

## **Indented Head Community Association Inc**



Indented Head Community Assoc Inc  
C/- Post Office  
Indented Head Vic 3223

### **Submission on the Draft Bellarine Peninsula**

### **Statement of Planning Policy – 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

The Indented Head Community Association would like to endorse the SPP directions for the Bellarine Peninsula proposal as critical for the significant protection of township character, natural resources and environment resilience, the wetland sites, woodlands, coastal landscapes, water ways and green breaks across the peninsula. We also support the Combined Bellarine Community Association's submission, as well as the separate community association's submissions that reflect their distinctive landscape and concerns.

#### **Vision and Policy Domains**

IHCA supports the 50-year vision that the Bellarine Peninsula is a sustainable, diverse region with thriving rural and coastal communities. The draft BP SPP is well structured and we can see the correlation between the vision, objective and strategies and acknowledge the work done by DELWP. Bellarine Peninsula's unique natural beauty, Wadawurrung living culture and its historic heritage, ecological significance, distinctive landscapes and identity is widely recognised and celebrated.

The IHCA agrees with the stated eight Policy Domains and the unique values and distinctive attributes must establish a clear framework of future use and development of land, including Crown Land managed by RPE/CoM Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management. Our Community Hall and only sporting facility is located on the foreshore. No useable community open space has been set aside on Council land and none on the foreshore.

**Environment risks and resilience** - We agree with the 11 strategies detailed for RPE's (CoM), they should **ALL be binding** and **NOT** recommendations. RPE's need to coordinate with local groups/clubs to set priorities and take action to achieve environmental objectives and long standing community requirements. Currently, Minister approved Management Plans with important community projects are not binding for RPE's to develop permanent open spaces and amenities that community feedback had requested. Revenue from campers is primary in what CoM's develop on the foreshore.

An urgent need to update old planning scheme amendment, Batman Park Incorporated Plan 2015, to align planning policies so as not to contradict new planning scheme amendments. E.g. Land Subject to Inundation Overlay 2019. The Incorporated Plan has removed the opportunity for residents to object to inappropriate development through a Planning Permit Application as was in place when Batman Park was redeveloped in 2009. RPE's need to adhere to the Marine and Coastal Policy and Strategy documents and ensure that the Activities include consultations with the community. Support the community's needs now on the foreshore for present and future generations to enjoy.

**Strategic infrastructure** must be sympathetic to the towns and villages by the nature of the character, landscapes and distinct areas. An urgent need for developers to meet the expectations of "Respecting the Township's Heritage and Landscape". In Indented Head currently we have four subdivisions that have been allowed by CoGG to construct houses completely unsympathetic with the character, street vista and the majority of other houses in the township. The Township Character Assessment Report shows incorrectly on Map 26 our Indented Head Woodland Nature reserve as General Residential Zone (GRZ1) when it is acknowledged by CoGG as PCRZ.

The existing township's medium and large block sizes need to be protected and any infill must maintain the street vista. Subdividing blocks for units in streets that are unsealed, with no street parking, and no requirement for the developer to accommodate parking must be stopped. The IH Structure Plan 2016 states *new development will integrate with the coastal and historical character of the township through the incorporation of design elements that reflect the coastal location and traditional seaside housing characteristics*, this was not followed through with planning, so we welcome the identification of 'overdevelopment, urban development impacts and settlement boundaries' as significant issues.

The community would welcome community consultation more often to ensure that we achieve an area of permanent community open space on the foreshore and the need for an all access public toilet adjacent the community hall.

We have a very popular IH Boat Club which leases the lockers under the Hall and adjacent a separate building which is occupied by the IH Yacht Club. Also an Indented Head Boatsheds Association which represents the interests of the boatsheds licensees.

**Aboriginal cultural heritage** –We welcome closer engagement with the Wadawurrung community, the Bengalat balug clan lived on the northern Bellarine where they fished and camped. We recognize the First Nations people and how they respect and engage with nature, its flora and fauna and their places. A recent redevelopment of our tennis court and basketball facility, has art work around the court designed by Wadawurrung artist Billy-Jay O’Toole featuring great spirit Bunjil and recognising the coastal location with fish and a meeting place for the Wadawurrung clans.

**Environment and biodiversity** are highly valued and need protections across the peninsula. No recognition of the 13.6 hectares of Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve which was declared a nature reserve in June 2019, after an exchange of land initiated by the Indented Head Community Association. It contains listed threatened fauna species, Latham’s Snipe, recorded within the Reserve and under the EPBC Act 1999, is listed as Near Threatened in Victoria. McDonald Street, is a Moonah tree lined unmade road and greatly appreciated by the community for its beauty and popular with walkers, it is recognised by CoGG as a ‘designated biodiversity conservation area’ and no further development should be allowed.

The protection of habitat and species of Indented Head’s Moonah, woodlands and Plains Freshwater Sedge Wetlands and increasing the biodiversity of the area, is critical to grow and retain the natural environment. For example, protection of erosion of coastal cliffs, and habitat on the foreshore and community open spaces are needed. Also protection of threatened habitats of birds, and indigenous plants.

**Historic heritage** of settlements, maritime history and land use for residents and visitors has shaped the peninsula culture and amenities. Preservation of these places, sites and facilities is valued to enhance the liveability and continuity of coastal and rural life. No acknowledgement of the Batman Park & Boat Sheds Heritage Review 2013 commissioned by the City of Greater Geelong. It is a thorough history of Indented Head with families contributing their long history to the document. This welcomed history produced a Heritage Overlay for Indented Head’s foreshore from White Woman’s Rock in the north to and including Wrathall Reserve in the south. Indented Head has 24 historic boatsheds built between 1924 – 1952 that are not mentioned in either the Township Character Assessment Report or the draft SPP, yet a photo is on page 3. Only historic boatsheds on the Bellarine Peninsula.

The northern Bellarine’s coastline marks the landing of Matthew Flinders in 1802 with a monument, and John Batman in 1835 at Indented Head which historians have well referenced in understanding the landing and early settlement. It is where William Buckley was befriended by the local clan of the Wadawurrung. He learnt their language and customs. Also where he surrendered to Batman’s party.

**Tourism, agriculture and natural resources** - tourism, agriculture, aquaculture and natural resources uses need to be planned, controlled and developed to protect village character and natural beauty. Over 900 campers use the Indented Head foreshore in three camping reserves, from 2 months, 4 months and 6 months. A permanent community open space needs to be centrally located opposite our General Store and Post Office as it has street parking. With no postal deliveries, residents are either forced to drive to the General Store and Post Office or walk on uneven nature strips, busy and unmade roads.

**Landscape** encompasses diverse coastlines, grassy and river red gum woodland, and rural areas of natural beauty and need to be highly valued and recognised as unique features of the peninsula. We agree, common oversight of the RAMSAR sites and connection of local groups of the peninsula will help to link and manage wetland sites to promote future sustainability.

**Settlement Boundaries** - Communities from across the Bellarine are very clear in their desire to maintain their boundaries, to protect and preserve the Bellarine as a distinctive area and landscape. The boundaries need to be guaranteed for the entire 50 years and not part of any reviews of the SPP. We strongly support the proposal for a protected settlement boundary around the township with permanent green breaks. Indented Head is a residential coastal town with a General Store and Post Office, with no postal deliveries. We currently have four housing estates, Amalfi Cove, Harvey Estate, Secret by the Bay Estate and the largest Seabreeze Estate to the west and adjacent the Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve.

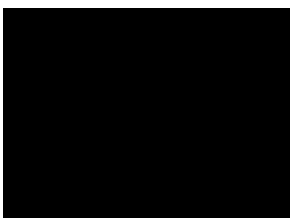
**Indented Head** is a picturesque bayside village with significant sites. The Wreck of the Ozone paddle steamer lies just off shore at Half Moon Bay. Twenty-four historic boatsheds sit on the foreshore from Half Moon Bay to Wrathall Reserve. The Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve is highly significant and very valued by the community, a “Friends of the IHWNR” was formed in 2019 and working bees are a regular event that residents enjoy knowing that they are helping to preserve and protect this rare woodland. In the near future it needs either a Vegetation Protection Overlay or an Environmental Significance Overlay. The benefits of being in nature for our wellbeing needs to be reflected in the SPP.

IHCA agrees the impacts of climate change on drought, water resources, flooding, coastal erosion, stormwater run-off and occurrence of more extreme weather events will damage the Indented Head foreshore into the future. These impacts need to be mitigated by appropriate coastal planning to ensure coastal trails are set away from the coast to reduce erosion. We have many sections of the foreshore that are subject to inundation and RPE’s/CoM’s (Bellarine Bayside) need to ensure that infrastructure is built away from the beach to ensure the safe use of public places, a reduction in the 247 camp sites must be planned for in the near future. LSIO overlays should be enforced on the foreshore. The 2016 census has the permanent population at 1,133 which increases to over 6,000 during summer. We lack basic infrastructure like footpaths on major and unsealed roads.

**Correction needed on Page 44, “Australia’s largest abalone farm is just off the coast at Indented Head”**. This description needs to be replaced with *...is located on privately owned coastal land, and utilises the roadway, foreshore and public beach with off shore intake and outtake pipes pumping water into the facility and out into Port Phillip Bay.* The Jade Tiger Abalone farm is not shown on map 7 as a major site on The Esplanade at Indented Head. The above ground pipes over the beach have raised safety issues for beach walkers. DELWP and Bellarine Bayside are responsible for any works carried out to achieve the covering of these pipes.

IHCA values DELWP’s collaborative approach and consultation with all the partners involved in forming the draft BP SPP, particularly the opportunity to comment on our coastal village of Indented Head. Due to our low lying foreshore, it will be impacted by sea level rises, so it needs to be developed to value our quiet, unique and relaxed atmosphere with open spaces needed on the foreshore and permanently available to the community and visitors to enjoy. The Indented Head Community Association actively supports the community values by engaging with residents in having their say in what issues are important to them. DELWP, CoGG, and Bellarine Bayside need to engage with the community more effectively to ensure that SPP strategies and the Marine and Coastal Strategy activities are followed into the future. It would be unfortunate if the excellent work which has been undertaken to date is jeopardized by a lack of implementation and we therefore request that DELWP ensures adequate funding and resources are applied to this process.

We also share the concerns of the other community groups in regard to the enforceability of the SPP in what will be certain resistance by developers and RPE’s to incorporate the long standing needs and protections of the unique and distinctive communities on the Bellarine Peninsula.



Secretary

**Indented Head Community Association Inc**