

# PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC



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Dear Council

## Re: Anderson Road east car park proposal

We refer to the proposal for works to the Anderson Road east car park.

### Strategic need

The Victorian Government has released its [Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy](#), setting the vision for boating investment and infrastructure until 2030. The strategy seeks to invest in improving recreational boating and develops a co-design process to fund improvements based on priorities identified by boaters.

We note that the proposed car park upgrade at Anderson Street has not been identified by the State body that oversees boating infrastructure as a project that requires funding.

The Council announcement of 11 March 2022 advises that: *"This \$675,000 construction project is fully funded by Council,.."* In contrast the Council website also advises: "Council has partial funding from the Victorian Fishing Authority for the proposal with Council contributing \$337, 092".

On this basis the need for a fully sealed and extensive parking area, as proposed by Council has not been identified by boaters or the State as necessary. Rather alternate funding has been obtained for approximately 50% of the cost of the car park from the Victorian Fisheries Authority.

Anderson Road Boat Ramp, Cowes Boating Action Plan September 2009 GHD (the GHD plan).

The GHD plan prepared for Council in 2009 is based on the Anderson Road boat ramp being classified by Council from a local ramp to a district facility. It is not known if this status has been formally achieved. If the facility is not a district facility the need for the expansion of the current arrangements would also not be a priority.

In relation to the car park east upgrade the GHD plan suggested a modest improvement in the east car park could occur at a cost of \$50,000. The cost of the current proposal is in the vicinity of \$675,000.

The current proposal appears to be vastly more significant than the GHD proposal and the proposal is not recognised by the state as a project requiring funding.

### **Vegetation on site**

PICS recognises that the area of dunes surrounding the carpark upgrade proposal is quite degraded, though presently stable. There is an abundance of serious and invasive weeds, most notably, at ground level, Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca major*) which forms complete carpets over large areas. Weed grasses such as Kikuyu (*Cenchrus clandestinus*) and Rat-tail Grass (*Sporobolus africanus*) are also prominent at the site. As well, weed species of shrub size were also noted, particularly African Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Cherry-plum (*Prunus cerasifera*).

Under the current proposal there are 3 large eucalypts to be removed. These are mature specimens of the Southern Mahogany (*Eucalyptus botryoides*) which is not indigenous to Phillip Island, but is a native species from eastern Victoria, widely planted as a shade tree in coastal areas mid last century. However, with the proposed development arborists may regard the trees as a risky species with the possible danger from falling limbs.

To save these trees, the carpark design would need to be altered and the boat trailer parking spaces reduced. Changing the shape of the carpark around the large trees is also constrained by steep gradients in the dunes on the northern and western sides, and by the need to retain a reasonable buffer zone between carpark and housing on the south side.

Should Council proceed with the removal of the vegetation the loss of habitat value caused by the removal of indigenous shrubs and the non-indigenous trees could be offset by replacement planting in the dunes adjacent to the carpark. Agreement with adjacent landholders would be advisable. There has been some recent planting and guarding of indigenous coastal species in the area adjacent to the houses and this could be extended.

There are also multiple tracks leading from the carpark to the beach, some of which could be closed and revegetated. Consideration needs to be given to the long-term control of Blue Periwinkle at the site, now a mammoth task in itself.

Runoff towards the beach will be significantly increased by the increase in area of impervious paving when the carpark is sealed. This increase in runoff may be absorbed by the dunes, though increased flow down the deep drain at the west end of the proposed carpark during intense rainfall events could cause some temporary washouts on the beach.

Council could consider a surface that increases permeability or the use of grates or other finishes that would achieve increased permeability.

In relation to the proposed "island" planting of Moonahs (*Melaleuca lanceolata*) at each end of the parking spaces the islands are not generous enough to allow the growth of Moonahs to maturity. These islands should be made wider by a metre or two. Such widening would only result in the loss of one or two car parking spaces.

## Summary

In summary we question the strategic need for significant car park works and the need to remove a large amount of vegetation. A car park of this scale appears to have limited strategic support.

Under the proposal there would be an unfortunate loss of habitat and only limited replanting including insufficient space allowed on the "islands" for planting of Moonahs.

Should works be undertaken on the site current serious and invasive weeds need to be addressed and replacement plantings should occur in adjacent dunes and in unwanted informal coastal walks to the beach. Surfaces in whole or part that are permeable should also be considered.

Should you require any further information please contact us as outlined above.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Nottle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeff Nottle

President