



Appendix 2

15.2 Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Development – Stage 1

*Meeting Minutes extract, item 15.3 Point Lonsdale
Lighthouse Reserve Master Plan, from Ordinary Meeting of
Council held on 24 January 2019*

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Wednesday 24 March 2021 at 7:00pm

Queenscliff Town Hall



15.3 Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Master Plan

File:	QG052 03 2018/02
Report Author:	Acting General Manager Planning and Infrastructure
Strategic Objective:	Preserve and enhance the Borough as a special place through excellence of design and conservation of its rich culture and unique heritage.
Portfolio:	Planning and Heritage
Portfolio Holder:	Cr Boyce Pizzey

Purpose

This report advises Council of the outcome of the recent community consultation process in relation to the draft Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Master Plan so that, along with the design consultant (Tract) and Project Reference Group's recommendations, Council can consider adoption of a final landscape improvement Master Plan.

Background

In 2012, Council received delegation from the State Government to be the Crown land manager of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve. This delegation gave responsibility to Council for all structures and buildings, but not the lighthouse and the newer fog horn shed.

Shortly after, consultants Planisphere were engaged to identify options for the future use of the Reserve. Four options were presented to Council and following a community consultation process including the establishment of a Community Reference Group, overwhelming community support was shown for an option that limited any changes to landscape and public realm improvements. Council endorsed this option at its Ordinary Meeting held on 29 April 2015.

After an extended period of advocacy, Council obtained State and Federal government funding for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve project in early 2018. The level of funding provided was based on a staged approach to works with stage 1 of the project estimated at \$800,000. Of this amount, \$200,000 was a notional value of the Federal Government contribution by way of a Green Army project that focussed on weed removal and low impact environmental works at the Reserve. The balance of \$600,000 (\$500k from State Government and \$100k from Council) funds stage 1 landscape improvements.

In March 2017, following an advertised Expression of Interest process, members of the current Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group were appointed by Council to provide advice on community based priorities in the ensuing project planning processes.



In August 2017, a community application for inclusion of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve (and surrounds) to be added to the National Heritage Register was placed on the National Heritage Priority List for assessment and Council has supported this nomination.

In April 2018, consulting firm Tract was appointed to prepare a detailed design for stage 1 landscape and public realm improvements including Paths and trails, Interpretative signage, Ship viewing areas, BBQ and associated facilities, Improvements to lighthouse surrounds, and Vegetation.

In relation to the four former Toc H buildings on the site, the brief for Tract was to assume removal of the buildings, but noting that the Reference Group in its deliberations had identified six possible scenarios, with its preferred scenario being:

- Remove asbestos from four buildings, new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out of largest building as an exhibit (known as McDonald's Hall), three remaining buildings securely sealed with no access to inside of building.

Note: All six options and associated estimated costs are presented in the Discussion section of this report.

Having worked with the Reference Group during several meetings over a number of months, Tract produced a draft landscape improvement Master Plan (Option C) for community consultation. (Refer **Appendix 2**). It is important to note that Tract's proposal was provided on the basis of landscape design, not heritage, expertise.

At its Ordinary Meeting on 23 August 2018, Council resolved as follows:

That Council:

- 1. Note that the Landscape Master Plan Report Option C Stage 1 by Tract Consultants Pty Ltd, as presented in Appendix 4b is the preferred option of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group. The Group's recommendation in relation to the Toc H buildings is to remove asbestos from four buildings, install new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out of largest building as an exhibit, three remaining buildings securely sealed with no access to inside of building, and that these works are undertaken as early stage works within the project.*
 - 2. Note that the Project Reference Group did not reach a final recommendation on the following items and that these items also be a part of the wider community consultation on the Option C, Stage 1 draft Master Plan Report:*
 - a. Extent of car parking on the site;*
 - b. the use of buildings on the reserve;*
 - c. the village green and amphitheatre;*
 - d. the path connection to the pier.*
 - 3. Request officers to progress community consultation with the wider community by:*
 - a. Preparing a project bulletin and mail to all rate payers. The project bulletin include an update of considerations and the work completed to date and request feedback using a pre-paid return envelope on the following broad project elements of the Masterplan as presented in Appendix 4b*
-



- b. *Support for the car parking provision (Yes/No)*
 - c. *Support for a kiosk and/or interpretive centre as part of a redeveloped McDonald's Hut (Yes/No)*
 - d. *Preferred option for the treatment of the Toc H Buildings selected from:*
 - i. *Demolish all four existing buildings and install interpretative signs on site.*
 - ii. *Remove asbestos from four buildings, new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out of largest building as an exhibit (known as McDonald's Hall), three remaining buildings securely sealed with no access to inside of building.*
 - iii. *Invitation to respondents to identify other options such as:*
 - *New cladding using material similar to original P1 huts and fit out of largest building as an exhibit (known as McDonald's Hall), removal of three remaining buildings.*
 - *New cladding using material similar to original P1 huts and fit out of largest building as an exhibit (known as McDonald's Hall), conversion of one other building into a shelter, remove remaining two buildings and provide interpretative representation of them.*
 - e. *Support for the all abilities path up to the lighthouse.*
4. *Support the above consultation process by holding 2 Open House sessions, one of which to be at the Engine Shed located at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.*
5. *Request officers to:*
- a. *Reconvene a meeting of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group at the conclusion of community consultation, and;*
 - b. *Provide a further report to a future Ordinary Council Meeting at the conclusion of the community consultation process and discussion with the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Project Reference Group about the consultation results.*

In accordance with the above resolution, a consultation period commenced on Monday 12 November with a project update and surveys distributed to all Borough ratepayers by mail and email, and letterbox dropped to households in Point Lonsdale within the City of Greater Geelong. Council held two community open house sessions at the Engine Shed on Tuesday 20 November 2018 and at the Point Lonsdale Primary School on Saturday 24 November 2018, where members of the public were able to view and discuss aspects of the draft Master Plan with Councillors, Council staff and representatives of the Tract design consultant team.

As a result of the consultation process, Council received 540 completed surveys, 19 written submissions and one petition signed by representatives of 20 Point Lonsdale based businesses.

Survey Results

Ninety-five percent of survey respondents identified as a Borough resident and / or ratepayer.

The survey asked a set of questions about the draft landscape Master Plan. The results for each question were:

1. Do you support the car parking proposals as described in the draft Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Landscape Masterplan?
 - Yes: **85.85%**



- No: **14.15%**
2. Do you support the location and the form of the Village Green as proposed in the draft Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Landscape Masterplan?
- Yes: **89.43%**
 - No: **10.57%**
3. Do you support the construction of an all-abilities standard path to the Pier as proposed in the draft Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Landscape Masterplan?
- Yes: **96.45%**
 - No: **3.55%**
4. Do you support a permanent or temporary kiosk at the Lighthouse Reserve? (Respondents were asked to select one option only).
- No kiosk: **47.14%**
 - Temporary kiosk: **23.85%**
 - Permanent kiosk: **29.01%**
5. What is your preferred option for treatment of the Toc H buildings? (Respondents were asked to select one option only).
- Demolish all four existing buildings and install interpretative signs on site: **45.16%**
 - Remove asbestos from all four buildings, install new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out largest building (McDonald's Hall) as an exhibit, seal and secure the three remaining buildings to prevent access to the inside of the buildings: **28.10%**
 - Another option, such as install new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out largest building (McDonald's Hall) as an exhibit, convert one other building into a shelter, remove remaining two buildings and install interpretative representation of them: **26.74%**

The survey also invited respondents to provide comments in relation to each question and the draft Master Plan overall. Many hundreds of individual comments were received in response and, overall, generally reflected and supported the results contained with the statistical response to each question. It is noted that whilst more than 85% of respondents supported the car parking proposals as described in the draft Master Plan, a general theme which emerged in the associated comments was that future car parking provision needs to be considered.

Written Submissions

Similar to the written comments contained within the survey responses, the nineteen separate written submissions generally reflected the statistical results of the survey questions. The main issues raised in the submissions included:

- More attention needs to be given to traffic management issues;
 - Car parking should be provided closer to the lighthouse;
 - Trees and vegetation cover should take preference over overflow car parking;
 - There should be more open park area, picnic tables and walking tracks;
-



- Power lines should be underground;
- Network of military and installations within and beyond the reserve should be improved;
- The project cost estimates are under-estimated;
- Kiosk - submissions both for and against a kiosk on the site;
- Toc H buildings – submissions both for and against removal of the buildings on the site;
- Any proposed changes should support / be consistent with the application for inclusion of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve on the National Heritage Register;
- The site should be rezoned to Public Conservation and Resources Zone;
- The community engagement process was inadequate.

Petition

The petition from 20 Point Lonsdale businesses requests that *“No decisions, planning or development of a kiosk or café at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve proceed without further extensive and meaningful consultation with local traders”*.

As per Council’s August 2018 resolution, a meeting was held on 13 December 2018 to brief the Project Reference Group on the outcomes of the community consultation process.

Key Issues

The key issues for consideration by Council are:

- Tract draft Master Plan Option C
- Project Reference Group’s recommendations
- Community consultation outcomes

The above should inform Council’s decision-making about adoption of the final Master Plan, along with consideration of the potential implications for the National Heritage application.

Discussion

Most of the design elements contained in Tract’s draft Master Plan Option C have been well supported by the Project Reference Group and the wider community. This section focusses on issues that warrant particular consideration.

Car Parking

Although the car parking proposals have been strongly supported, comments and submissions received during the consultation process suggest that some further consideration is warranted, particularly in relation to any possible future expansion of the car park. It is suggested that this matter can be considered as part of the detailed design process after adoption of the final Master Plan. Note, the car parking proposals are not funded within stage 1 of the project.



Kiosk

A temporary or permanent kiosk is not part of the project's stage 1 funding. Accordingly, there is no urgency to have this matter resolved in the short term. As per the petition received from the Point Lonsdale traders, further consultation should occur before any future consideration about any proposed kiosk on the site.

Toc H Buildings

Tract's draft Master Plan Option C recommends the retention of the four Toc H buildings. Specifically, McDonald Hall is proposed as "an exhibit/community space/interpretative centre/café", with the other three buildings to be "managed as sculptural elements ie. No Access".

The Project Reference Group identified six scenarios for consideration, and determined option No. 5 as its recommended and preferred scenario. The six options and indicative costs are:

Toc H building options	Cost Estimate*
1. Demolish all four existing buildings and install interpretative signs on site.	\$120,000 (\$80k for demolition and \$40k for interpretative signage)
2. Demolish all four existing buildings and build a new interpretative centre that includes amenities, air conditioning and displays. Approximate area of the new building 160 square meters.	\$760,690
3. Remove asbestos from four buildings, new cladding material similar to original P1 huts, (corrugated galvanised iron sheets) and buildings sealed with no access to inside of building.	\$164,000
4. Remove asbestos from four buildings, new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, minimal fit out to allow for community use.	\$554,000
5. Remove asbestos from four buildings, new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out of largest building as an exhibit (known as McDonald's Hall), three remaining buildings securely sealed with no access to inside of building.	\$206,600
6. Demolish largest building, all asbestos removed from three remaining buildings, new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out of three remaining buildings for community use. In addition a new interpretative centre built that includes amenities, air conditioning and displays. Approximate area of building 160 square metres.	\$1,010,400

* Cost estimates are based on quotes received by Council officers and the 2018 Rawlinsons Construction Handbook.

The wider community's most popular single option, as expressed across the 540 returned surveys was to:



- Demolish all four existing buildings and install interpretative signs on site. This was favoured by **45.16%** of respondents.

The results for the other two options presented in the survey were as follows:

- Remove asbestos from all four buildings, install new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out largest building (McDonald's Hall) as an exhibit, seal and secure the three remaining buildings to prevent access to the inside of the buildings: **28.10%**
- Another option, such as install new cladding using material similar to original P1 huts, fit out largest building (McDonald's Hall) as an exhibit, convert one other building into a shelter, remove remaining two buildings and install interpretative representation of them: **26.74%**

From within the Project Reference Group and the wider community, strong cases have been made both for retaining and removing the Toc H buildings.

Those in favour of retention point to heritage values. To this extent, the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse reserve is included in the Victorian Heritage Register. The VHR citation notes that the *"The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse precinct is of architectural, historical and archaeological significance to the State of Victoria."* Also, *"...The defence group is of historical significance for the range of fixed defence structures within the site, reflecting the importance of the defence of Port Phillip Bay and the major cities of Melbourne and Geelong during the duration of both the First and Second World Wars. The P1-type huts are of interest for their association with the 7 Australian CRE [Works] division, the Australian Women's Army Service [AWAS], and the Toc H organization"*

Those in favour of removing the buildings suggest that they have been altered to such an extent that they provide little or no heritage value, and that any remaining heritage value would be further eroded by additional alterations that would be required to retain and restore the buildings. It is also suggested by some who dispute the heritage significance of the buildings that the large number of similar buildings in better condition throughout Victoria and Australia means those at Point Lonsdale are of little importance to the telling of the Toc H story. Other arguments in favour of removing the buildings focus on the financial costs of retention and restoration, the ongoing risks and costs of vandalism, and the opportunity to replace the buildings with vegetation.

It is noted that the current funding agreement with the State Government includes \$80,000 for demolition of the former Toc H buildings and \$40,000 for Interpretation of Toc H huts.

Staging and Funding of the Project

As per the stage 1 funding agreement, the schedule of proposed works is limited to:

- Paths and trails
 - Removal of Toc H buildings
 - Interpretative signage
 - Ship viewing areas
 - BBQ and associated facilities
-



- Improvements to lighthouse surrounds
- Vegetation

Works currently envisaged for stage 2 or other works would require a Council budget allocation and/or new government funding support. This includes any proposed retention and/or restoration works relating to the Toc H buildings, which would require a variation to the current funding agreement and future additional funding.

Also relevant to this issue is the timeframe commitment Council has under the conditions of funding agreement with the State Government whereby stage 1 works, as funded, are required to be completed by the end of July 2019.

Heritage and Statutory Approvals

It should be noted that a permit from Heritage Victoria is required for any works or alterations in relation to a registered place or object including:

- *Building extensions, constructions, interior works, demolition or relocation of buildings and structures, changes of colour schemes and signage.*
- *Construction of new buildings and garden structures such as fences or decks, pathways and driveways, and changes of materials.*
- *Works to registered trees and gardens which are not regular maintenance works.*
- *Excavations at registered sites or damage or alteration to an archaeological artefact.*
- *Relocation, repair and conservation treatment of objects.*

While there are not any formal requirements for referral to the Commonwealth until a final decision is made on the National Heritage Listing application, Council has previously committed to informally referring any proposal to the appropriate Federal body to ensure the application is not compromised in any way.

Project Reference Group

The Project Preference Group has been instrumental in informing and supporting the design process to date. Having reached an important project milestone with the (anticipated) adoption of the final Master Plan, it is suggested that the Reference Group Terms of Reference be reviewed and updated, as required, to ensure that the work of the Group remains most effective and relevant to the future requirements of the project.

Council Plan

The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve project relates to the following Strategic Objectives of Council, as per the 2017 – 2021 Council Plan:

- Community Wellbeing - Enhance community wellbeing by providing a safe environment where people are involved, healthy and active in recreation, arts and culture.
 - Environmental Sustainability – Play our part in protecting the local, national and globally significant values within our natural environment for future generations.
-



- Planning and Heritage – Preserve and enhance the Borough as a special place through excellence of design and conservation of its rich culture and unique heritage.

Financial

The budget for stage 1 of the proposed landscape improvements is \$600,000, which includes design and consultation costs. As indicated in the Discussion section of this report, works currently envisaged for stage 2 or other works would require an additional Council budget allocation and/or new government funding support. This includes any proposed retention and/or restoration works relating to the Toc H buildings. It is intended that procurement of stage 1 works will be subject to a tender process and a fixed price contract.

Social

The process to date has engaged hundreds of community members to varying degrees of involvement and serves as a good model of a collaborative and inclusive community process that has brought people together in pursuit of a common goal. Adoption of a Master Plan and subsequent landscape improvements will enhance a site that is of significance to the social and cultural fabric of the nation.

Environmental

Improvement of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve in accordance with the draft Master Plan will improve the local environment. Planning for protection of key species, fire risk, and clearance of weed and other infestations will protect and enhance the ecological significance of the site.

Risk Management

Any project of this scale carries risks, most of which are manageable risks given appropriate project management processes and practice. The specific risk that will require particular consideration and careful navigation concerns obtaining multiple statutory approvals for the project in a reasonable timeframe, given the complex range of planning, heritage and environmental controls that apply to the site.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

Under Section 80C (1) (2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council staff and persons engaged under a contract to provide advice or a report to a meeting of the Council or a special committee, and who have a direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice or report relates, must disclose the type of interest when providing the advice or report and before the advice or report is considered by the Council or the committee.

Officers involved in developing the report have no direct or indirect interests.



Assessment

Having regard to all of the above – including the draft Tract Master Plan Option C report, Project Reference Group recommendations and outcomes of the community consultation process – it is recommended that Council should adopt draft Master Plan Option C generally as presented to the community, and that it determine its position in relation to the future of the Toc H buildings.

Conclusion

A process to undertake a moderate level of landscape development at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve commenced some years ago and the considerable efforts of Council and the community to progress the project to this stage should be acknowledged. Adoption of a final landscape improvement Master Plan would be a significant milestone in delivering a project of high interest and importance to the community.

Recommendation:

That Council:

1. **Note the outcomes of the community engagement process, including the receipt of 540 completed surveys, 19 written submissions and one petition from 20 Point Lonsdale traders.**
2. **Noting and notwithstanding Council's endorsement in April 2015 of the initial Concept Plan for landscape improvements, adopt Landscape Master Plan Option C (Tract, 27/07/18), including the agreed detailed design elements, as presented during the community consultation process, subject to the following:**
 - a. **Inclusion of a note on the plan indicating possible future car park expansion area;**
 - b. **If required, amendments to the plan to reflect Council's decision in relation to the future of the four existing Toc H buildings, as per item 3 of this resolution.**
3. **Determine its formal position in relation to the Toc H buildings having regard to the draft Master Plan Option C prepared by Tract, the advice of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group, and the outcomes of the community consultation process.**
4. **Notwithstanding items 2 and 3 above, seek the relevant advice and approvals to ensure that none of the proposed Master Plan works would compromise the chances of a successful outcome to the current application for National Heritage Listing of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.**
5. **Do not proceed at this time with any kiosk and only consider a temporary or permanent kiosk for a future stage after further consultation with local traders.**
6. **Maintain a Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group and undertake a review of the Terms of Reference to ensure they remain relevant and most effective given the progress of the project to date and the contents of this resolution.**



- 7. Request the CEO to issue a Media Release to update the community on this matter and to thank community members who served on the Reference Group and who engaged in the consultation process.**

Councillors Pizzey / Francis:

That Council:

- 1. Note the outcomes of the community engagement process, including the receipt of 540 completed surveys, 19 written submissions and one petition from 20 Point Lonsdale traders.**
- 2. Noting and notwithstanding Council's endorsement in April 2015 of the initial Concept Plan for landscape improvements, adopt Landscape Master Plan Option C (Tract, 27/07/18), including the agreed detailed design elements, as presented during the community consultation process, subject to the following:**
 - a. Inclusion of a note on the plan indicating possible future car park expansion area;**
 - b. If required, amendments to the plan to reflect Council's decision in relation to the future of the four existing Toc H buildings, as per item 3 of this resolution.**
- 3. In acknowledging the history of the site, that Council prepare a heritage impact statement that supports an application for a heritage permit and/or other relevant statutory approvals that responds to the Toc H buildings as follows:**
 - a. Reinstatement of the eastern building (known as P1 McDonald) for the purpose of an interpretative exhibit;**
 - b. Replacement of the northern building with, or redevelopment as, a shelter as part of a picnic / BBQ area, utilising or replicating elements of the existing building;**
 - c. Demolition of the western building and installation of signage or other minor, low scale interpretative element in this location;**
 - d. Demolition of the southern building and installation of a sculptural or other creative interpretative element in this location;**
 - e. Request officers to prepare and present a report to Council on the design and costs of the proposed works in order to enable Council to make application to Heritage Victoria;**
 - f. Advise the Australian Heritage Council of Council's recommendation.**
- 4. Notwithstanding items 2 and 3 above, seek the relevant advice and approvals to ensure that none of the proposed Master Plan works would compromise the chances of a successful outcome to the current application for National Heritage Listing of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve.**
- 5. Do not proceed at this time with any kiosk and only consider a temporary or permanent kiosk for a future stage after further consultation with local traders.**
- 6. Maintain a Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Reference Group and undertake a review of the Terms of Reference to ensure they remain relevant and most effective given the progress of the project to date and the contents of this resolution.**



- 7. Request the CEO to issue a Media Release to update the community on this matter and to thank community members who served on the Reference Group and who engaged in the consultation process.**

Carried unanimously
