaborate: DELWP, PV, DOT, Regional Tourism Boards, DJPR, TOCs</p> <p>b) Lead: DELWP Collaborate: DELWP, PV, DOT, Regional Tourism Boards, DJPR, TOCs, CoM, GORCAPA</p>	<p>2022–2026</p>
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Any planning regulations that seek to increase density in these two townships, will further exacerbate this potentially very frightening possibility. While there may be few who provide feedback on this issue, it is a topic of strong conversation over the hot summer period.

Height Controls

My additional concern is around any plans to change the building regulations around heights of buildings. In recent years within Point Lonsdale, there have been many new homes built, all complying with current height regulations. To increase the allowable height on adjoining properties in the future, will in many cases be to the disadvantage of existing home owners, and to the disadvantage of uniformity within streets.

An overall allowance to increase heights, could also be to the detriment of existing homeowners, where both those homes are on undulating streetscapes. A home built on the lower side of the slope, following which a home is built on the next upper block, with an additional height allowance, will, without careful planning legislation, have the potential for a haphazard streetscape presentation, and a good deal of dissatisfaction in neighbour relations.

Regards . . 