



**Point Nepean National Park**  
**Master Plan Renewal**  
**Community and Stakeholder Engagement**  
**Summary Report – Phase 1**  
**March 2016**

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Level 10, 535 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

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## Executive summary

On behalf of the Victorian Government, Parks Victoria is renewing the Point Nepean National Park Master Plan to ensure it reflects current relevant policy and community views. The final master plan will provide a shared, long-term, strategic vision to guide future use of the park.

Phase 1 of the project, held from January to March 2016, included preparation and distribution of a Discussion Paper to outline the project purpose, key elements of the draft 2010 Master Plan, and what we heard in previous community consultation. Community and stakeholder engagement focused on seeking feedback on the Discussion Paper and what has changed or is missing from the draft 2010 Master Plan.

This report summarises the results of communications and engagement activities undertaken in Phase 1. Approximately 250 people attended the Community Information Days, there were 50 submissions/letters received, 32 questionnaires received and 20 stakeholder meetings.

Overall feedback indicated high levels of support for the 2010 Master Plan and its principles; yet when asked if anything has changed or was overlooked since the draft master plan, common feedback included:

- clarify in the revised master plan what is or is not allowed within the park
- provide more certainty around lease arrangements and future use of the Quarantine Station
- highlight the purpose the National Park and high conservation values
- consider broader site context, including the two headlands and surrounding landscapes and water
- highlight the importance of Aboriginal heritage, values, culture and stories
- support for adaptive re-use of heritage buildings
- new development should be minimised and must remain within existing disturbed footprint
- support for accommodation that fits the park character and values
- concerns about privatisation and exclusivity from potential development
- potential for education-related uses as a basis for future activation
- take into account carrying capacity and seasonality of the peninsula
- support for events that do not compromise park values
- clearly outline future governance, funding and implementation plans
- important for interpretation and recognition of the site's history and environmental values
- potential to achieve and showcase sustainable outcomes
- importance of showing immediate action once the master plan is endorsed, by implementing catalyst projects or programs.

Feedback from Phase 1, combined with past consultation input, additional analysis, and independent expert advice will help inform the master plan renewal. Further community and stakeholder engagement will seek feedback on the revised draft master plan.

## Introduction

### Project background

Under the *National Parks Act 1975*, Parks Victoria manages Point Nepean National Park (PNNP), including the Point Nepean Quarantine Station, on behalf of the Victorian Government and community with the primary purpose of conserving its significant natural and cultural values.

A draft master plan, which involved extensive community and stakeholder consultation and input, was prepared and exhibited in 2010. It was prepared within the planning and management context provided by the *Point Nepean National Park and Point Nepean Quarantine Station Management Plan 2009* (Management Plan), and was developed in close collaboration with community and stakeholders to provide a shared, long-term vision for the future of PNNP.

The master plan was amended and released in April 2013 under the former Coalition Government, alongside an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to find a suitable investor to revitalise and operate accommodation and associated services within the Quarantine Station. The EOI process stretched beyond the recommendations of the master plan and ultimately was not successful.

Parks Victoria has been directed by the Hon Lisa Neville, Minister for Environment Climate Change and Water, to renew the master plan to better protect the park's significant landscape and heritage, and ensure it still reflects community aspirations. The master plan review seeks to validate the strategic intent of previous versions of the master plan, and build on the wealth of existing knowledge gathered during community engagement undertaken in 2010–2013.

On behalf of the Victorian Government, Parks Victoria is undertaking three tasks:

1. Re-engaging with the community and stakeholders to re-affirm their aspirations for PNNP.
2. Expressing those aspirations in a renewed master plan for public comment.
3. Finalising a master plan that the government will use as the clear and unequivocal parameters for future management and development.

### Project governance

The governance structure for the project includes a Project Working Group comprised of Parks Victoria planning and regional staff, a representative from the Department Environment Land water and Planning (DELWP), and a representative from Mornington Peninsula Shire (Council).

A Project Steering Committee comprised of Parks Victoria directors provides oversight and advice on planning, regional, tourism, commercial and culture/heritage matters.

The Minister also appointed Shelley Penn to provide independent engagement facilitation and advice as part of the planning and consultation process.

## Project Phasing

Community and stakeholder engagement is being undertaken as part of Phase 1 and Phase 3 of the project.

Phase 1 held from January to March 2016, included preparation and distribution of a Discussion Paper to outline the project purpose, key elements of the draft 2010 master plan, and what we heard in previous community consultation. Community and stakeholders were asked to comment on the Discussion Paper and what has changed since the 2010 master plan.

Feedback received in Phase 1, along with the results of consultation from previous planning, will help inform the master plan renewal (Phase 2), for further community engagement on the draft master plan (Phase 3).

## Communications and engagement approach

The purpose of this report is to summarise the outcomes of Phase 1 communications and engagement.

From 6 January to 4 March 2016, various communication methods and engagement activities were undertaken to seek community and stakeholder feedback on the Discussion Paper and master plan renewal. The following section outlines these approaches and the levels of participation for the various community and stakeholder engagement activities.

The objectives for engagement include:

- outline project purpose, process and timeframes
- clarify what is involved in preparing a renewed master plan
- understand community and stakeholder views and concerns
- achieve a greater level of consistency and transparency in planning process.

## Communication methods

The following section outlines the methods used to promote the project and elicit community engagement.

Online promotions included:

- A project webpage: [www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan), which included a summary of the project process and links to the Discussion Paper, online questionnaire, the 2010 Draft Master Plan and the 2009 Management Plan.
- Facebook posts on Parks Victoria page and on key stakeholder and community group pages.

Media promotions included:

- Minister's Media Release – 25 January 2016 (**Attachment 1**)
- Radio Port Phillip (RPP FM)
- Southern Peninsula News
- Mornington Peninsula Leader
- Mornington Peninsula Shire – What's On events webpage

Email and letter (**Attachment 2**) to stakeholders and 'keep informed list' (from past consultation):

- 06 January 2016 (project promotion and information)
- 25 January 2016 (Information Days reminder)

Information Days invitation (**Attachment 3**) was distributed via:

- email to keep informed list
- phone calls to stakeholders in early January 2016
- posters in local shops, schools and community centres, and
- posters in the park Information Centre, Stables, Gunners Cottage and the shuttle bus.

## Engagement activities

Community and stakeholders were encouraged to send their feedback either via:

- email: [pointnepeanmasterplan@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:pointnepeanmasterplan@parks.vic.gov.au)
- letter addressed to Point Nepean Master Plan Comments  
Level 10, 535 Bourke Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000
- phone call to Parks Victoria Info Centre on 13 19 63
- online questionnaire

Engagement activities completed and approximate participation numbers for each are as follows:

Engagement activities	Number of participants*
Information Days (5 & 6 February)	250 (approximate)
Online questionnaire	20
Printed questionnaire	12
Submissions	50
Stakeholder meetings	20 meetings

\*A combined total is not calculated as some participants may have contributed via multiple engagement activities (i.e. a person who attended a meeting and completed a survey would be counted twice).

## Information Days

Two community information sessions were held on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 February from 10am to 3pm in Badcoe Hall at PNNP. The purpose of the Information Days was to provide opportunity for community members to speak with staff involved in the project, hear about the process, ask questions, and provide feedback on the Discussion Paper and 2010 Draft Master Plan. Approximately 250 people attended over both days. Key issues raised are summarised under the 'Feedback Themes' section.

## Questionnaire

A questionnaire (**Attachment 4**) was prepared to seek comment on the Discussion Paper and asked respondents to consider the following four questions:

1. Do the fundamental principles of the draft master plan still hold?
2. Has anything changed?
3. Was anything overlooked?
4. Do you have any other comments, questions or concerns?

A total of 32 questionnaires were completed, with responses summarised in the 'Feedback Themes' section.

## Stakeholder meetings

Phase 1 consultation involved 20 meetings with various stakeholders and community groups. The meetings included a brief project presentation by Parks Victoria, followed by open discussion giving the groups opportunity to raise issues and opportunities for consideration in the master planning renewal.

The meeting objectives were to:

- Brief stakeholders on the project history, purpose, timeline, and future directions.
- Provide an opportunity for early, meaningful input to help inform the master plan renewal.
- Gain insight from stakeholders on issues or opportunities that may impact the master plan.

Refer to the 'Feedback Themes' section for feedback from meetings with the following groups:

Bushwalking Victoria	Parks Victoria – PNNP staff
Friends of Point Nepean	Queenscliff Historical Society
Heritage Victoria	Sorrento Croquet Club
Mornington Peninsula Shire	Sport and Recreation Victoria & YMCA Victoria
Mornington Peninsula Tourism Board	Tourism Victoria
National Parks Advisory Council (NPAC)	Under the Radar Abottsford Group
Nepean Conservation Group	University of Melbourne
Nepean Historical Society	Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC)
Nepean Ratepayers Association	Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA)
Traditional Owner Groups	

## Submissions

Around 50 submissions were received either by individuals, stakeholders or community groups.

Refer to the 'Feedback Themes' section for a summary of topics raised.

## Feedback themes

The following section highlights key feedback themes raised during Phase 1 consultation, via submissions, questionnaire responses, Information Day feedback and meetings with stakeholders or community groups. Overall feedback from Phase 1 indicates high levels of support for the draft 2010 Master Plan and its principles. Yet when asked the following four questions, common feedback themes were as follows:

### 1. Do the fundamental principles of the draft master plan still hold?

**Yes.** A majority of responses indicate people are generally supportive of the 2010 Master Plan principles and concept approach. Other related feedback includes:

- **Review the 'Vision' for the park**, with more focus on protection of natural and cultural values, as opposed to a focus on growth and tourism.
- **Highlight the primary purpose as a National Park** to inform the basis for planning and site uses.
- **Focus on Traditional Owner values** as a basis and key theme throughout the master plan, including future park management, planning and use.
- **Consider the site's broader context**, including adjoining significant parks, proximity to Melbourne's CBD, and the geographic, historic and cultural connections of the two headlands (e.g. Queenscliff/Point Lonsdale).

- **Emphasise the site's connection with water**, especially the concept of the water between the two heads as a 'place,' including topography, history and relationship to Traditional Owner stories.

## 2. Has anything changed?

- **Government made changes to leasing in PNNP** by the *National Parks Amendment (No 99 Year Leases) Act 2015*. Essentially a lease greater than 21 years, but not exceeding 50 years may only be granted depending on factors such as the nature of the proposal, the level of investment and expected benefits for the environment, the community and the state.
- **Lease arrangement and delivery model** should be considered (head lease vs. multiple smaller leases vs incremental delivery). The head lease options was generally not opposed, in fact many believe it is necessary. Yet there are concerns a single head lease will result in privatisation or exclusivity.
- **Park improvements and capital works completed**, including essential services upgrade, new car park and road works, building removals, heritage conservation works, interpretation and signage, range clearing, track improvements, and first shot centenary works.
- **The master plan should establish clear parameters** for any proposed development including location, height, bulk, footprint and access or exclusivity.
- **The master plan should have bi-partisan support**, as changing government does not provide certainty for the park's future.
- **People are frustrated by lack of progress; therefore 'quick wins' are needed** to show immediate action from the master plan and build momentum and confidence.
- **Planning Authority and Planning Scheme** implications must be clarified.
- **Potential for World Heritage nomination** for the site's internationally significant cultural and historic values.
- **Relocating the Visitor Information Centre** to the Quarantine Station creates a poor park entry arrival, confusion about how to navigate the site, and an underutilised building.

## 3. Was anything overlooked?

- **Concern for Government ability to provide adequate funding and resources** for ongoing heritage asset conservation and maintenance.
- **Future governance must be carefully considered**, as there are concerns about government's ability to prevent inappropriate development. Need for an overseeing body/advisory committee to ensure intended delivery of the master plan.
- **Acknowledgment of Ticonderoga** including protection and interpretation of the historical significance of the site and events related to Ticonderoga descendants.
- **Education should be a key theme** and basis for future site activation and use.
- **An implementation plan and delivery options** should be part of the master plan, to clearly outline next steps and how the MP will be delivered.
- **Big, lavish and expensive proposals are not necessary**, and maybe a more moderate approach that focuses on the unique qualities of the site.
- **Use of technology on site**, especially for greater youth involvement, interpretation, and wayfinding.

#### **4. Do you have any other comments, questions or concerns?**

Feedback themes are similar to comments raised by community and stakeholders in past master plan consultation processes and have been categorised as follows:

##### **Natural and cultural conservation**

- Conservation of natural and cultural values is of paramount importance.
- Need better interpretation of army occupation and Aboriginal culture, values and history.
- Future development must not remove or impact significant vegetation or habitat.

##### **Access and circulation**

- The park must provide open, equitable access for all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Concern about carrying capacity and seasonality - balance conservation, attracting visitors, and peak/non-peak periods.
- Clarify fire safety requirements in terms of roads and access.
- Need greater connection to Police Point Park and Mornington National Park.
- Safe bicycle access should be permitted all the way to the point.

##### **Engagement**

- Broader community engagement should be encouraged (not just local).
- Need ongoing Indigenous involvement, including active management, visitor centre, and tours.
- Strong support to pursue partnerships and short-term opportunities for businesses, volunteers and community groups to activate the site

##### **Heritage buildings**

- The concept of adaptive re-use of heritage buildings was understood and supported once explained.
- An Aboriginal Keeping Place is required on site.

##### **Private development and leases**

- Most people understood the need for the private sector to play a role in the future of Point Nepean, but views were divided about the level of private sector investment.
- Restrict development opportunities to the existing disturbed footprint.
- Strong views against exclusivity/privatisation - development should not exclude public access.

##### **Education and interpretation**

- Education, learning and research functions are seen as a good match for the site.
- High quality interpretation seen as a crucial requirement.
- Consider quality interpretation as an early site activation initiative.

##### **Accommodation**

- General support for a range of accommodation options on site, consistent with site values.
- Concern about a boutique hotel and fit with the character of the Quarantine Station.

##### **Water interaction**

- Views were divided about water access and the proposal for a new pier or swing moorings.
- Any water access needs to be nature based.

- Concern about swimming safety and the concept of a sea kayak route.
- Further investigations required to confirm safety and potential marine impacts.

#### **ESD**

- Should pursue environmentally and economically sustainable outcomes.
- Carefully consider increased visitation and demands for services and facilities (sewer, water, shops/food, parking, beach use, etc).

#### **Activation and events**

- PNNP has significant tourism/visitor attraction opportunity given close proximity to Melbourne CBD
- Consider tourist route linking Great Ocean Road, PNNP and Phillip Island.
- Identify top iconic experiences that make the park unique to visitors.
- Events and festivals supported.
- Uses should fit site character (e.g. conservation, health/wellbeing, outdoor recreation).
- Some form of food and beverage shop generally supported. Local businesses should have opportunity to be involved on site.
- Guided tours should promote the sites natural and cultural values and enable sustainable eco-tours.

## Attachment 1 – Minister’s media release

# Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP  
Minister for Environment, Climate Change & Water



Monday, 25 January, 2016

### COMMUNITY INVITED TO HAVE A SAY ON POINT NEPEAN

Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water Lisa Neville has released a discussion paper about the future plans for Point Nepean National Park.

Engagement with the community about the site’s future has commenced, with a master plan for the site to be finalised in late 2016.

A discussion paper has been released for comment that draws from a draft master plan developed in 2010.

Point Nepean has a long and rich history, spanning Aboriginal occupation, its role as an important Australian military and defence facility, and most recently, as a national park.

Protecting this significant heritage to ensure this rich history is conserved for future generations is of primary importance.

The discussion paper and options for input can be found at [www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan)

There will also be an opportunity for people to attend on-site information sessions from 10am - 3pm on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 February. At the sessions, people will be able to provide feedback on the discussion paper, and talk to Parks Victoria staff involved in the process for renewing the park’s master plan.

#### Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water Lisa Neville

*“Over a number of years, many people have contributed valuable ideas about possibilities for the future of this iconic site.”*

*“We want a plan in place that reflects current policy, community views, and future options for the site that both the Government and the community agree upon.”*

*“I encourage anyone who’s interested to go along to the information sessions at Point Nepean on 5 and 6 February.”*

Media Contact: Kara Douglas 0417 655 803 | [kara.douglas@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:kara.douglas@minstaff.vic.gov.au)

## Attachment 2 – Parks Victoria CEO letter



Healthy Parks  
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Bradley Fauteux  
Chief Executive Officer  
Level 10, 535 Bourke Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Telephone 13 19 63  
www.parks.vic.gov.au  
ABN 95 337 637 697

6 January 2016

### RELEASE OF POINT NEPEAN NATIONAL PARK DISCUSSION PAPER FOR COMMENT

I am pleased to advise that a discussion paper about future plans for Point Nepean National Park will be released later this week. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in the process to develop a renewed master plan for Point Nepean National Park.

The release of the discussion paper will begin a process of engagement with the community about the site's future, and the development of a current master plan for the park. The discussion paper draws from a draft master plan for Point Nepean National Park that was developed in 2010 and allows people the opportunity to put forward key issues and ideas in advance of the renewed plan.

Point Nepean has a long and rich history, including Aboriginal occupation, its role as an important Australian military and defence facility and most recently as a national park. Protecting this significant heritage to ensure this rich history is conserved for future generations is of primary importance.

On behalf of the Victorian Government, Parks Victoria will be:

- engaging with the community and stakeholders on the site's future
- developing a draft master plan for the park for public comment which reflects current policy, community views, and future options for the site
- finalising the master plan to guide the park's future management.

There will be a number of ways to be involved in the development of the master plan. On Wednesday 6 January 2016, the discussion paper and options for input will be available at: [www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan).

It is expected that on-site consultation will occur in February, the dates for on-site consultation will be made available once they are finalised. If you have a query about the process for developing a master plan for Point Nepean National Park or other ways to be involved, please contact Brian Doolan, Director Environment and Visitor Planning, on 8427 3370 or email [brian.doolan@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:brian.doolan@parks.vic.gov.au).

Many people have contributed valuable ideas about possibilities for the future of this iconic site, and I look forward to your participation in the development of a master plan for Point Nepean National Park.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bradley Fauteux".

Bradley Fauteux  
Chief Executive



## Attachment 3 – Information Days Invitation



Parks Victoria invites you to the

### Point Nepean National Park Information Days

You are invited to have your say about planning the park's future and provide feedback on a Discussion Paper which re-looks at the 2010 draft master plan.

Please drop in on the Friday or Saturday to speak with a member of the team involved in renewing the master plan.

<b>When</b>	10am - 3pm on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 February 2016
<b>Where</b>	Badcoe Hall, Point Nepean National Park (end of Point Nepean Road, Portsea)
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:pointnepeanmasterplan@parks.vic.gov.au">pointnepeanmasterplan@parks.vic.gov.au</a>

For further information and to view the discussion paper visit:

[www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan)



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## Attachment 4 – Questionnaire

### Point Nepean National Park - Master Plan Renewal

#### Discussion Paper Questionnaire

Please submit responses by Friday 4 March 2016

#### Project Overview

Parks Victoria manages Point Nepean National Park including the Point Nepean Quarantine Station, on behalf of the government and the Victorian community. Protection of this significant piece of Australia's heritage is of primary importance to Parks Victoria, to ensure that its beauty, heritage and stories are conserved for future generations to enjoy.

The Victorian Government is reaffirming the direction for management of Point Nepean National Park and redefining the master plan to better protect and conserve the Point Nepean Quarantine Station.

A discussion paper has been prepared which outlines the purpose of the review, a background of the project, the key elements of the draft master plan and what we have heard so far through community consultation. To find out more visit [www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/pointnepeanplan)

In order to progress the master plan review, we are seeking your comment on whether the discussion paper accurately captures your views. Please review the discussion paper before considering and responding to the following questions.

1. Do the fundamental principles of the draft master plan still hold?
2. Has anything changed?
3. Was anything overlooked?
4. Do you have any other comments, questions or concerns?
5. If you would like to be kept informed on the project, please provide your details:

Name and/or group \_\_\_\_\_

Address and/or email \_\_\_\_\_