



NEPEAN CONSERVATION GROUP INC.

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NCG October 2021 Newsheet

Dear members,

This Newsheet provides you with updates and highlights of work undertaken and in progress since our July 2021 Newsheet.

We had our 19 September NCG Committee meeting via zoom on Sunday 19 September 2021, as well as a number of single agenda item meetings relating to Victoria's new marine and coastal strategy, planning on the Mornington Peninsula and the Mornington Peninsula Planning Amendment C219morn (more below).

Your committee members, as previously advised are: John Atchison, Judith Brown, Eddy de Jong, Ursula de Jong, Priscilla Donald, Barend Frielink, Ian Gray, Lisa Howard, Shannon Richards, John Trewarne, Catherine Walker and Peter Walker.



October 2021. This image of the Peregrine falcon with its young by photographer Dave Watts on the other side of the world, gives you a good idea of the current state of the nest and young chicks on the cliffs along Bass Strait in the Mornington Peninsula National Park. Unfortunately, my camera does not have a sufficient zoom lens to provide you with such a close-up view. Eddy and I have watched our pair nest over many years, and so it was wonderful to see the eggs in August (on a precarious rock ledge) and the young hatched in September. It will not now be long till they fledge – if they can survive the Spring storms. These new falcons are always welcome.

The committee continues to work very hard over these Spring months across many and diverse areas.

Updates from your committee:

- As advised previously NCG completed and submitted three grant applications to DELWP. For the 2021 Port Philip Bay Fund: “Stewardship of the Bay: conserving coastal habitat - Portsea to Rye” (up to \$50k) – the NCG were awarded \$48k through DELWP and the project is well under way. The Contractors, NatureLinks began work in August. Unfortunately, with Victoria in lockdown, Friends groups have not been able to work alongside the contractors. We look forward to beginning again sometime in November, once 80% of Victorians (over 16s) are fully vaccinated.
- September 2021 St JohnsWood Rd carpark reserve – due to Victoria’s lockdown, NatureLinks planted 600+ plants and completed mulching. The final NCG MPS Placemaking grant report for this site is due end October 2021.
- 21 October St JohnsWood Rd walk with MPS Natural Systems Team and Community 3942 to check the final track alignment for track from Melbourne Rd to Bridgewater Bay, within the newly established linear bushland reserve. We have much more work ahead of us here.
- Community Coalition - NCG putting together dot points for a new initiative for consideration. The Community Coalition has not met since Victoria was put into its sixth lockdown. The NCG however continues to work with our Nepean Ward Councillors, Sarah Race and Susan Bissinger, as well as with the entire MPSC, and its officers.
- NCG Auspice for Friends Groups: PNNP (grant application up to \$30k); and Coast Care Grant submission: Friends of Sorrento Foreshore, Richard Holland - submitted up to \$30k (still awaiting outcomes of the grant applications).
- NCG submitted a response to Victoria’s new Marine and Coastal Strategy.
- NCG submitted a response to the MPS Western Sister Master Plan.



Moonah forest, Point Nepean National Park, photo PN Research and Education Field Station 2021

- Point Nepean National Park updates: members of the NCG committee (and others) attended the [Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station](#) Community Briefing on Monday 11 October hosted by [Monash University](#) and the [University of Melbourne](#). The presentation was recorded and if you are interested in a copy please make contact with them via [email](#). Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station: <https://www.pointnepeanfieldstation.org.au/>

Planning Matters



The InterContinental Hotel Sorrento – opening soon. While working hard to meet deadline of 1 December 2021 opening – this looks like it is being postponed following construction work shut downs due to covid lockdowns across Victoria. The NCG continues to monitor the site and to work with Heritage Victoria.

Permits across the Nepean Ward – continue to be reviewed.

Work commencing on Ferry Terminal – NCG querying community consultation on the proposed traffic plan (published in Southern Peninsula News).

The NCG received correspondence from MPS (28 June 2021) re proposed Aged Care Facility at 3233-3235 Pt Nepean Rd Sorrento – advising that MPS has refused the application. The applicant is appealing the decision, the NCG submitted its Statement of Grounds to VCAT on 10 August. On 15 October the NCG attended the Directions hearing. A full compulsory conference is scheduled for 25 November 2021, and the full hearing for the first two weeks of February 2022.

Website updates

Many of you will have noticed that the NCG website has been on and off line over the past few months following a temporary shutdown, so that the NCG website can be reworked and updated. We thank the NCG committee for their hard work over the last few months to put the website onto a sound foundation so it is ready to begin again. We are now working with a small professional company to manage and update the NCG website going forward. Our web site will once again be found at nepeanconservationgroup.org.au

Stunning Spring in our National Parks and Bushland Reserves



Photos U de Jong – LtoR - Pink Fairy orchids; Running Postman and Karkalla



Photos U de Jong – LtoR – Silky Guinea Flower; Swainson Pea and tea tree

Bridgewater Bay Habitat Corridors – NCG grant application and pilot mapping project

In the Bridgewater Bay area, the Nepean Conservation Group (NCG) is the umbrella group for:

- 2 established Bushland Reserves (E G Ritchie & Sid Baker)
- 8 small reserves - 6 former drainage reserves, and 2 pocket reserves
- the proposed new linear bushland reserve along St Johns Wood Rd, from Melbourne Rd to Mornington Peninsula National Park.

The NCG submitted an unsuccessful grant application to the MPS for a \$10k biolinks grant earlier in 2021. In the grant application the NCG stated that it is keen for Bio links to be established in the area bounded by Kirwood, Melbourne and Royadie Roads, interfacing with the Mornington Peninsula National Park, Blairgowrie. The precinct is a distinct existing unmade roads precinct, with a designated neighbourhood character and high environmental values. The project aimed to protect, rehabilitate, enhance and nurture biodiversity through the establishment of habitat corridors. The NCG envisaged that the grant would be utilised:

- to map the area for existing patches of vegetation/habitat, on public and private land, using aerial photography and driving to document the precinct - these methodologies are a starting point for systematic on-ground work to rehabilitate verges and public and private land
- to link existing reserves and these identified patches via network of roadside verges and private land, to establish habitat corridors
- to engage the community in weeding and replanting of roadside verges and private properties.

Written contact will be made by the NCG with all property owners in the identified area to explain the project aims and to invite their participation in the creation of the corridors by volunteering their time to weed and replant roadside verges and their own properties and/or joining a Friends Group.

A biodiversity workshop will be developed and offered to local residents and property owners. A long term benefit of this grant would be to educate local people to understand their unique flora and fauna, and to encourage the community to value, maintain and enhance the natural environment.

Even though we were unsuccessful in gaining a BioLink grant, the MPS is willing to work with us to engage with the community, once we are out of Victoria's covid lockdowns.

The NCG committee has gone ahead with the mapping exercise, funding it from our funds. Katherine Smedley from *Sundew* Ecological Services, Ecological Consultancy & Biodiversity Management/Monitoring, undertook the site work on the first weekend in October 2021.

The mapping, from 2003 and 2004, which the Mornington Peninsula Shire has done doesn't indicate vegetation quality, it just shows Environmental Vegetation Classes (EVCs). The mapping K Smedley is undertaking is more detailed and will assist the NCG in prioritising areas and deciding what are priority patches to link (based on vegetation quality), etc. Also, with the recent work K Smedley has been doing with Gidja Walker, they think most of the area would probably once have been EVC 309: Calcareous Swale Grassland rather than EVC 858: Coastal Alkaline Scrub. In any low-lying spots there may also be EVC 12: Wetland Swale Herbland which they think they noted a small patch of near (if not in) our study area. Katherine will over the next month complete the report – and we look forward to sharing some of the highlights at a biodiversity workshop once we can organise it.

YOUR PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Our NCG Winter Ramble to Dimmicks Beach was cancelled due to Victoria's extended covid lockdowns. As soon as Victoria is unlocked again we will reschedule and advise. We do hope you are keeping as well as possible in these times and look forward to catching up with many of you once permitted.

Planning Amendment C219morn

The amendment proposes to implement the Housing and Settlement Strategy: Refresh 2020-2036 (Mornington Peninsula Shire, 2020) and Neighbourhood Character Study and Guidelines (Ethos Urban, 2019) by making substantial changes to zones, overlays and policies affecting the Shire's residential areas.

The NCG committee has been reviewing the numerous documents that are part of this C219 planning amendment. The NCG has held meetings with the entire MPSC, with planning officers and with key stakeholders, in an attempt to understand the changes and their implications. We attach the **Mornington Peninsula C219morn Desktop Review of Strategic Work** for your information and provide links below to relevant files of maps and documents.

File access:

Existing DDO and GRZ for the area <https://mapshare.vic.gov.au/Vicplan/index.html>

Proposed DDO https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/schemes-and-amendments/browse-amendments?query=C219morn&search_mode=id#Amendments-C219morn

Property Search

<https://shape.mornpen.vic.gov.au/planning-scheme-amendment-c219morn-housing-for-the-peninsula/c219morn-property-address-search>

click layers

We suggest that you inform yourselves as fully as possible. We suggest you look up your own property and examine the changes – ensure you click on the multiple layers. DO NOT rely on the summary which generally states that there are minimal changes. Click on the relevant residential zones and overlays and compare the current and the proposed to be fully cognisant of the changes and implications of changes. We will send our findings and our submission to you.

We encourage you to make submissions – **due 29 October 2021.**

<https://shape.mornpen.vic.gov.au/planning-scheme-amendment-c219morn-housing-for-the-peninsula>

The NCG looks forward to your engagement and participation and to hearing from you on any of the above matters, or any other concerns you may have.

Warm regards

Ursula

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