Part 2
The Planning Framework
Part 2 The Planning Framework

2.1 Vision and Guiding Principles
Planning for the future of recreational boating draws on a vision for:

A highly valued, efficient and sustainable network of boating facilities providing safe access to the coast

A highly valued efficient and sustainable network of boating facilities means:

- Boaters value and enjoy their boating experiences.
- As competing demands for use of the coast increase, the need to use the existing boating facilities more efficiently for example, improving boat launch and retrieval is important.
- The use of the coast must be consistent with sustaining a healthy and productive coast over the long term.
- A network of boating facilities across the region provides a range of boating opportunities.

Providing safe access to the coast
Facilities will consider safety of users both on land and on the water.

Guiding Principles
Three guiding principles, that reflect the Victorian Coastal Strategy hierarchy of principles, have been identified in planning for recreational boating which together seek to achieve a sustainable balance between providing for boating activities and protecting environmental and cultural values:

- Protect ecologically and culturally significant areas
- Provide safe and affordable boating infrastructure that addresses shared-access issues
- Promote tourism and recreational boating opportunities in a sustainable way.

2.2 The Network of Boating Facilities and Boating Hierarchy

Goals
- A network of recreational boating facilities and water-based activity facilities will be established, with each facility providing a level of service appropriate to its role in the hierarchy
- Appropriate levels of service will be delivered through an integrated approach to onshore and offshore facility components
- The location and design of facilities will respond to demand, safety considerations, coastal processes and the natural environment

The VCS uses the concept of a ‘network’ of boating facilities as a planning tool to consider the geographical distribution of the different levels of boating facilities within each coastal region. This provides a strategic context for assessing the upgrade of any boating facility, or development of new facilities, in terms of the range of boating opportunities that already exist.

The boating hierarchy is based on the facilities and services provided at a boating facility and the catchment of the facility. The hierarchy ranges from a wide catchment area at major population centres to local catchments servicing a small group of people. The VCS identifies five levels of facilities namely, State marine precinct, regional, district, local and informal facilities as described in Table 1. These categories are to be applied to all existing and proposed boating facilities in the region.

The central coastal region includes three areas designated as State Marine Precincts: the Melbourne CBD, Geelong waterfront and the Port of Hastings as shown in Figure 3.
Figure 3 State Marine Precincts
### Table 1 Boating hierarchy for the central coastal region (Source: Boating CAP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description/Definition</th>
<th>Types of Facility</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Marine Precinct</strong></td>
<td>All – these include ports, marinas, charter boat facilities, slip facilities, waterfront activities, marine services, piers, jetties, moorings &amp; ramps</td>
<td>State level of significance that provides a key boating and tourist destination Commercial shipping potentially a dominant activity High level of investment as a key boating activity centre Exceptional level of service that caters for a wide range of boating activity and skill levels Safe haven and controlled water space Wide catchment area, with an even spatial distribution, at major population centres All tide access Public access to the facility and coastal environment Servicing facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Boating Facility</strong></td>
<td>Regional boat ramps, marinas, piers / jetties, moorings, maintenance and service facilities, harbours</td>
<td>A high level of significance that provides a boating destination A high level of investment as a key boating activity centre An exceptional level of service provision that caters for a wide range of boating activity and skill levels Provision of a safe haven Provision of maintenance and service facilities Wide catchment area, with an even spatial distribution, at major population centres All tide access Public access to the facility and coastal environment A key boating destination within the network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Boating Facility</strong></td>
<td>Marinas, boat ramps, piers / jetties, moorings, yacht clubs and servicing facilities</td>
<td>Level of investment that provides for gaps in the network of regional boating facilities High level of service provision that caters for specific types of boating activities at each facility Harbour which provides haven in some weather conditions Restricted tidal access Smaller catchment area at the community level Public access to the facility Boating destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Boating Facility</strong></td>
<td>Boat ramps, yacht clubs / boat clubs, piers / jetties, moorings, boatsheds</td>
<td>Relatively lower level of investment Good quality boating facilities that cater for local access to the coast, but do not have a wide range of other services Harbour or safe haven not expected Local catchment area for smaller populations Public access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informal Boating Facility</strong></td>
<td>Across beach access point, car parking, scattered moorings not associated with any specific boating facility</td>
<td>Minimal investment No boating facilities at the foreshore, other than those required to gain access to the beach Possible local tie-up through permanent swing mooring not associated with a boating facility Local through to regional catchment areas for across-the-beach boating activity Public access to the foreshore at existing and approved access points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 details the range of functions and service levels the boating facilities across the hierarchy aim to provide.

Boating facilities in the central coastal region are a mix of public and private facilities. Facilities described as public are generally able to be used by anyone, whereas those described as private typically require membership of a club and public access is generally limited. Most of the existing private boating facilities are associated with yacht clubs or motor boat clubs. As well as facilitating launch and retrieval on the coast, boating facilities perform other functions including destination or ‘tie-up’ points, a safe haven, gathering places and places of general public interest. A safe haven within the hierarchy is provided by either a regional or district level facility.

The existing network of boating facilities and a proposed 2030 future are shown in Maps 1 and 2. Facilities for which a change in the hierarchy level is proposed by 2030 are shown in Table 9 Appendix 6.

While protecting the environment and ensuring safety remain over-riding considerations, the strategic priorities for boating, in order, are:

1. Improving the level of service and efficiency of existing facilities
2. Upgrading facilities to meet proposed future roles in the boating hierarchy
3. Adding value to the boating network through the provision of new facilities
4. Decommissioning redundant or poorly sited facilities

Swing moorings are a significant feature of Port Phillip and Western Port and help provide the diversity of access for boaters. There are about 3,000 swing moorings. The trial of using temporary mooring on the Mornington Peninsula over the summer school holidays has proven to be popular and a good way to reduce the demand on boat ramps over this period and should be considered as an alternative management option in peak demand areas and times.
Part 2 The Planning Framework
## Table 2 Facilities and services across the Boating Hierarchy (Revised from Boating CAP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Service</th>
<th>Boating Facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>✓ Required</strong></td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>✙ Optional</strong></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>✗ Not provided</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### General and Access*

- **Capacity for major public boating events**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✗
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Safe Haven**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✔
  - Local: ✗

- **Public Access**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

- **Car Parking**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

### Launch, Retrieval and temporary mooring

- **Boat Ramps**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Pier/Jetty**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

### Berthing

- **Public (Casual) Berths**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Wet Berths**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Dry Berths**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Moorings**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

### Services/Utilities

- **Fuel**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Pumpout**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✔
  - Local: ✗

- **Toilets**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

- **Washdown**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ☑

- **Fish cleaning**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ☑

- **Security**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Navaids**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

- **Service utilities (power/water/lighting)**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ☑

### Maintenance Facilities

- **Boat repair and servicing**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Chandlery/Boating retail**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

### Recreational /Tourist Facilities

- **Commercial vessel berthing facilities (including ferries)**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Boat hire/charter**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Community Facilities (including club rooms)**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

- **Recreational facilities (including picnic tables, walkways)**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

- **Retail or entertainment and land based uses/attractors**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✗

- **Community use, access and enjoyment of the facility**
  - State: ✔
  - Regional: ✔
  - District: ✗
  - Local: ✔

Note: * Principles related to disabled access apply
2.2.1 Upgrading a facility

A detailed assessment of the location, environmental, social and economic criteria (Table 3) should be undertaken at an early stage in the planning process for any development that upgrades a facility to a higher order role in the boating hierarchy. Where boating facilities impact on Crown land, land managers should ensure these criteria are satisfactorily addressed prior to a proponent seeking formal planning approval.

Table 3 Criteria for upgrading existing facilities or assessing new facilities
(Revised from Boating CAP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Function and Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The geographic spread and/or capacity of facilities within the network will be improved and boating opportunities will be diversified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The role is consistent with any structure planning for adjoining activity centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is sufficient and appropriate land and water space available for an expanded role (including, where relevant, for the creation of a safe haven and locating facilities away from the foreshore where they do not require a coastal location)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The development of the facility can balance boater and other users’ needs both on land and in the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The upgrade will improve safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The site and location selected will not have an adverse impact on significant environmental features and protect significant environmental values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The environmental impacts including impacts on water quality associated with the construction and maintenance of the facility will be minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Significant initial or ongoing dredging is not required, or is minimal compared with alternative sites and represents best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sufficient car parking is provided in an appropriate location with minimal environmental, amenity or community impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The development will not have a detrimental impact on indigenous or non-indigenous cultural values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The location is sustainable with respect to coastal processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shared access can be provided or enhanced to the facility and the facility can be integrated with other community amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Public benefit is maximized in association with the provision of boating services and facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Queuing times will be reduced without over-catering for demand for the majority of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Maintenance costs are identified and funded so that the facility will form a viable and enduring part of the network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The facility location matches areas where future population growth is expected or boating demand is high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 Decommissioning or downgrading a facility

An existing boating facility should be considered for decommissioning and removal or downgrading from the network when a process of local consultation has been undertaken and where the criteria are met as listed in Table 4.

Table 4 Demand and location criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand and Location Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The facility is inappropriately located, with alternative facilities in close proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition, one (or more) of the following criteria is applicable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Upgrade is not considered a strategic priority for the network of boating facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing maintenance liabilities significantly outweigh benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The removal or closure of the facility will not detrimentally impact on the network and/or the decommissioning is timed with local upgrades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The removal or closure of the facility will result in improved coastal processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public access to the coast and/or foreshore can be enhanced by the closure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The facility, or peoples’ impact from using the facility, is causing damage to, or negative impact on the foreshore and/or marine environment i.e. a carrying capacity for areas adjacent to boating facilities may also need to be recognised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The facility is a potential risk to boater safety, either on land (for example, inappropriate parking) or in the water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informal boating facilities or locations where access is provided to the foreshore will be permitted at appropriate locations where the following can be demonstrated:

• The impact of the access is not adversely affecting other users and the foreshore environment
• The cost of maintaining access justifies the benefits it provides
• There are users of, and demonstrated demand for, the access
• Use of the facility does not represent a potential risk
• A coastal management plan identifies the access as appropriate.
2.2.3 The planning context

Although a boating facility may be shown at a higher level in the 2030 boating network (Map 2) this does not provide formal planning approval to upgrade the facility or undertake any works. Applications for use and development in the coastal and marine environment and particularly coastal Crown land are considered under the legislative framework of the Coastal Management Act 1995 and Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the policy direction of the Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS).

The issue of climate change and planning for sea level rise is considered by referring to the VCS and relevant planning tools provided by DTPLI and DEPI.

The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and Regulations established to recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria, may trigger the need for a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for proposals on the coast.

The Environmental Effects Act 1978 provides for assessment of proposed projects that are capable of having a significant effect on the environment, which often includes major works such as a harbour development. The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth) will be triggered if the development impacts on areas of national environmental significance, for example a Ramsar site.

2.2.4 Desired outcomes in planning for recreational boating

1. The boating hierarchy provides strategic direction in planning for recreational boating facilities and is instrumental in determining the priorities for investment in upgrading and developing new facilities
2. While protecting the environment and ensuring safety, priority is given to improving the level of service and efficiency of existing facilities, upgrading facilities to meet proposed future roles and adding value to the boating network through the provision of new facilities (see map 2 for 2030 boating network)
3. The Regional CAP integrates the demands for boating, Plan Melbourne and the development of major activity centres with nearby existing or proposed boating facilities
4. That a statewide strategy is put in place to assist in funding investment in boating facilities

2.3 Strategic Directions

2.3.1 Sustainable development

Goals

• Protect significant natural coastal values
• Protect Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage in the use and development of the coastal environment
• Protect water quality in the bays from illegal sewage discharge from boats

Boating, unlike some coastal activities, has an infrastructure footprint and potentially boaters can have an adverse impact on sensitive natural areas. Possible impacts from boating include rubbish and pollution, the spread of marine pests, damage from dredging and mooring chains and sedimentation from breakwaters. There are also people impacts where boaters come ashore and may disturb migratory shorebirds at key Ramsar sites or locally significant heritage areas.

New technologies are improving the sustainability of boating activities, for example holding tanks, cleaner engines, improved anti-fouling treatments and use of solar power for on-board appliances. Improved design of facilities can also assist by managing on-site drainage, grey water and sewage and bilge water to prevent contaminants entering the ocean.

Desired Outcomes

1. The use of popular marine protected area destinations by boaters, SCUBA divers and snorkelers is monitored and managed to avoid adverse impacts
2. Information is provided to boaters on how they can help protect the marine environment, water quality, sensitive marine protected areas and Ramsar sites
3. Potential impacts to environmental and heritage values are avoided in planning, development and management of boating facilities and activities
4. Wash down facilities are promoted as important to marine pest management and boat maintenance
5. Dredging is minimized when designing new or upgrading existing boating facilities. If essential, dredging is in accordance with approved dredging guidelines
6. Detailed investigations of sediment movement are undertaken prior to construction of structures on the coast and any adverse impacts on adjacent areas are prevented
2.3.2 Boating safety and standards

**Goal**
- Design boating facilities to provide safe access to and from the water

Boating facilities need to be designed to promote safety, however not all safe havens can necessarily be constructed to provide quiet water in all conditions around Port Phillip and Western Port. Some locations may only provide limited protection under certain wind or wave conditions. Harbours are currently provided at a number of locations around the two bays (mainly regional and higher level facilities), and some rivers and creeks provide haven.

Safety also needs to be addressed in boating activities through water zones and managing the behaviour of boaters and particularly Personal Water Craft.

**Desired Outcomes**
1. Safe havens are developed at strategic locations around Port Phillip and Western Port, having regard to reasonable boat travel times
2. Boating facilities are designed and maintained by addressing safety as a key requirement i.e. to comply with relevant Australian Standards and other regulatory requirements
3. Risk assessment and remedial actions are undertaken at locations where there is a real or perceived risk to the safety of boaters, or damage to boats arising from the design, maintenance, operation or use of facilities
4. Signage provided that assists with communication about risks and helps support multiple use of the coast

2.3.3 Balancing demand for coastal space

**Goals**
- Balance the use of coastal Crown land to ensure equitable access, whilst preserving the resource and maintaining amenity for residents and visitors
- Ensure the built environment on coastal Crown land is confined to structures providing significant community benefit and to those whose functionality depends on them being near the water

Coastal space is highly valued for its visual amenity, the sense of well-being it engenders, and the number of activities that can be enjoyed on and offshore. It is a limited resource under high demand. Boating is only one of the activities sharing coastal space, therefore when determining priorities for improving boating infrastructure, consideration should be given to facilities that will also benefit the wider community.

Boat trailer parking is placing increasing demand on coastal space at the majority of boat ramps, both in terms of the increasing size and number of boats as 98% of registered vessels are trailerable. In order to meet the increasing demand for boat launching facilities, it will be necessary to find alternative locations for trailer parking, storing boats away from the foreshore and using options such as swing moorings.

Given the growth of the recreational boating industry and demands for the coastal resource the threshold or carrying capacity for boating and use of the foreshore will need to be addressed in some locations. Thresholds will need to be determined from three main perspectives: ensuring a safe boating experience; ensuring a pleasurable boating experience (impacted by waiting times for launch and retrieval); and ensuring manageable impacts on other coastal uses and environmental values.

Boating clubs are an integral part of the boating facility infrastructure and contribute public benefits through public activity days, information on boating, fishing and general safety on the water.

**Desired Outcomes**
1. In congested areas, components of boating facilities are located away from the immediate foreshore area whenever possible e.g. car and trailer parking and dry-stack boat storage
2. Use of the foreshore for boating activities is balanced by:
   - Improving the overall efficiency and usability of existing infrastructure to reduce the need for more boating facilities and the demand on public resources
   - Supporting clubs to increase memberships and private facilities to provide boating opportunities for the public
   - Making berths available for casual use in all facilities
   - Recognising that commercial boating activities (e.g. boat hire/charter) may provide a good option for the provision of access to the coast for a wider group of people
3. The carrying capacity of a site for boating over the longer term is determined by balancing the demand for boating, impacts from it and the needs of other uses of the foreshore
2.3.4 Accessibility and equity

**Goals**

- Provide a range of boating opportunities across the region
- Provide for public benefit in the management of existing boating facilities and in planning for new facilities

To facilitate improved accessibility, boating facilities will need to be strategically located to reflect agreed boating destinations and in areas where high levels of future population growth are expected.

In the central coastal region boat ramps provide the most common type of access to the water for most users. The demand to use boat ramps can exceed the capacity and number of ramps during peak times. Supervision of launching has been introduced at some busy ramps however this has its own set of problems e.g. cost, role and responsibilities of staff supervising launching and Occupational Health & Safety issues for staff.

The impacts of growing demand for boat ramps needs to consider:

- congestion in and around boat ramps
- parking at boat ramps and in local streets
- the capacity of local roads to cater for peak periods
- impacts on the local residents and the community.

Planning for recreational boating also needs to recognize the different types of recreational boaters and differing abilities.

**Desired Outcomes**

1. Equal access to coastal environments is provided, as far as practical, by geographically distributing facilities evenly across the region and by catering for different types of boating
2. Queuing times for regional and district level facilities are reduced by design features, supervision of launching at busy ramps during peak times, education of boaters and promotion of a range of accessible alternative launching sites
3. Design of boating facilities caters for a range of boating abilities
4. Public benefit is maximised in the provision of boating facilities including commercial opportunities such as charter, ferry and public transport services, in accordance with Tour Operator Licence requirements