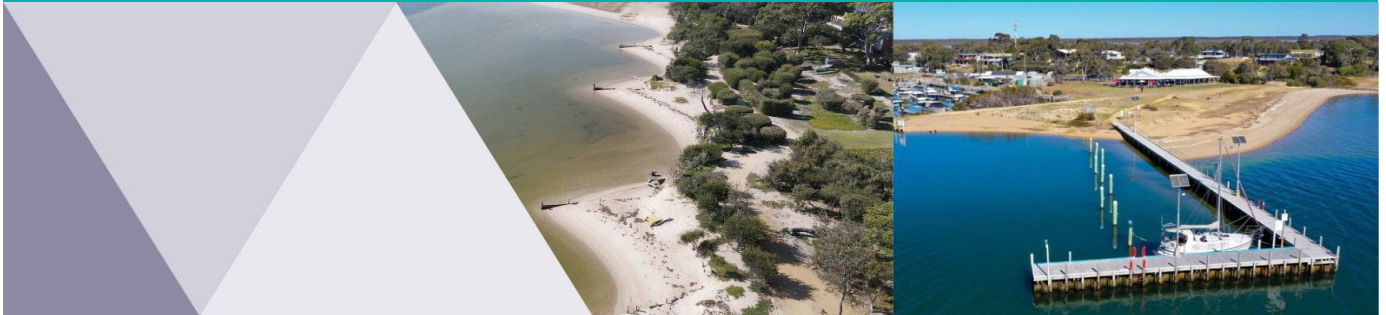


# Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve Coastal erosion / adaptation planning

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS OCTOBER 2022



## Community Engagement Findings

Recently consultation was sought by the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) to understand how community use and value the Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve. The findings of a scientific study were presented to gauge communities' level of support for one or more of the options identified to mitigate or adapt to coastal erosion and inundation along the reserve.

### Introduction

The eastern half of the Loch Sport town Lakefront is a highly dynamic part of the coastline that has a history of erosion. The shoreline has been heavily modified by range of coastal engineering interventions over the last 30 years.

There are currently over 70 structures, mostly groynes, at Loch Sport to help with erosion. These offer some protection but, as with all physical structures, also require ongoing management.

Many groynes and other protection structures are in poor condition making them less effective. This coupled with wave run-up from severe storm events over recent years has led to moderate erosion.

To scientifically examine the causes and best pathway forward, DELWP commissioned consulting firm BMT Commercial Australia Pty Ltd (BMT) in August 2021.

This involved a comprehensive review of past studies, an audit of existing coastal protection structures, a review of historic dredging and beach nourishment, and the completion of a coastal hazards assessment.

From mid-August to mid-September 2022, we presented the findings of this study and sought community feedback on the seven adaptation measures identified to respond to coastal erosion and inundation.

Participants were also asked to share how they use the reserve and what they value about the reserve.

We've heard perspectives from many people, and we thank everyone who completed the online survey, provided feedback either in person, via email or over the phone. It is greatly appreciated.

### What were we asking?

Using an online survey via Engage Victoria, we asked people to read the report detailing the scientific study, and/or attend an information session and/or watch the pre-recording and provide their perspectives on:

- How they use the reserve
- What they value about the reserve

### Acknowledgment

DELWP and the partner agencies acknowledge and respect that the land and sea is of spiritual, cultural, and economic importance to Aboriginal people.

The Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve lies on the traditional lands of the Tatungalung clan of the Gunaikurnai people. We honour Elders past and present, whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country and acknowledge their contribution in the management of Victoria's marine and coastal environments.



# Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve

- Their support or otherwise for the seven adaptation measures identified for Loch Sport

Consultation was promoted through an online information session, a face-to-face drop-in session at Loch Sport, through social media, emails, and local media.

## Who did we hear from?

There were 1.92k unique visitors to the Engage Victoria website for the Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve Coastal Erosion consultation, this included:

- **73 surveys completed**
- **30 people subscribed to an email list to be kept updated**

The Report was downloaded **265** times online.

**51%** of respondents live at Loch Sport and **22%** of respondents were from Greater Melbourne.

**21%** of respondents were from elsewhere in Wellington Shire or broader Gippsland and the remaining **5%** were from Regional Victoria or interstate.

The most responses were received from people between the ages of **56 and 75 years old**.

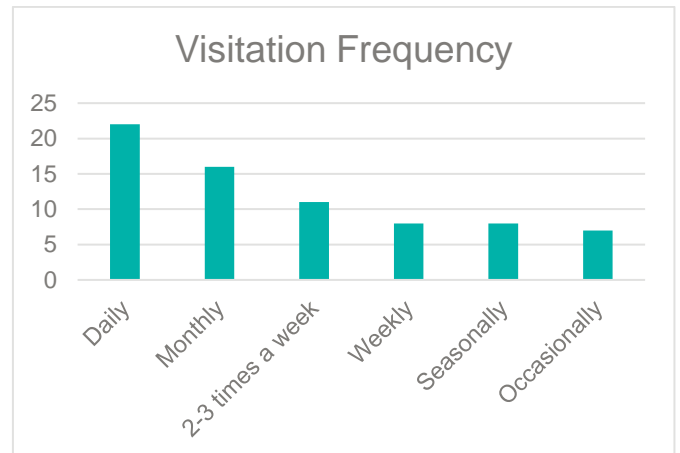
Response breakdown by age group:

- 18 – 25 **1%**
- 26 – 35 **8%**
- 36 – 45 **13%**
- 46 – 55 **15%**
- 56 – 65 **24%**
- 66 – 75 **32%**
- Over 75 **7%**

In terms of visitation frequency to the reserve, **31%** of the 73 respondents reported visiting the reserve daily, with

**15%** visiting the reserve at least **2-3** times per week and,

**11%** visiting the reserve weekly. **22%** reported visiting the reserve monthly with the remaining **21%** visiting either occasionally or seasonally.



**Figure 1.** Number of people who visit the reserve either daily, 2-3 times a week, weekly, monthly, seasonally or occasionally.

## Values and current use

Respondents were asked what they value the most about the Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve.

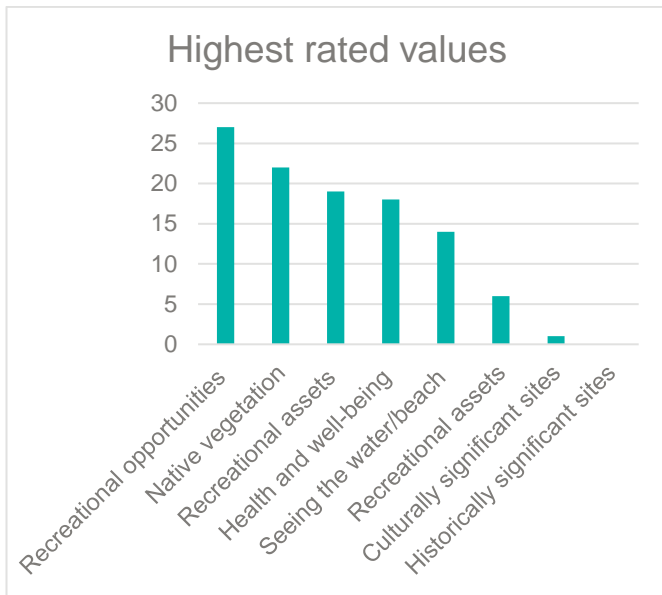
Recreational opportunities provided by the reserve was reported as the top value by **27** respondents.

Native vegetation, ecosystems and wildlife was reported as the second highest value, followed by recreational assets such as the walking path and boat ramps.



**Picture 1.** Recreational opportunities such as walking and fishing are what respondents value the most about the Loch Sport foreshore reserve.

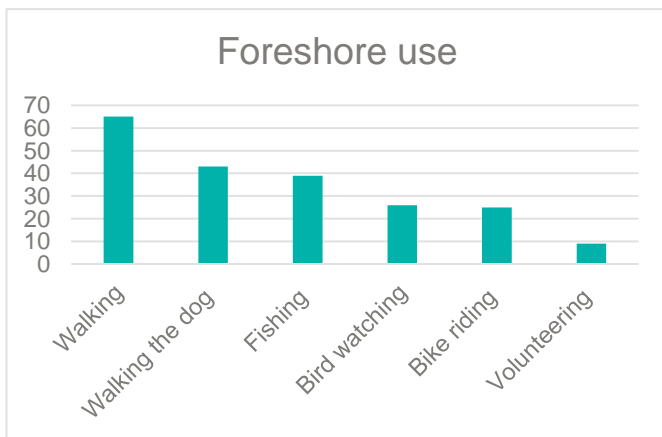
# Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve



**Figure 2.** The highest rated values of the Loch Sport foreshore reserve by respondents.

Respondents were asked how they used the foreshore, selecting as many options as relevant.

**Walking**, walking the dog, followed by fishing, bird watching, bike riding, then volunteering (in that order).



**Figure 3.** Foreshore use indicated by the 72 survey respondents.

## Priorities

Respondents were asked to rank what they consider are the top three priorities for the foreshore reserve out of seven different categories.

Each category has been prioritised in order according to how respondents ranked the seven categories. The results of the ranking are displayed in the table below.

Reported priorities for the foreshore reserve	
1st priority	<b>Erosion control/management</b>
2nd priority	<b>Adapting/mitigating risks from sea level rise</b>
3rd priority	<b>Native vegetation protection and enhancement</b>
4th priority	<b>New infrastructure (e.g., additional pathways, improved beach access)</b>
5th priority	<b>Bushfire risk reduction/fire safety</b>
6th priority	<b>Weed control</b>
7th priority	<b>Pest animal control</b>

**Figure 2.** Respondents order of priorities for the management of the foreshore reserve.



**Picture 2.** Coastal erosion control/management was considered by respondents as the highest priority for the future management of the reserve.

## Adaptation measures

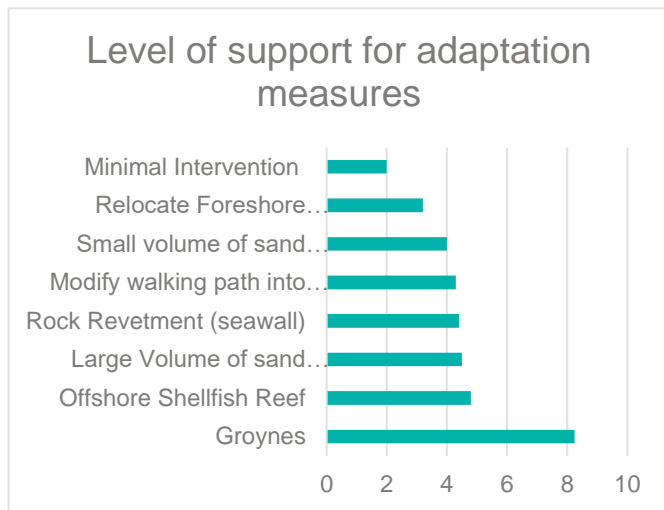
Respondents were presented with seven erosion adaptation options ranging from “do nothing” to constructing rock revetments.

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate how supportive they were of the seven

# Loch Sport Foreshore Reserve

measures identified on a sliding scale from 0 to 10, (0 = not supportive through to 10 = very supportive).

The findings are presented in the table below.



**Figure 4.** The level of support indicated for the 7 adaptation measures identified with 0 = not supportive through to 10 = very supportive

There is broad support for groynes amongst respondents. Offshore shellfish reefs and large volume sand renourishment every 10 years are the second and third most supported option.

Respondents favoured the concept of modifying the existing walking path to a boardwalk type structure over relocating the path.

## Adaptation pathways

In addition to presenting the adaptation measures, community were provided information on adaptation pathways.

A pathways approach enables a range of actions to be identified, and their relative sequence, timing, and triggers for implementation from present day to longer-term (2100).

Verbal feedback obtained during the information sessions indicated varying levels of understanding and acceptance that adaptation actions are not mutually exclusive, and often a suite of measures is required to effectively manage coastal hazard risk.



**Picture 3.** There is strong support for groynes (pictured) by survey respondents.

## Next steps

We are working with all stakeholders involved to incorporate feedback we heard where possible.

Findings will assist with implementation of short-term adaptation measures and planning for medium-to longer term adaptation measures.

Community engagement is central to future planning, and we will inform and involve the community as the project progresses.

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