



NEPEAN CONSERVATION GROUP INC

ABN 44 531 738 131 Reg. No. A0020791U

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Nepean Conservation Group's Mission is

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

The NCG acknowledges and pays respect to the Bunurong people, the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the Nepean Peninsula.

NCG March 2025 Newsheet



Coastal Banksia – late summer, beginning of Autumn. Our enormous backyard coastal banksia tree is just coming into full flower. A delight. Photo U de Jong.

Welcome to your NCG March Newsheet. As always, we welcome your feedback and engagement.

Your 2025 committee members are:

Ursula de Jong (President), John Atchison (Vice President), Catherine Walker (Treasurer), Eddy de Jong (Secretary);

General committee members: Jane Byrne, Chris Dunn, Lisa Howard, Shannon Richards, John Trewarne

Contacting us: info@nepeanconservationgroup.org.au

Membership: membership@nepeanconservationgroup.org.au

President: president@nepeanconservationgroup.org.au

NCG 2025 AGM

We had a most successful AGM on 15 February 2025. On a cold, wet and windy day we had fifty people brave the weather and join us at Badcoe Hall for a full agenda and great guest speaker. Some people thought it the best AGM ever!! More than a dozen people enjoyed dinner on the Parade grounds afterwards, ever changing skies with storms circling around us and dolphins frolicking in the Bay.



NCG 2025 AGM post meeting dinner – above, all rugged up on the Parade grounds outside Badcoe Hall, PNNP, 15 February 2025. Enjoying a little sunshine, with views of storms over the Bay below. Photos U de Jong



We were very pleased to welcome three MPSC Councillors to the AGM: Cr Andrea Allen [Nepean], Cr Cr Max Patton [Benbenjie] and Michael Stephens [Warringine]. The Mayor Cr Anthony Marsh [Briars] was a late apology. Ben Smith, standing as an independent candidate for Flinders in the up coming Federal elections joined us to find out what we do and for an opportunity to meet and speak with many of you.



Left: Cr Max Patton [Benbenjie] Dr Ursula de Jong and Cr Michael Stephens [Warringine] at the NCG 2025 AGM. Photo J Atchison. Right: storms over Port Phillip Bay, view from Badcoe Hall. Photo U de Jong.

A summary report of the NCG 2025 AGM meeting follows:

The President, Dr Ursula de Jong, began the AGM with an acknowledgement of country and welcome to all members, guests and visitors. The jurisdiction of the NCG Inc was confirmed as covering the whole of the Nepean Peninsula on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria. Attendees were reminded that most of the Nepean Peninsula is Moonah woodland – a threatened habitat, listed under the Flora Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, now the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Amendment Act 2019. The Nepean Peninsula is an inspirational place, one with a unique ecology, biodiversity and fragile coast.

Our 11 new MPS Councillors and their 11 Wards were introduced to all.

Objects and rules governing the NCG Inc.

The NCG Constitution which dates from 1973, 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, and
- (d) generally, to take such action as it considers necessary or appropriate in the interests of promoting conservation ...

NCG Vision and Mission was updated with more modern language in the 1990s, vis a vis

‘VISION: The NCG’s vision is for people to understand and appreciate the natural and cultural 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 and cultural heritage of the Nepean Peninsula.’

In order to be eligible to apply to the Australian Taxation Office [ATO] for Deductible Gift Recipient [DGR] status, members were advised of necessary changes to the NCG’s Rules of Association, subject of the Special Resolution passed at the 2025 AGM. That is to REPLACE Rule 2 “purposes” with a “principal purpose”.

2. Purposes

The purposes of the association are:

- to lead and inspire the community to appreciate, recognise, conserve, protect and celebrate the natural, cultural and built heritage of the Nepean Peninsula.
- to protect and conserve the Nepean Peninsula’s amenity, and enhance its unique character and sense of place.
- to promote the conservation and protection of the natural environment of the Nepean Peninsula.
- to establish a public fund to support these purposes, particularly the conservation and protection of the natural environment.

WITH

2. Purpose

The principal purpose of the association is:

- the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment of the Nepean Peninsula, on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, through, but not limited to,
 - conserving and promoting significant natural areas
 - mitigating vegetation loss
 - creating resilient habitat corridors and biolinks for wildlife
 - highlighting issues affecting the environment
 - promoting ecologically sustainable development principles

Rule 70 [establishment of a Public Fund] was also replaced in order to establish a Gift Fund.

It is useful for members to be aware of the history of the evolution of the NCG Inc's Rules of Association and the reasons for the necessary changes.

NCG Membership ...

Anecdotal evidence suggests that most of our new members are recruited by learning about the NCG from existing members. Increasing our membership is therefore dependent on current members (not just the NCG 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 – but we need to broadcast our work further afield. Overall membership is being maintained at about the 250 level (this represents about 360 people). Not all are paid up!

While 2020, 2021 and 2022 were difficult years for all of us, the NCG committee has put in place a strategy to communicate with its members through quarterly Newsheets. This appears to be working successfully!

ACTION – in 2025 we again ask each of our members to sign up a new member!

ACTION – membership continues to be a strategic priority of the NCG committee for 2025.

Membership fees and donations

Membership fees and donations constitute the only income the NCG receives. As a not-for-profit organisation these monies are vital for the NCG to be able to continue the work it undertakes in conservation on the Nepean Peninsula; supporting grant applications for environmental work; making submissions and representation at VCAT and Planning Panel Hearings to protect our environment; liaising with the Shire; reviewing Shire policies and making submissions as relevant; working with like-minded groups; supporting our volunteer Friends Groups; and so on. We also pay an annual fee to store our archives. As well insurance costs have increased dramatically.

With little change in 2024, the NCG in 2025 needs to upgrade its website and social media platforms, and the software programs used to communicate with NCG members and Friends Groups. There will be some costs involved in upgrading to a better website platform to serve us now and into the future. Any help - financial or with expertise - gratefully accepted.

The work of the NCG Inc. includes the natural and cultural environment, global warming and climate change impacts on our fragile coastal environment, habitat, biodiversity, development impacts on the environment, planning and policy pertaining to the same.

Over 2024 the NCG committee met formally bi-monthly (January, February AGM, March, May, July, October, November), emailed all members with a quarterly Newsheet (Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer) and organised bi-monthly rambles for members (April, June, September and October – even though the weather played havoc with an orderly schedule). We organised a number of successful working bees in September, October and November, attracting new people.

Planning: development and environmental issues

While coastal landscapes, such as that of the Nepean Peninsula are highly valued by the wider community for their scenic beauty and for recreational activities, they are also highly desirable as real estate.

One of the consequences of the MPS being part of metropolitan Melbourne, ease of access via freeways and increasing suburbanisation has been the loss of character of place, loss of vegetation, habitat and biodiversity.

Balancing the economic, social and infrastructure needs of growing residential, holiday home and tourism communities with environmental sustainability and the capacity of such a sensitive coastal landscape continues to be a considerable planning conundrum.

Planning submissions in relation to inappropriate development have been ably led by John Atchison. Ensuring a good outcome for the environment has become more and more difficult as State laws such as the bushfire regulations are applied to the whole State including our Mornington Peninsula.

In appropriate development: two recent and ongoing examples where NCG has made submissions due to or ongoing concern about inappropriate development on the Nepean Peninsula in Blairgowrie and Sorrento were highlighted.

Bushfire regulations and compliance: the impact of State bushfire regulations on the MP continue to be profound - State bushfire regulations mean we have little means to protect the vegetation of the MP. The loss of vegetation on an increasing scale means loss of habitat, loss of biodiversity, loss of character of place and greater difficulty in mitigating against climate change and global warming impacts. The State regulations are used to completely clear blocks of land. Vegetation replanting and landscape plans, if provided, are generally not followed up by MPS officers. Verges, or nature strips, continue to be denuded by building contractors and /or residents. Generally for parking! Thus, we are losing remnant vegetation and habitat corridors. Compliance continues to be a major issue on the Mornington Peninsula.

Updates on Planning amendments

Ocean Beach Rd Sorrento – mandatory heights - C286morn on Council meeting 25 February 2025

Recommendation is that this goes to

- Directions Hearing: week beginning 24 March 2025
- Panel Hearing: week beginning 5 May 2025.

July /August – major submissions and objections to developments at Boneo Rd, Mineral hot springs, and Napier St Rye, due to adverse impacts on green wedge and coastal townships.

- Napier St Rye - MPS granted permit with conditions
- Boneo Road – MPS granted permit with conditions – VCAT - called in by the Minister

Planning Panels Victoria – February 2023 - C219 Hearing 14 Feb- 28 Feb, 7 March 2023

Amendment C219morn: Housing for the Peninsula. NCG put forward that the panel had both an obligation and an opportunity to protect the Mornington Peninsula. We developed a tour guide for the PP members and reiterated this in our presentation. Planning Panels Victoria report came back to the MPS with extra work required. This is yet to be finalised. The NCG Notes that the longer this remains with the Minister, the greater and continued is the threat to our neighbourhood character, our sense of place, our unique environment on the Mornington Peninsula.

Valuing what we have on our doorstep!

A year ago, we reported that our infrastructure is failing, specifically at Sorrento Ocean Beach, in the Mornington Peninsula National Park.

Our infrastructure is failing due to age, lack of maintenance and erosion. John Atchison, our VP, undertook a full Sorrento Back Beach infrastructure documentation in 2023. The NCG has had discussions with PV and other local community groups. We are advocating a holistic approach to this highly valued unique and significant part of our MPNP. We need to undertake a concerted campaign before we lose it.

Now the NCG is leading the way and working with Parks Victoria. We reported on our newsheets in 2024 that on 9 October 2024 John Atchison led a team of volunteers to reinstate the tracks leading up to Coppins Lookout. On 11 November 2024, John Atchison led a team of volunteers to reinstate the tracks leading up to Coppins Lookout from the cemetery.

All this work led to the partnership with PV, the Sorrento SLSC, Rye Beach Clean and the NCG to run the first ever “green patrol” on 18 January 2025. One of our NCG members and a Sorrento SLSC member, Erin Doupe was instrumental in organising and co ordinating everyone for a very successful day. Environmental work, infrastructure work and a beach clean resulted in clearing of walking tracks, removal of polygala; restoring the track along the roadway and collection of nearly 100kg of rubbish. An amazing effort. The 35 volunteers are to be congratulated. Dr de Jong gave a presentation at the SLSC which was followed by a BBQ lunch. And for anyone game to try it – afternoon patrol with the lifeguards on duty.



Bottom: Sorrento Back Beach features a natural amphitheatre, 700-metre shoreline with crashing waves, crystal clear waters, limestone and calcareous cliffs. Top: Environmental volunteers on 18 January with the green patrol; and middle: beach clean volunteers. Working in partnerships reaps great rewards for all.

The Mornington Peninsula is included in metropolitan Melbourne. The MPNP and the PNNP are described as metropolitan parks! There is nothing metropolitan about our national parks.

There is a need to treat the peninsula 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. But the Mornington Peninsula community needs to work very hard together if we are to achieve this recognition and value what we have on our doorstep!

New proposed Sorrento Surf Life Saving Club



The natural amphitheatre which is the backdrop to the location of the current Sorrento SLSC is clear in the left photo. The proposed new Sorrento SLSC is a larger footprint on the ground and two stories in height. A new ramp along the cliff face is proposed. Its impact on the natural environment will be significant. Photos U de Jong.

The Nepean Conservation Group put in a submission requesting that the design of the facility and infrastructure be reconsidered before any permit is granted, in order

1. to achieve a better outcome for this unique coastal environment at Sorrento Ocean Beach, and
2. to better serve the Sorrento Surf Living Saving Club now and into the future.

Caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula ...

Sometimes our work for caring for the environment on the Nepean Peninsula is deliberately vandalised: the Western Sister where the NCG affiliated Friends under the leadership of Richard Holland, have worked hard to clear weeds and revegetate; where the NCG has worked as “stewards of the Bay” under a Port Phillip Bay Fund grant, much destruction occurred over this past summer. This is a devastating impact on our bushland reserve here at the Western Sister. The NCG is now working with the MPS, Richard Holland and the Friends to reinstate this unique coastal place.



Left above: aerial view with sites of damage indicated. Right above: damaged trees, evidence of fires, litter and platforms built in trees, site 2.



Left: excavation at site 1 near the cliffs; below right: excavation and building assemblage at site 2 near the cliffs. Reinstatement and restoration is extremely difficult, particularly on the cliff edges.

Clearly all of us need to be far more vigilant and quickly report anything untoward to the Shire, to Parks Victoria, or other responsible authorities, along our fragile coastline, in order to prevent further destruction.

The NCG can report on new signage at St Johns Wood Road linear bushland reserve

June 2024 our new “linear bushland reserve” along St Johns Wood Road Blairgowrie – created in the wide verge between Melbourne Road and Bridgewater Bay carpark. This reserve and meandering track is the culmination of four years’ work and a collaboration between the Mornington Peninsula Shire, the Nepean Conservation Group Inc and the Blairgowrie Community Advocacy Group. There is still much work to be done – the formation of a Friends Group is critical for ongoing care of this unique strip of land.

However, the NCG are still awaiting the installation of signs at Western Sister and at Rye foreshore!

The NCG can report on grant applications 2024

NCG works with the MPS and PV to co-ordinate Friends Groups to restore habitat and biodiversity across many bushland reserves. In April 2024 two grant applications were submitted – one to the Port Phillip Bay Fund (\$25k) from Portsea to Rye and one to Victorian Landcare, (\$20k) focusing on Tuckey Track and Stringers Reserve. Both successful. The interim report for the PPBF is due 28 February 2025. In May the progress report for the 2023-24 Victorian Landcare Biolinks Grant was submitted, and the final report in November 2024. On 14 February 2025 the NCG successfully submitted a Coast Care Grant application to work on environmental restoration at Sorrento Ocean Beach. Fingers crossed. The South East Water Community grant application is due in March 2025.



St Johns Wood Road linear bushland reserve track; Box berries – one of the delights of late summer. Photo U de Jong

Volunteers are an essential part of our ecosystem.



Our Friends Groups and volunteers make a difference

BUT we need more volunteers, to revitalise and nurture the people who are active friends at the moment. And to enable those with knowledge and skills and passion to mentor the next generation of volunteers and friends. ...

Before the AGM I received the following email from lifelong volunteers at Dimmicks Bushland Reserve:

Ursula, apologies from Keith & Shirley would have liked to attend and see the quarantine station again and hear the speaker but afraid at age 95, me Shirley 89 we aren't going out much. Particularly driving in the traffic these days. In the past when we moved here, we volunteered in many activities but are easing back now. We still enjoy the news (except trying to remember the darned passwords). Cheers Shirley & Keith

To that end the NCG is working with our local primary schools – below St Joseph's PM Sorrento, where Jane Byrne has propagated 1000 plants [750 moonah trees] with the children. They are ready to plant this Autumn if we get good rains!



This was kick started by the Moonah woodland project - working with People and Parks Foundation in partnership with PV, MPS, PNAG, local community (NCG +SPIFFA), St Joseph's PS Sorrento, and St Mary's Parish Sorrento.

NCG Strategic roadmap 2025/2026

Repositioning the Nepean Conservation Group Inc

NCG succession planning for the committee - this is now critical

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

Environment

- Short term: Enhancing our unique environment through grants
- Medium term: Planning policy
- Long term: Distinctive landscape
- Ongoing: Nurturing volunteers and Friends Groups

Engagement

- Local and state government, community groups and organisations
- Members: regular communication
- Broader community: sell ourselves
- Work with Mornington Peninsula Landcare Groups
- Join with other like-minded groups

Thank you to the 2024 NCG committee

John Atchison, Jane Byrne, Eddy de Jong, Ursula de Jong, Chris Dunn, Lisa Howard, John Trewarne, Shannon Richards, Catherine Walker

And finally

A thank you to all our volunteers - in whatever capacity you volunteer, your time, energy and expertise are appreciated! Great to see a number here at the NCG AGM!

The invitation to become a volunteer is always open! All are welcome, no matter your skills.

If you are not yet an NCG member, please sign up! If you are member – please sign someone else up!

The more people we have involved the stronger the community!

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

The shipwrecks of Point Nepean and beyond: managing our underwater heritage

Guest Speaker: Danielle Wilkinson, Senior Maritime Archaeologist at Heritage Victoria and President of the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA)

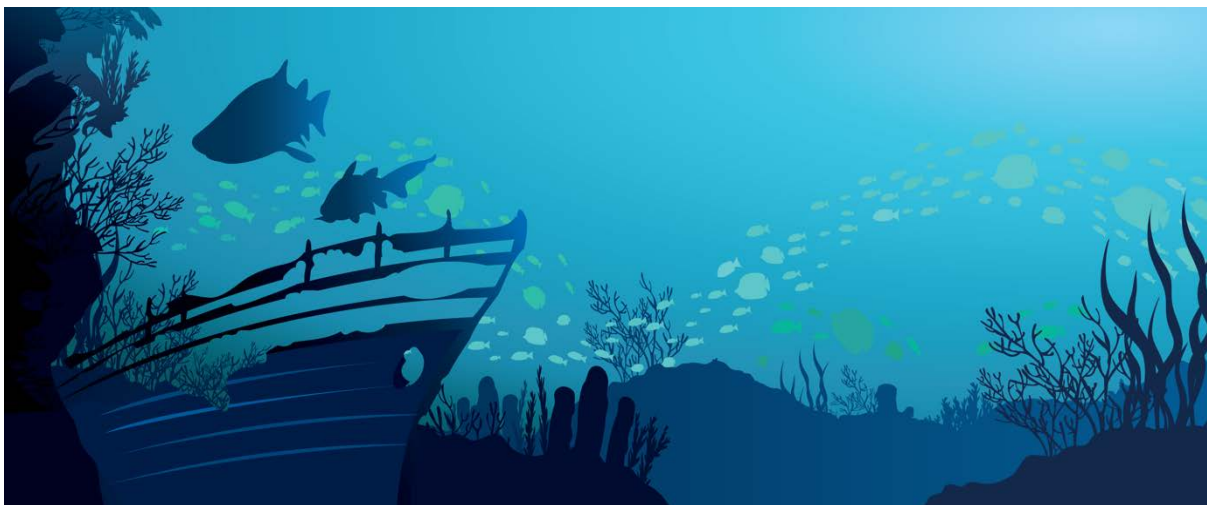


Image copyright Danielle Wilkinson 2025



Bio: Danielle Wilkinson, Senior Maritime Archaeologist at Heritage Victoria and President of the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA). Images copyright Danielle Wilkinson 2025.

Danielle loves historic shipwrecks. She became captivated as an undergraduate volunteer at the Western Australia Shipwrecks Museum, which led to a Masters in Maritime Archaeology at Flinders University in South Australia. Danielle worked as a consultant specialising in maritime archaeology across NSW, QLD, VIC, NT and WA before heading to the UK and managing consultancy projects mostly associated with offshore windfarms. Back in Australia, Danielle is now in the State government and her small team manages 660 shipwrecks plus other underwater cultural heritage across Victoria. Danielle has also been involved with AIMA for over 10 years holding various volunteer positions before becoming President in 2021.

Topic: The shipwrecks of Point Nepean and beyond: managing our underwater heritage

Summary: It's no surprise that Port Phillip Heads has always been a dangerous place for ships - the dozens of shipwrecks around Port Nepean demonstrate its perils. However, these historic shipwrecks now form a valuable resource that provides a unique view to shipping and life in Victoria across time. Shipwreck cargos, trade items, engineering changes, personal items and more give a glimpse into history that land sites often cannot. Shipwreck artefact assemblages can also be more varied, more complete and in surprisingly good condition. They can also form a beneficial symbiotic relationship with the natural environment as artificial reefs. Yet recording, conserving, protecting and managing underwater cultural heritage has its own challenges, not just for the sites themselves but also for any artefacts recovered.

After questions, the NCG Vice President, J Atchison thanked Dr Wilkinson on behalf of the NCG and all present for an inspiring talk. "We greatly appreciate you sharing your knowledge, passion and expertise with us", he said. Applause.



An amazing evening after a great 52nd AGM. The rugged wild beauty of the Bay after a day of rain, hail and gales. U de Jong

Since the AGM the NCG committee has been continuing its work to protect the environment on the Nepean Peninsula. Two permit applications came to the fore requiring our immediate attention.



Permit P35431 - P3543 [Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct]

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct, 3875 Point Nepean Road and 3880 Point Nepean Road and 1-7 Franklands Drive, Portsea (VHR H2030) Application P35431 for demolition, tree removal, construction, conservation and landscaping (including carparking) works for a new Research and Education Field Station in the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct, including works to Badcoe Hall.

Submissions close 18 February 2025.

Link: <https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/protecting-our-heritage/currently-advertised-permits>

The community on the Nepean Peninsula was only made aware of the notice on the weekend of the 15/16 February, when the Nepean Conservation Group Inc held its 2025 AGM. We found the notice stuck to the outside door of Badcoe Hall, and totally obscured when the door was open! There has been no public meeting, no community consultation and no community conversations on the matters raised in this permit application. This is the first time the NCG saw drawings etc and reports pertaining to this development proposal. We are concerned that key community stakeholders were not alerted to the advertising of this permit application.

Following a request for an extension of time, the NCG was advised by email from Heritage Victoria that:

"An extension of time cannot be granted but we are able to accept late submissions which will then be considered in the same way but under section 101(3)(b) – any other relevant matter. We are happy to receive additional submissions by 28 February 2025".

Our submission is in six parts:

1. Community Consultation
2. Point Nepean Master plan 2017
3. The Heritage Impact statement January 2025
4. The Arborist Report
5. The Historical Archaeological Assessment
6. Conclusion and Recommendation

The scope of works has changed significantly over time. In fact, so significantly, that the use of buildings should have been rethought, and the lease renegotiated. Instead, the lease [ie exclusive use] footprint has slightly expanded to include Badcoe Hall & surrounds (inc adjacent sewer pits, stormwater etc, kerbing + channelling, some garden), and the Memorial site has been proposed as a new Licence area [ie non-exclusive use]. While research aims of the field station have now declined, the proposed accommodation has significantly increased. Badcoe Hall is now to be used for admin, classes, social spaces, kitchens and dining, etc while the new proposed building exclusively houses accommodation [up to 50 staff, researchers and students]. We are particularly concerned with the proposed new building - why is a new building required for accommodation and why can't an existing building or buildings be adaptively reused? The Master Plan [2017] envisaged that historic heritage buildings, identified as of primary significance would be adaptively reused. In the proposed scenario a building of secondary significance [Badcoe Hall] is being redeveloped and a new building is being built behind it. The NCG considers that the current historic heritage building stock in the Quarantine Station precinct needs to be repurposed and used, lest they are irrevocably lost. The need to adaptively reuse the

heritage buildings with Primary Significance should drive the development proposal, which must demonstrate a clear future benefit to the National Park as a whole.

We have concerns re traffic and car park capacity in relation to the proposed development. We do not want PNNP turned into a carpark. The original community vision was for PNNP to be a car free National Park. Sustainability was a key consideration then, in the Master Plan, and should be now.

To sum up: "The NCG Inc. considers that the permit application in its current form should be rejected. We ask that Heritage Victoria insist that the proponents amend the proposal to focus on the adaptive reuse of the existing heritage buildings of Primary Significance.

"This should be accompanied by meaningful consultation and engagement between Heritage Victoria, Parks Victoria, the Point Nepean Advisory Group, the Victorian National Parks Association, the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), the Nepean Conservation Group, Inc. and the applicants.

"The proponents have received \$17m of government funding and this should be used to provide the best outcome for the conservation of the Quarantine Station and the broader Point Nepean National Park. The outcome should not involve the construction of a new building as proposed. That would be a lost opportunity for the sustainable activation of the Quarantine Station and the Point Nepean National Park as a whole.

"The Nepean Conservation Group Inc, and I personally, have been involved in the creation and care of Point Nepean National Park since 2000. Its natural, cultural, historic and heritage values are significant to Victoria and to Australia, as recognised in its listings. This place deserves a better outcome".

P23_0853-250-Ocean-Beach-Road-SORRENTO **Sorrento Life Saving Club**

In November 2024 the Nepean Conservation Group Inc welcomed the opportunity to respond to the planning permit application for the redevelopment of the Sorrento Life Saving Club located at the Sorrento Back Beach, in the Mornington Peninsula National Park. As members are aware, the NCG has been involved in the care and protection of the coast along Bass Strait and here at Sorrento since its beginnings. We highlighted the dynamic fragile coastal environment into which the proposed redeveloped Sorrento Life Saving Club is proposed to be built. The NCG raised a number of major concerns vis a vis:

1. The design: the scale of the re development in a coastal environment; and the carrying capacity of Sorrento Back Beach
2. The environmental impact on this dynamic coast, on the biodiversity etc. To that end we requested that the ramp design and placement be urgently reconsidered
3. Stakeholder engagement

On 20 February 2025 the NCG received notification that Application ID P23/0853. Description: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REPLACEMENT SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB HOUSE, PUBLIC AMENITIES AND BEACH ACCESS RAMP, AND REMOVAL OF NATIVE VEGETATION would be determined at MPS Council meeting scheduled for 25 February 2025. It was listed as a late agenda item, having been previously called in, and added to the normal scheduled MPSC meeting in Mornington.

At such short notice we could not present at the Council meeting. John Atchison was able to provide our concerns in a 3-minute online presentation, and I emailed each Councillor, with an updated summary of NCG's concerns. We argued that the Sorrento SLSC facility needs to be upgraded. The proposed new facility is not the correct solution to this site for reasons outlined in our submission and summary document. We need to build a new facility that respects this place, is fit for purpose and is sustainable. We therefore respectfully requested that the design of the facility and infrastructure be reconsidered before any permit was granted at this time, in order to

1. achieve a better outcome for this unique coastal environment at Sorrento Ocean Beach, and
2. serve the Sorrento Surf Living Saving Club now and into the future.



Sorrento Back Beach from the walkers' stairs down to ocean beach – high tide mark clearly visible – this is a normal regular high tide, not a storm surge [which can go under the fence line]. The indigenous coastal vegetation here is critical to holding the cliff and dune in place. Photo U de Jong



Sorrento Back Beach - dune erosion under the stairs where all vegetation has been removed. The indigenous coastal vegetation seen here to the right of the stairs is critical to holding the cliff and dune in place. Photos U de Jong

At the MPSC meeting the planning permit application was unanimously agreed to by all Councillors.

Documents for your information can be found at the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/rp1hhxdRO6A>

SSLSC discussion starts at 1:59 hr and stops at 2:30 hr. (Item 4.11).

And MPSC papers addendum:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/9m0xe8mzrgr27ps5zpeaj/Council-Meeting-Addendum-Attachment-Book-25-February-2025.pdf?rlkey=b7cxppckwdhrchiaem29gmwbp&st=4nt29ze7&dl=0>

We are left wondering how can we better look after and protect our fragile coastal environment?

Other updates and invitations to participate and engage with us and your community:



<https://mailchi.mp/2346ad2688cf/mpln-december-newsletter-5844828?e=26c593851f>

Newsletter February 2024.

This edition contains a Special Feature: The Parlous State of Our Climate
It makes sobering reading – recommended to you all.

Let's shape the future of our Peninsula together!

Your Voice matters



We're planning for the next four years, and we want to hear from you. Your input will help shape the Council Plan, Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and other key strategies—ensuring they reflect our community's needs.

Here's how to have your say:



[Take the survey](#): Share your thoughts online. It only takes 10 minutes!



[Join a community pop-up](#): Visit us in person and chat about what matters most to you.

The next NCG Committee meeting is on **Saturday 15 March 2025**. If you have any agenda items for us to consider, please send through to the president by Saturday 8 March 2025.
president@nepeanconservationgroup.org.au

We hope you have enjoyed your March NCG Newsheet. We would love to hear from you – please write to us and share your pictures too. info@nepeanconservationgroup.org.au

A DAY IN THE BAY

SUNDAY 23RD MARCH 2025

Through our fun, interactive activity program on the Southern Peninsula you will:

- Experience the unique beauty of Port Phillip Bay's precious marine ecosystems
- Understand the pressures created by marine pollution, climate change and coastal development
- Discover what you can do to ensure the sustainability of the Bay's marine and coastal environments

Activities

- ☐ Beachside Tai Chi (Beach Box Tai Chi)
- 🐬 Sightseeing Adventure (Polperro Dolphin Tours)
- 🏄 Stand Up Paddleboard Lesson (Wild Adventures Melbourne)
- 🚶 Guided Coastal Walk (Walk Mornington Peninsula)
- ★ Junior Foreshore Ranger Program (Whitecliffs Foreshore Rangers)
- 🐬 Coastal Ramble (Nepean Conservation Group)
- 🤿 Snorkelling Experience (Polperro Dolphin Tours)

"In the end, we will
conserve what we
love and we will love
what we understand"

Bobo Dioum - African Ecologist

Guest Speaker Program

- ☐ The Beauty of the Bay (Judy Muir & Neil Blake)
- 🐬 Just Add Water - the importance of the Bay's catchments (Neil Blake)
- 🏄 Breaking the Cycle - rethinking beach cleaning (Josie Jones)
- ★ Climate Change and the Bay (Pete Lindner & Jacqui Salter)
- 🐬 How to incorporate the Bay in school programs (Peter Lindner)

Find more information:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ent-Hst35GgsdZUsYdayrDmNEwBKy0-c>



To book, visit:

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1347243>



A Day In The Bay is brought to you by:



A Day In The Bay is proudly supported by::



Join the NCG ramble on Sunday 23 March 2025 – a wonderful experience walking the Farnsworth Track from Portsea to London Bridge, with a BYO everything morning tea before returning. Use the QR codes to book. Event free for current NCG members. We look forward to seeing you there!



A welcome visitor to our backyard. Please keep water out for our native animals and birds. Photo U de Jong, February 2025



Time to de-head all agapanthus in your gardens and neighbourhood before the seeds are spread again. Bag and dispose of responsibly. Even better, support biodiversity and resilient habitats by digging them out completely and replanting with indigenous grasses, ground covers and shrubs. Our verges and gardens would then become a haven for our indigenous animals and birds. NCG Friends Groups on the task – photo U de Jong 2 March 2025.