



26 November 2019

Mel Mitchell
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
Level 39
2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

Dear Dr Mitchell

ASSESSMENT OF VICTORIA'S COASTAL RESERVES DRAFT REPORT

Hobsons Bay City Council welcomes the release of the *Assessment of Victoria's Coastal Reserves Draft Report* by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, and wishes to provide the following comments in response to questions presented in the report:

Chapter 2

Do the purposes and objectives for coastal reserves appropriately reflect current and future values and uses?

The current purpose of the coastal reserves in Hobsons Bay is to provide opportunities for informal recreation associated with enjoyment of the coastal, with future values to be inclusive of formal and informal recreation.

From a property perspective within Council, the current purpose and occupation of the majority of the coastal reserves has remained unchanged for a significant length of time. Council's objective is to preserve, protect, and ensure that residents and non-residents have access to all Crown land. Where tenure exists or where a Committee of Management is present, Council manages the tenure without impacting the coast. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)'s approval is sought where the current use may alter the purpose. The current use in terms of tenure is dominated by similar activity-based groups with various business models, and arguably only accessible to some, or of interest to some. For example, the Kororoit Fishing Village in Williamstown is located on Council freehold land in Gray Reserve and is used by a limited and segregated group of people.

Do you have any suggested changes to or comments on VEAC's technical definition of coastal reserves?

Hobsons Bay City Council currently refers to DELWP's definition of 'coastal reserves' for usage in all Council documentation.

Do you have any suggested changes to or comments on VEAC's maps of coastal reserves?

No comment

How can we best prepare for changes to land tenure boundaries of coastal Crown land resulting from the effects of climate change?

Hobsons Bay City Council currently applies the doctrine of accretion to recognise the boundaries of coastal Crown land within the municipality. There would be a need to resurvey every five years and adjust the boundaries of the land parcel accordingly if climate change impacts were to cause change either inward or outward. For example, the placement of the boat ramp in W.G. Cresser Reserve is subject to erosion and is expected to notably alter the boundary of the reserve in the near future.

What is the best way to provide clarity and certainty for land owners and managers along the coastline?

The construction and placement of hard engineering coastal protection infrastructure, such as seawalls and rock revetments, is regarded as the most effective way to maintain clarity of boundaries for land owners and managers along the coastline.

Additionally, a more proactive role between the different parties can only be achieved with delineation of responsibility. A concerted effort must be made between the various authorities for effective management and development of the coast.

Chapter 3

Should all coastal reserves be reserved for specific purposes?

As an important public resource, all coastal reserves should be reserved for specific purposes, with need for consistency between legislative Acts, Policies and Strategies – such as the Marine and Coastal Management Act/Policy/Strategy and the Victorian Coastal Strategy.

Chapter 4

Are there any additional uses or values of coastal reserves that should be reported or included in the inventory?

Any changes in the use of coastal reserves within Hobsons Bay will need to be consistent with other Acts, strategies and policies and addressed in terms of community benefit and services, biodiversity concerns and protection, climate change impacts, particularly rising sea levels, as well as the increased impacts of tourism.

Are there other ways to present the information that would assist land managers with planning and decision making?

No comment

Chapter 5

Are there other important trends or emerging uses of coastal reserves?

There is now a much greater demand on the use of coastal reserves. For historical reasons, some reserves on the coastline of Hobsons Bay are used for recreational use, such as Williamstown Cricket Ground, Fearon Reserve and JT Grey Reserve.

It should be noted that there will always be new coastal and foreshore trends and activities, however, not all can and should be accommodated. Coastal precincts are required to reduce usage and user conflict impacts.

Chapter 7

Are there other climate change datasets that should be considered when assessing coastal reserve values at risk from the impacts of climate change?

The dataset from the updated Coastal Hazard Assessment should be considered when it is released by DELWP in mid-2020.

Should you have any questions on the information within this submission, please contact Eliza Arias, Council's Coastal Management Planning Officer

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jake Trevaskis', written in a cursive style.

Jake Trevaskis
Acting Manager Active Communities and Assets