

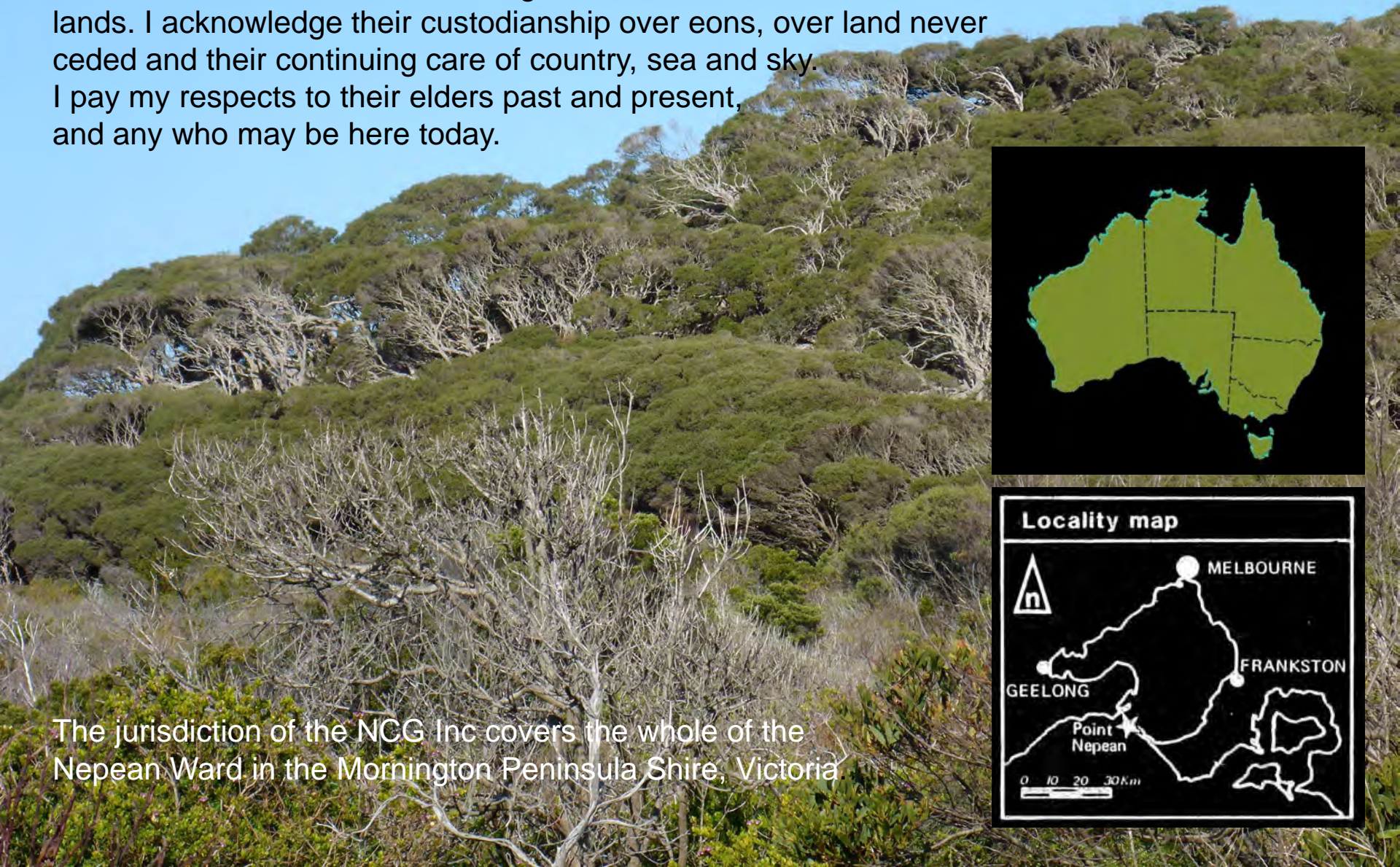


Nepean Conservation Group
Celebrating 50 years of caring
for our environment on the
Nepean Peninsula
Looking back-looking forward

2023 President's report
Ursula de Jong



I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this land upon which we meet: the Bunurong people. I recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. Every day we live, work, and dream on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. I acknowledge their custodianship over eons, over land never ceded and their continuing care of country, sea and sky. I pay my respects to their elders past and present, and any who may be here today.



The jurisdiction of the NCG Inc covers the whole of the Nepean Ward in the Mornington Peninsula Shire, Victoria.



Our Wards

Current Councillors

Briars Ward

HOLLAND, Steve MAYOR

O'CONNOR, Despi

MARSH, Anthony

Cerberus Ward

DIXON, Lisa

Nepean Ward

RACE, Sarah

BISSINGER, Susan

Red Hill Ward

GILL, David

Seawinds Ward

CELI, Antonella

BROOKS, Simon

MAR, Debra DEPUTY MAYOR

Watson Ward

VACANT

Nepean

Seawinds

Briars

Red Hill

Cerberus

Watson

Sam Groth, MP
Nepean

Port Phillip

Western Port



MORNINGTON
PENINSULA
Shire

In 1996 the name of Collin's Riding changed to Nepean!

The Nepean Peninsula is an inspirational place ... one with a unique biodiversity and fragile coast



Eddy de Jong



Rob Varney



Ursula de Jong



PV

© Dr Ursula M de Jong



"In the environmental movement, every time you lose a battle it's for good, but our victories always seem to be temporary and we keep fighting them over and over again." *David Suzuki*

This too is the story of the Nepean Conservation Group 1973-2023

Looking back – looking forward

1973 The Conservation Group originated with a meeting held in the "Age" office in Spencer St. Melbourne, in October 1973, to oppose the Shire's proposed Sorrento Foreshore Development Plan drawn up by the Shire Engineer. This included a proposed marina West of the Sorrento Pier, in which land-fill would have extended as far as Lentell Ave.

The battle with marinas continued over the decades: Sorrento – 1983, 1987; Rosebud 1996; Blairgowrie 1995, 1997, 2012.

The Conservation Group was set up as the Sorrento Portsea Blairgowrie Conservation Group

The committee agreed that the group had a broader conservation remit and a policy to preserve the unique character of Sorrento Township ...



Dune thistle

The NCG Constitution developed over 1973/4, states that the objects of our group are

- (a) To make every effort to ensure that the land and waters of the [Nepean Peninsula] are used with wisdom and foresight and that the competing demands upon them are resolved in the best long-term interests thereof
- (b) To foster the conservation of the vegetation and fauna and natural features ...
- (c) To cooperate with, or promote cooperation ... among persons, trusts, corporations, firms, associations, institutions, governments, ... concerned with or interested in conservation
- (d) generally, to take such action as it considers necessary or appropriate in the interests of promoting conservation...

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

GUIDE TO INDIGENOUS TREES PLANTS AND PROBLEM WEEDS

FOR
SORRENTO
— PORTSEA —
BLAIRGOWRIE



Coast Pomaderris
(*Pomaderris oraria*)



NEPEAN CONSERVATION GROUP
P.O. BOX 157
SORRENTO 3943
SORRENTO — PORTSEA — BLAIRGOWRIE
CONSERVATION GROUP
P.O. Box 157,
SORRENTO 3943

GUIDE TO INDIGENOUS TREES PLANTS AND PROBLEM WEEDS

FOR
SORRENTO
— PORTSEA —
BLAIRGOWRIE



Drooping She-Oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*)



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CONSERVATION GROUP INC.
P.O. Box 157,
SORRENTO 3943

GROUND COVER/CREEPERS

Running Postman (*Kennedia prostrata*)

Widespread. Enjoys sunny banks, forming a carpet of scarlet pea flowers on long trailing stems in Spring. Summer watering will extend life and vigour of plants. Propagate from seed or cuttings.

Coast or Smaller Fan Flower (*Scaevola albidia* formerly *S. pallida*)

A prostrate, matted perennial. Covers up to 1sq.m. Bears masses of small blue or white fan-shaped flowers in Spring/Summer. Benefits from Summer watering. Hardy. Propagate from cuttings.

Coast Swainson Pea (*Swainsona lessertifolia*)

A spreading herb with racemes of purple flowers on erect stems in Spring. Enjoys filtered sun.

Small Leaved Clematis (*Clematis microphylla*)

Very hardy climber. Small creamy white flowers in Spring, followed by masses of silvery billows of fruiting plumes. Self-seeds readily.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS

GARDEN PLANTS THAT CAN BECOME ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS NEAR BUSHLAND include:
Agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox orientalis*)
Mirror Bush (*Coprosma repens*)
Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*)
Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* spp)
Bluebell Creeper (*Sollya heterophylla*)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT



The NEPEAN CONSERVATION GROUP
Sorrento-Portsea-Blairgowrie
Conservation Group Inc.
P.O. Box 157
SORRENTO 3943

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to Fran Gilbert, George Stolfo and Peter Strickland for their fine illustrations, to Barry Trollope, and to members of the Society for Growing Australian Plants for their advice.

This leaflet was reprinted with funding assistance from Melbourne Parks and Waterways, 1996.



3/9/1977 The SPBCG undertook to prepare a pamphlet on the need to preserve natural vegetation on blocks to be handed out with building permits.

Left – pre 1996
Right – 1996 reprint

1991: Shire modified their “site Works & Vegetation Removal on Building Sites” leaflet to incorporate roadside planting in building permits

9/4/78 Mr. Bell reported that he had written to the Shire voicing the Group's objection to a developer's proposal to construct 5 two storey dwellings on a standard 66' x 264' block at 13 Hiskin St. This was the first of many objections to a development proposal for an individual residential block.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1979: 5 joint meetings held throughout the year with the Ratepayers Association and the Sorrento – Portsea Chamber of Commerce.

1979: As a result of inspection of a new house in Vision Ave, it was decided to write to the Council suggesting a height restriction on houses

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1981: the committee became aware that a cluster subdivision application had been made for an area around the settlers' graves at eastern Sister.

1982: The Australian Heritage Commission listed the "First Settlement Site" for inclusion in the Register of the National Estate.

1982: In March the State Government decided to acquire the entire site

1984: official opening of First settlement Site by the Governor

2002: the Rand property: NCG, NRA, NHS and Chamber make presentation to State Cabinet on 12 April

2008: A private auction held for Rand property "the Sisters" Shelmerdine family purchased for cash price of \$18.5m

2010: VCAT!!

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Early 20thC – a busy ferry terminal

2/9/84: the committee passed a motion opposing vehicular ferry at Sorrento pier.



14/7/85: The Minister issued a licence for a vehicular ferry between Sorrento and Queenscliff. The Group put in a submission to the Planning Appeals Board for conditions. The shire also objected, there were also numerous objections from Queenscliff



The shire also objected, there were also numerous objections from Queenscliff

2017 – NCG VCAT hearing into expansion of the Sorrento ferry terminal

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1984: The committee nominated the Quarantine Station and the Point Nepean Fortifications for the Register of the National Estate

2002: POINT NEPEAN CAMPAIGN begins

2002: NCG, NRA, NHS and Chamber make presentation to State Cabinet on 12 April

2002: Four Deakin students present a report on Pt N "What's the Point?"

2000s: continues

Point Nepean National Park

Point Nepean National Park remains on the NCG agenda. Two NCG members, Kate Baillieu and Ursula de Jong completed a four-year term on the Point Nepean National Park Management Advisory Committee, which reported directly to the Board of Parks Victoria, on 30 June 2021.

2020-2021 were difficult years with the National Park shut during the long periods in which greater metropolitan Melbourne was in Covid-19 lockdown. Work has nonetheless progressed on interpretation and on the camping site on Ticonderoga Bay.

Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station - \$25m promised by Hon Greg Hunt. The University of Melbourne and Monash University are developing a world-renowned interdisciplinary research and education centre in PNNP. The plan is to adaptively reuse Badcoe Hall and build a new bespoke building nearby.

2022: New federal Government reallocated funding. C \$16m was removed from this project. The Universities are exploring other funding.

EOIs for a new Point Nepean Advisory Group was advertised in late 2021. A group of eight people were selected. Four meetings were held in 2022. The first meeting for 2023 will be in April!

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1985: The Conservation group started planting indigenous plants in the 150th Anniversary Park at Stringer Reserve Blairgowrie
2021: NCG reviewed new plans for Stringer Reserve highlighting the importance of a holistic approach and the significance of indigenous vegetation



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1999: The preferred name for the McFarlan/Stringer Rd reserve decided as "Slip's Reserve". Ruben Schlipalius, who was known as Slips, used to operate the former ice cream carton the beach

11/03/07 The final report of the enquiry into building strong communities found that the Mornington Peninsula Shire ranked second for volunteering amongst Victorian shires. Volunteering Australia was the national peak body. Friends Groups were particularly encouraged

9/3/08 Stuart Sherren gave a report on the Friends Groups. 6 were no longer viable, Dimmick's Bushland Reserve was very active with 30 members. Many of the other groups had minimal support.

2023: Slips has a thriving Friends Group and provides "borrowed amenity" for the neighbours.



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1989: the Sorrento back beach kiosk and CF&L office destroyed by fire

1991: Conservation Group AGM: Mr K Yorke of the Department of Conservation and Environment spoke about the management of Point Nepean National Park. He indicated that in the years ahead the Department faced a major problem in the ongoing maintenance cost of parks throughout the State.

1997: visitors to the MPNP 2.9 m, 335k in December

1998: relocation of Coppins walking track between Sorrento and St Paul's Rd too steep.

2000: NCG and PV build a bridge

2001: Life Saving Building at Sorrento Back Beach approved by Shire and PV



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1991: The Conservation Group supported the Council by objecting to the Department of Housing and Planning allowing a building height of 12 metres throughout the State

1991: The committee sent a submission to the Shire suggesting a simpler and cheaper method of maintaining unsealed roads in the Wildcoast Residential Zone

1992: The long-range planning sub-committee submitted a report with contour maps on the effect of rising water levels possibly due to the greenhouse effect – CLIMATE CHANGE FLAGGED

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



- 1991: The Shire receives a grant under the Victorian National Estates program toward funding a heritage study of the Shire – the beginning of a long continuing journey for the Conservation Group ...
- 2006: VCAT Despite raising the necessary funds to employ professional representation, the applications for 21 Constitution Hill Rd. and 108-118 Ocean Beach Rd. were upheld, with some small modifications.
- 2010 onwards – the Continental Hotel saga ...
- 2023: Sorrento now has its own Inter-Continental Hotel

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

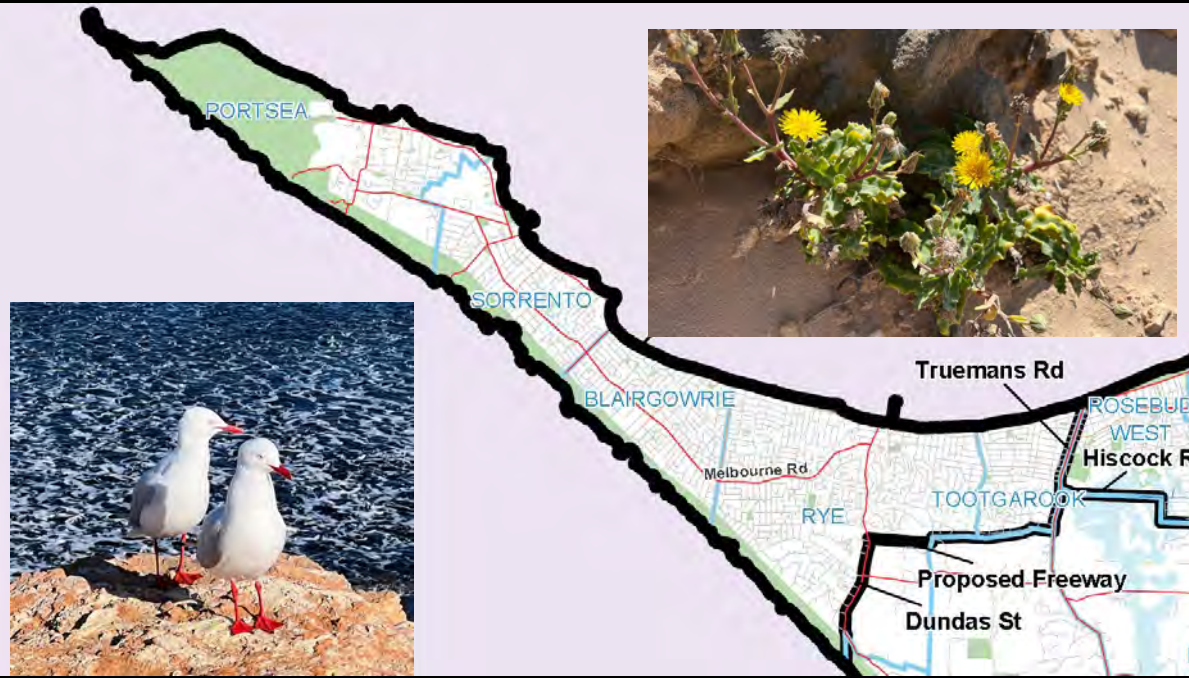


2023: The NCG continues to monitor and respond to permit changes via Heritage Victoria

Intercontinental Hotel Sorrento below; historic photo above



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1999: David Fearon was concerned that the Group's name was too cumbersome and moved that it should be changed to "Nepean Conservation Group Inc". This was carried. This needed confirmation by the members

1999: The Council budget indicated asset sales at \$1.5m. Of the \$121.6 million capital works, c\$450k was spent in the southern peninsula. "This seemed to reflect the Shire's general lack of concern for this locality".

1999: Planning scheme workshop - "concern that permits were decided case by case".

2004: Chris Elkin Smith provided a report on planning application reviews, and pointed out that handling all the many permit applications was too big a job for one person.

1/5/05: The volume of applications was beyond the resources of our Group, and it was suggested that we employ a capable retired person with an appropriate remuneration

2023: Ditto continued concern over volume of inappropriate developments

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



1994-1999: the Koonya and SOS
2003: planting by the Shire at Stringer's Corner Park, after all our discussions, was not satisfactory, and would be remedied
2022: NCG ramblers gathered in the Stringer's Corner Park

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

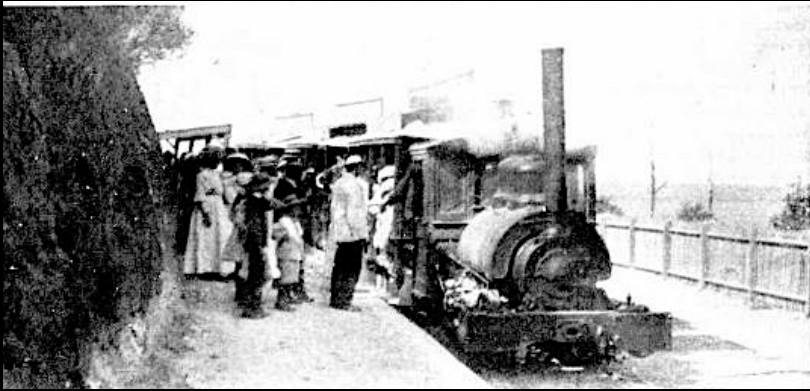


15/5/2004 Les Whiteley handed out his report to the Committee on the channel deepening project, in which he set out a large number of aspects to be considered. He considered that the justification for the project was very superficial and proposed a motion that the committee join and support in principle the work of the Blue Wedge Coalition. The motion was passed. A letter of support was written.

2023: the impacts are not resolved



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



2003: A concept plan for the steam tram platform to be undertaken
2009: The steam platform officially launched on 22 November

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

5/2/06 A membership survey had 72 replies, representing 102 members, out of 306 members.

Age under 10-3 members. 21to30-4, 31to40-6, 41to50-7, 51 to/60-17, 61to70-19, over 79-46.

Issues members would like to address: Restrict developments, awareness of weeds, roadside vegetation, conservation of Pt. Nepean, illegal clearing, protection of front and back beaches, resist development on foreshore, Bay dredging, more trees, less tennis courts, control of Agapanthus



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

NCG Inc Vision and Mission

‘VISION: The NCG’s vision is for people to understand and appreciate the natural, cultural and built heritage that contributes to the sense of place of the Nepean Peninsula, in order to protect and conserve the amenity and enhance the character of the Nepean Peninsula.’

‘MISSION: To lead and inspire the community to appreciate, recognise, conserve, protect and celebrate the natural, cultural and built heritage of the Nepean Peninsula.’



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

“Sorrento by the Bay” Registered Aged Care Facility FAILS AT VCAT.

The NCG is an objector at the current VCAT hearing – 1-9 February and another 3 days added – 6-8 April 2022. The MPS, the neighbours, the NRA and the NCG are all objecting to the proposed development. We are arguing that State planning clause 53.17 (introduced in 2018 to facilitate the building of aged care facilities, with 16m height allowance) must not ignore the local context. John Atchison, Ian Gray and Ursula de Jong attend the hearing and presented the NCG case.



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Sorrento Foreshore Coastal Management plans

The NCG has reviewed and responded to a number of management plans and concept design plans for areas along the Sorrento foreshore. SCAG advises the Shire in greater detail.

We have made a number of general points as well as providing detailed feedback.

We have suggested a holistic integrated approach to place.

We are concerned by the multiple jurisdictions and lack of accountability across the foreshore.



Sorrento Foreshore Reserve



- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | DELWP Land | | Committees of Management |
| | Vicroads Roads | | Mornington Peninsula Shire |
| | | | Parks Victoria |
| | | | Whitecliffs to Camerons Bight |



0 50 100 150 200 m

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Lindsay Fox in land grab for more Portsea July 4, 2020

“Dr Ursula de Jong, president of Nepean Conservation Group, has spoken against the land extension move.”

We continue to advocate for an appropriate outcome ... and respond to permit applications such as “watering the buffalo grass”.

We still await a response from the State Government!



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

What of the Mornington Peninsula's inclusion in metropolitan Melbourne? In 1997 "the Shire was arguing for a special planning scheme for the peninsula".

Already in 1966 all of the Mornington Peninsula was included in the metropolitan statistical area.

The 2006 MPS PS, under Settlement pattern and housing, states that: "The Mornington Peninsula is a "fringe municipality".

The 2014 MP Localised Planning Statement states that: "The Mornington Peninsula will be planned as an area of special character and importance with a role clearly distinct from and complementary to metropolitan Melbourne and designated growth areas ..."

In 2017, the State Government of Victoria noted that Victoria is divided into 79 local government areas – with 31 of them located in metropolitan Melbourne. The Live in Melbourne website lists the MPS as one of 31 local government areas located in metropolitan Melbourne.

If the Mornington Peninsula were declared a distinctive landscape, it would be a major step in setting out a long-term vision and strategy on how land is used, protected and developed. A map would also be produced of the proposed areas to be protected. The aims of the declaration would be to protect the environment, landscape and lifestyle of the Mornington Peninsula. The NCG is working towards this goal.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

A distinctive area and landscape

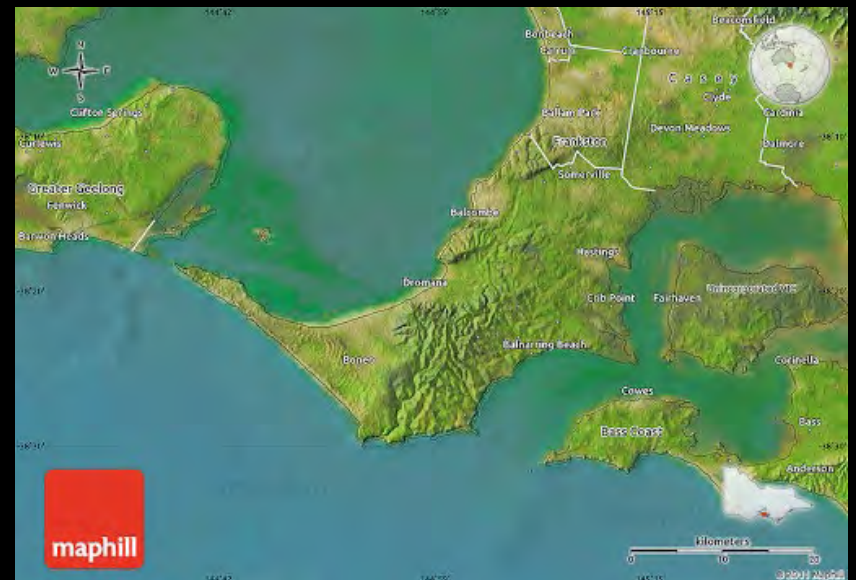
In May 2018 in landmark legislation Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018 was passed to recognise Victoria's most distinctive natural and cultural landscapes.

The Mornington Peninsula, on the fringe of Metropolitan Melbourne, is renowned for excellent beaches, bay and ocean, historic towns and villages, coastal biodiversity, a rural hinterland, valuable green wedges, boutique wineries and artisan producers, offering a wealth of recreation and tourism facilities and amenities. As the yet to be implemented MPS Neighbourhood Character study has revealed, each community is unique and has its own distinct identity.

The area has been experiencing significant development pressure leading to significant threats to the peninsula's valued landscapes and natural areas, as well as its cultural heritage.

There is a need to treat the region as a single, integrated and living entity so that it can be protected for future generations. There is no other place like the Mornington Peninsula.

The Mornington Peninsula community needs to work very hard together if we are to achieve this goal.



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

10/9/06 The habitat sub-committee had met on the 8th Sept. It was agreed that education of private property owners was required, with possibly the production of a pamphlet advising and illustrating preferred planting for nature strips and private gardens

12/7/09 The committee discussed alerting the community to the need for pockets of land to be connected creating networks of wildlife corridors.

2021: Mapping of verges and habitat in Bridgewater Bay precinct

2022: Successful Biolinks grant from MPS



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

The Friends Groups covered by the NCG Inc MOU with the MPS 2022- 25 are as follows:

1. Dimmicks Bushland Reserve. 45 Mungala Crescent and 58 Carslake Avenue Blairgowrie
2. E G Ritchie Memorial Flora & Fauna Bushland Reserve. 36 Summoner Street Blairgowrie
3. Jack Ritchie Track Bushland Reserve. 51 Dana Avenue Blairgowrie.
4. Sid Baker Bushland Reserve. 15 Summoner Street Blairgowrie.
5. Fawkner Avenue Bushland Reserve. 25-31 Fawkner Avenue Blairgowrie
6. Slips Reserve. 11-17 Stringer Road Blairgowrie
7. Tyrone Bushland Reserve. 7-17 Hibiscus Grove Rye
8. Sullivan Bay and the Western Sister, Sorrento, Property Number 127926.
9. Sorrento Foreshore Reserve, off Point Nepean Road
10. Tuckey Track Reserve. 2 Lady Nelson Drive Sorrento.
11. Rye Foreshore Reserve. Off Point Nepean Road, Rye
12. 36 Dana Avenue Blairgowrie
13. 12 Hilltop Avenue Blairgowrie
14. 57 Ridley Street Blairgowrie
15. 12 Arnold Street Blairgowrie
16. 13 Sinclair Street Blairgowrie
17. 10 Dana Avenue Blairgowrie
18. Police Point Shire Park, Portsea
19. Moonah Warren Bushland Reserve, Flinders St, Rye
20. St Johns Wood Road Carpark Reserve
21. St Johns Wood Road Linear Bushland reserve (Melbourne Rd to MPNP)



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Our Friends Groups make a difference for biodiversity by caring for bushland parks and coastal reserves, for flora and fauna, for habitat on the Nepean Peninsula



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Our Friends Groups make a difference



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Our Friends Groups make a difference

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

The NCG can report on
successful grant applications

NCG works with the MPS and PV to co-ordinate Friends Groups to restore habitat and biodiversity across many bushland reserves. In 2022 we reported that we were successful in getting grants to help in this work: MPS place making grant (\$8+k); a South East Water Community Grant (\$5k), Sorrento Foreshore Coastal Grant (\$30k) and a DELWP PPBG (\$48+k). We have successfully completed much of this work using this money to reduce weeds and restore habitat. We supported Cool Changes grant and St Joseph's School propagation program at the Briars.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

The NCG can report on successful grant applications – 2021 Port Philip Bay Fund received \$48,597 from DELWP Stewardship of the Bay: conserving coastal habitat Portsea to Rye.



Map 1. Police Point-woody and scrambler weeds.

Map 2. Sorrento Western Sister-woody and scrambler weeds.

Ground flora weeds in selected plots only.

Map 3. Sorrento Eastern Sister-woody and scrambler weeds

Map 4. Rye foreshore-woody and scrambler weeds.



Not shown on maps: sea spurge control from Shirlow Ave Rye to Whitecliffs kiln, and Hughes Rd to Police Point.

Progress report submitted end of Feb 2022. Final report Dec 2022.
C\$5k unspent – working on signage

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Slips Bushland Reserve

Coastal Moonah Woodland covers much of the Nepean Peninsula and is found within this bushland reserve

Sandy, lime-rich soils and a dynamic coastal climate produce this vegetation type, characterised by a canopy of Moonah and Coast Tea-tree with a diverse understory of shrubs and groundcovers.

This threatened vegetation community is vital habitat for the Long-nosed Bandicoot and Swamp Rat who hide under dense tussock grasses, and the Eastern Spinebill that darts between the Drooping She-oaks.

Moonah

Melaleuca lanceolata

Moonah's are extremely long-lived trees. Their multi-stemmed trunks twist and turn, and over time, often rest on the ground. Cream coloured flower spikes are plentiful in summer, turning into hard seed capsules that persist on the branches.

Coast Tea-tree

Leptospermum laevigatum

Common on coastal sands, Coast Tea-tree grows to eight metres tall. It has flaky bark that sheds in strips, and grey-green leaves with blunt tips. Masses of white flowers appear from August.

Coast Beard-heath

Leucopogon parviflorus

The white flowers of this medium shrub are highly scented with fine hairs on the petals, hence the name beard-heath. During summer, small white bead-like fruits are an important food source for many animals such as the Singing Honeyeater.

Drooping She-oak

Allocasuarina verticillata

Male and female she-oaks are easy to tell apart; Male trees have brown flower spikes at the end of its drooping 'leaves', while females produce hard oval cones containing winged seeds. Up to ten metres tall, this tree can be distinguished by its "drooping" form.

White Correa

Correa alba

A small erect shrub with rust coloured stems and soft grey-green leaves. When compared to other correa's, the flowers of this species are not tubular, but instead open up into four white spreading petals which can be seen all year round.

Rare Bitterbush

Adriana quadripartita

Bitterbush is a salt tolerant shrub found in coastal regions. Look out for the coarsely toothed leaves and reddish stems. The leaves are an important food source for insects, particularly the larvae of various moth and butterfly species.



Mornington Peninsula Shire acknowledges and pays respect to the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people, the traditional custodians of these lands and waters. The Friends of Slips Bushland Reserve works in partnership with Mornington Peninsula Shire to enhance the biodiversity values of this reserve.


MORNINGTON
PENINSULA
Shire

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

The NCG can report on successful grant applications: Sorrento Foreshore bushland reserve \$30k with Richard Holland and the Friends Group and Contractor Naturelinks, led by Dan Suffern. Work commenced 15 February 2022. Progressing towards completion.



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



The NCG can report on a successful 2022 South East Water community grant.

Working in small reserves in the Bridgewater Bay area.

Final works have been undertaken and final report is almost finalised.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Guide to INDIGENOUS PLANTS & PROBLEM WEEDS of the Nepean Peninsula

Guide to INDIGENOUS PLANTS of the Nepean Peninsula

TREES

- Blacksilva (Eucalyptus) - A tree of the Myrtaceae family, commonly found in the Nepean Peninsula.
- Braided River Gum (Eucalyptus) - A tree of the Myrtaceae family, commonly found in the Nepean Peninsula.
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SHRUBS

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TUFTED PLANTS

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PLANTING GUIDE

Checklist for planting in the Nepean Peninsula:

- Know what you are planting
- Consider the site conditions
- Prepare the soil
- Watering and care
- Pruning and maintenance
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Record keeping
- Sharing and reporting
- Promoting and awareness
- Feedback and review

The NCG can report on a successful 2022 MPS Placemaking Grant to revise and reprint our Guide to Indigenous Plants and Weeds on the Nepean Peninsula.

Feedback has been received.

Progressing towards completion.

Guide to INDIGENOUS PLANTS and WEEDS of the Nepean Peninsula

Guide to INDIGENOUS PLANTS and WEEDS of the Nepean Peninsula

CLIMBERS AND SCRAMBLERS

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SMALL PLANTS AND GROUND COVERS

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WEEDS

- Blacksilva (Eucalyptus) - A tree of the Myrtaceae family, commonly found in the Nepean Peninsula.
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ROAD RESERVES

The road reserve is a special area of land that is reserved for the use of the road and its associated infrastructure.

MURDERIES

Some areas are affected by illegal dumping and littering.

WEEDS

Weeds are plants that grow in the Nepean Peninsula and can cause environmental damage.

NEPEAN PENINSULA

Map of the Nepean Peninsula showing the location of various sites.

Review and writing will take place over the next couple of months – then to printing.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Engagement

We participate in relevant Shire, Council and committee meetings. A new group has been formed following the demise of the “Nepean Coalition Group” at the end of December 2021. The Nepean Advocacy Group – NAG - has met with the Shire Executive and officers on a regular basis throughout 2022 and will meet on a quarterly basis in 2023. This group includes the Nepean Ratepayers Association, the Rye Community Group Alliance, Community 3942, and the Nepean Conservation Group.

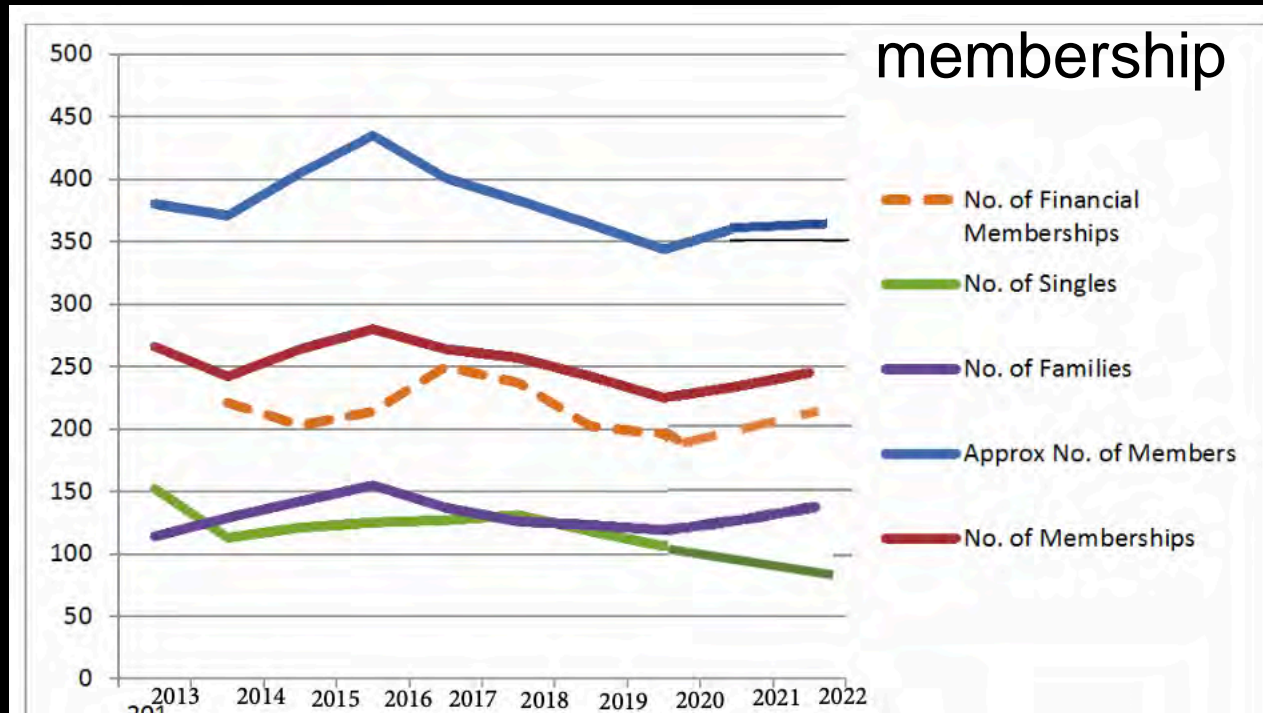
These meetings provide us and the Shire with the opportunity to focus on matters of concern to our community. Planning is a major item on our agendas. Council officers have the opportunity to attend and update us on actions they are taking. Our next meeting is in March 2023.

Currently the NCG is participating in the Planning Panel Hearing relating to the planning amendment C219morn (14 -28 February, 7 March 2023). The NCG is presenting to the panel on 23 February. This amendment relates to Neighbourhood Character and the provision for growth in Housing and Settlement patterns on the Mornington Peninsula. This is a critical hearing of an amendment which will shape the future of the Mornington Peninsula.

Post 2022 Federal election we are yet to meet with Zoe McKenzie, MP Flinders.

Post November 2022 State election we are yet to meet with Sam Groth, MP for Nepean.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



Anecdotal evidence suggests that most of our new members are recruited by learning about the NCG from existing members. Increasing our membership is clearly dependent on current members (not just the Committee) promoting the work of the NCG and being able to demonstrate that important issues are being addressed. In other words, the NCG is making a difference in the eyes of its members – now we need to broadcast our work further afield. Overall membership is being maintained at about the 250 level (this represents about 360 people). While 2020 and 2021 were difficult years for all of us, the NCG committee put in place a strategy to communicate with its members through quarterly Newsheets throughout 2022.

ACTION – in 2023 we again ask each of our members to sign up a new member!

ACTION – membership is one of the strategic priorities of the NCG committee for 2023

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula



C219 Why we care for biodiversity and habitat ...

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

SORRENTO-PORTSEA CONSERVATION GROUP

The Collins Riding A Unique Environment to Preserve



Moonah (*Melaleuca lanceolata*) silhouetted against the sea at Camerons Bight

The Collins Riding consists of the narrow Nepean Peninsula, bounded on one side by the sheltered waters of Port Phillip Bay and, on the south, by the rugged ocean coastline of the Cape Schanck Coastal Park. It includes the townships of Sorrento, Portsea and Blairgowrie.

Between the two coastlines the Riding still retains a great deal of natural bushland to provide sheltered settings for permanent and holiday homes, fine and varied recreational facilities including sailing and golf clubs, historic limestone buildings and a high proportion of parks and reserves.

The first British settlement in the State of Victoria was established by Collins at Sullivans Bay between the Two Sisters in 1803.

From 1840 the local limestone was developed and limeburning became a thriving industry with kilns throughout the Riding and around Rye.

It was George Coppin, theatrical entrepreneur of the time, who recognised the attraction of Sorrento and was the leader in its development as a tourist centre from 1870. The pier was built for visitors travelling by boat from Melbourne, and local limestone was used for many of the public and private buildings. Sorrento still retains many of the fine old buildings of the period.

This leaflet has been prepared by the SORRENTO—PORTSEA CONSERVATION GROUP to identify the unique features of the Collins Riding and to encourage their preservation.

Rugged coastline in the Cape Schanck Coastal Park at Bridgewater.



PRESERVATION OF OUR BUSHLAND

Many ratepayers and residents have been attracted to the Nepean Peninsula to escape the suburban environment of Melbourne

A large part of the Riding has already been sub-divided into suburban-sized blocks. The maintenance of the bushland atmosphere is dependent on how we develop our properties and on retention of our trees

- Retain as much as possible of the natural tea tree on your block when cleaning to build a house. In particular, retain a screen of trees between your house and the road. (Note: In Residential B and Special Residential Zones clearing is not permitted within 10 metres of the front boundary other than for access.)
- Retain the natural trees on your road reserve
- Replant with native trees including the she-oak, banksia and melaleuca
- Select fences which merge rather than intrude on the environment
- Avoid suburban-like development of your property by blending your house into its natural surroundings
- If road making is necessary, support the Shire Council in its plans to reduce pavement width in low traffic density streets and preserve informality by allowing road alignment to meander within the road reserve. Where you wish to retain the "bush track" atmosphere take advantage of the Shire Council's "private streets assistance" scheme for minimal upgrading.

Mature Coast Tea-tree screening houses in Melbourne Road, Sorrento.



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Vegetation

The original character of the area can be restored by planting indigenous plants. Indigenous trees include Moonah, She-oak, Coastal Banksia, Boobialla (*Myoporum insulare*), and Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*).



Indigenous shrubs you can plant include:

White Correa	<i>Correa alba</i>
Native Fuchsia	<i>Correa reflexa</i>
Coast Pomaderris	<i>Pomaderris paniculosa</i>
Thyme Riceflower	<i>Pimelea serpyllifolia</i>
Sea-box	<i>Alyxia buxifolia</i>
Coast Beard Heath	<i>Leucopogon parviflorus</i>

Small indigenous plants and groundcovers include:

Black-anthered flax lily	<i>Dianella revoluta</i>
Coast Fan Flower	<i>Scaevola albida</i>
Running Postman	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>
Kidney Weed	<i>Dichondra repens</i>

Indigenous grasses include *Poa*, *Austrodanthonia* and *ustrostipa* species.

For more detailed plant information see the Nepean Conservation Group leaflet on local plants and weeds.

Our indigenous plants are versatile, perfectly adapted to local soil and climate conditions, hardy and need less water. They provide food and shelter for local wildlife such as birds and butterflies, and help conserve biodiversity (the variety and number of species). Local plants not only reduce the visual impact of new subdivisions and varied architecture but also provide a natural screen from dust and noise. They create and enhance the distinctive coastal ambience of our streets and roads.

What you can do to Conserve the Character of the Nepean Peninsula

- Retain maximum natural vegetation when designing your home, and keep a screen of local plants between the house and road.
- Replant with indigenous plants.
- Remove environmental weeds from your property.
- Design your home and fences to blend with the natural surroundings.
- If traffic density is low on your unmade road, consider having minimal road upgrading—contact a Private Roads Maintenance Group or Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.
- Join Nepean Conservation Group and receive the quarterly *Nepean Conservation News*.
- Join a Friends' Group and help maintain a park, reserve or foreshore.



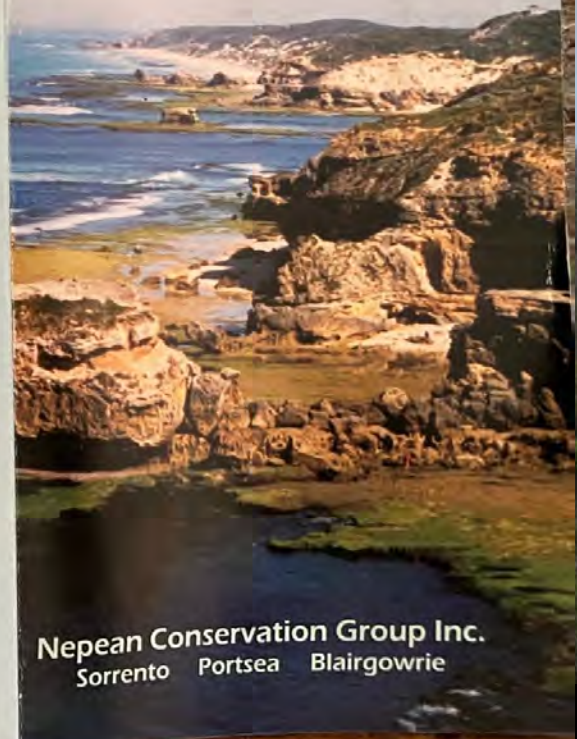
Nepean Conservation Group Inc.

The Nepean Conservation Group Inc. was previously known as the Sorrento Portsea Blairgowrie Conservation Group Inc. It began in 1973. We aim to:

- maintain the character and amenity of the Sorrento—Portsea—Blairgowrie area;
- ensure new developments are in harmony with the character of our area; and
- foster conservation of the vegetation, wildlife, natural attributes and historic features of the area.

Nepean Conservation Group Inc.
ABN 44 531 738 131 Reg. No. AOO20791U
P.O. Box 157, Sorrento, Vic 3943

Conserving the Character



Nepean Conservation Group Inc.
Sorrento Portsea Blairgowrie

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Natural Character

The Nepean Peninsula, encompassing Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie, lies on the narrow tip of the Mornington Peninsula. From bayside to the wild coast is two to three kilometres. The contrast is remarkable: from the warm, lapping waters of the picturesque sandy bay to the colder crashing surf rollers of the ocean beach. There are spectacular views from the tops of sand dunes in the Mornington Peninsula National Park. Bayside, Arthur's Seat, Mt Martha, Mt Eliza and the City of Melbourne are visible.



Low tide at the ocean beaches reveals extensive rock platforms, nearshore reefs and deep rock pools, plovers and herons, seaweeds and shells. Shady woodland paths meander through stands of Moonah, She Oak and Tea Tree, a mosaic of subtle greys and greens, flecked with colour in spring, filled with sounds and glimpses of yellow robins,



wrens and finches, and the tracks of the Blue Tongue and other lizards, and echidnas.

History

The Nepean Peninsula was the home of the Bunerong people whose middens can still be seen.

The Collins' Settlement, Sorrento

"The wavelets broke gently on the sandy beach. Rising from it was a succession of green-clad gentle hills studded with trees, spaced as though set by the hand of man, while nearer the sward glowed with flowers of every hue."

—Lieut. J.H. Tuckey, describing Sullivan Bay, Sorrento in 1803

Early settlers all spoke of this "park-like" appearance and John Pascoe Fawkner, there as a boy, described the timber as being chiefly the native She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) with scattered trees of Moonah (*Melaleuca lanceolata*), Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*), Coast Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*) and Wirilda (*Acacia retinodes*).

The first official European settlement in the state of Victoria was established by Lieutenant-Governor David Collins in 1803 at Sullivan Bay Sorrento, some 30 years before Melbourne was founded. It failed after a few months due to lack of fresh water.

The settlement site is preserved on the Eastern Sister as the Collins Settlement Historic Site and includes early graves and a Display Centre.

Limestone

From 1840 local limestone was extracted and limeburning became a thriving industry. Some of the early kilns can still be seen. The activities of the limeburners and timbercutters who removed all the large trees, and farmers who cleared land, dramatically altered the landscape. The subsequent regeneration was largely of Coast Tea-tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) which had previously been restricted to the coastline.

In the early days, limestone was also used for roads. Some original limestone pavement remains in the walking tracks established by George Coppin along the coast around the Sorrento ocean beach.

This area is characterised by its old limestone buildings, many dating back to the 1870s. A number of early limestone

buildings such as St John's Church, the Nepean Historical Society Museum (formerly Mechanics' Institute) and Blairgowrie House are protected as historic sites under the Shire's Planning Scheme.



Point Nepean

Nearby, in the Point Nepean sector of the Mornington Peninsula National Park, there are extensive ruins of the fortifications built in the 1880s which made Port Phillip the best defended commercial port in the British Empire. Some forts are restored and open for inspection, accessed by transporter and walking tracks. Adjacent to Point Nepean is the old Quarantine Station established in the 1850s, which is now a museum.

Tourism

George Coppin recognised the attraction of Sorrento, and from 1870 led its development as a tourist centre. The area's popularity has continued and increased. It is now a major Australian tourist destination attracting many thousands of visitors annually.

The number of permanent and part-time residents has grown dramatically and there is a risk that the townships will become increasingly suburban and lose their unique character.

Tourism and housing place enormous pressure on our fragile coastal environment.

Photographs: Ursula de Jong, Catherine McIver, Michael Ritchie, Betty Swaan ©2002

Planning Amendment C219morn

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

Planning Panel Hearing 14 -28 February, 7 March 2023. NCG is presenting on 23 February



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

C219 More specifically, the Amendment proposes various changes to:

3.1. the Planning Scheme Ordinance in respect of the Municipal Planning Strategy (**MPS**), Planning Policy Framework (**PPF**), General Residential Zone (**GRZ**), Low Density Residential Zone (**LDRZ**), Neighbourhood Residential Zone (**NRZ**), Design and Development Overlay (**DDO**), Neighbourhood Character Overlay (**NCO**) and Operational Provisions; and

3.2. the Planning Scheme Maps in respect of residential and public land zones, the Vegetation Protection Overlay (**VPO**), the DDO and the NCO.



C219 In broad terms, the Amendment seeks to:

- 4.1. Direct residential growth towards appropriate areas in a sustainable manner to accommodate the State Government's population and household projections set out in *Victoria in Future 2019 (VIF2019)*;
- 4.2. Protect and enhance the valued character of the Mornington Peninsula's residential areas by ensuring residential development respects neighbourhood character; and
- 4.3. Simplify permit requirements in relation to the construction or extension of a single dwelling on a lot, and improve the drafting and structure of residential zones and overlays.

This is a critical hearing of an amendment which will shape the future of the Mornington Peninsula.

Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

NCG Strategic roadmap 2023/2024

Governance

Review the Rules of the Association – special meeting of NCG Inc incorporated into the 2023 AGM

Membership

Membership drive continues, alerting the wider Nepean community to our significant work and inviting them to support us

Environment

Short term: Biodiversity Workshop to be rescheduled – Biolink grant successful

Medium term: Planning policy - Amendment C219 planning Panel hearing Feb 2023

Nepean Advocacy Group established – quarterly meetings with MPS 2023

Closer partnership with PV

Long term: Distinctive landscape status for Mornington Peninsula

Working with PV and MPS

Ongoing: Friends Groups

Engagement

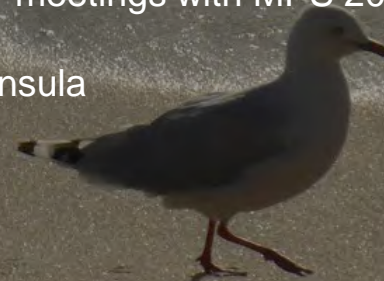
Business: local and state government, community groups and organisations

Members: regular communication – quarterly newsheets by email

Broader community: sell ourselves

Associated with Mornington Peninsula Landcare Groups

Join with other like-minded groups



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Looking back-looking forward
50 years of environmental activism
and advocacy 1973-2023

“We have not inherited this world
from our ancestors, we have
borrowed it from our children” (anon)



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Thank you to the 2022 NCG committee

John Atchison, Judith Brown, Eddy de Jong,
Ursula de Jong, Priscilla Donald, Barend Frielink,
Ian Gray, Lisa Howard, John Trewarne, Shannon
Richards, Catherine Walker, Peter Walker



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

*Acknowledgement and special thanks to the 2022
NCG committee members who are stepping*

Judith Brown and Ian Gray



Looking back-looking forward - caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula

Finally

A thank you to all our volunteers - in whatever capacity you volunteer, your time, energy and expertise are appreciated!

An invitation to become a volunteer: all are welcome, and all types of skills are required.

If you are not yet an NCG member please sign up!

And an observation: the more people are involved the stronger the community is.

*Keep in touch: facebook, Instagram, website and email:
info@nepeanconservationgroup.org.au*

