

# ALTONA PIER DESIGN OPTIONS



Engagement Report  
October 2020



### Acknowledgement of Country

Aboriginal people, through their rich culture, have been connected to the land and sea, for tens of thousands of years.

Parks Victoria respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners, their culture and knowledge, their continuing connections, and cultural obligation, to care for their Country.

### Privacy

Parks Victoria is committed to protecting privacy and personally identifiable information by meeting our responsibilities under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the associated Information Privacy Principles.

For the purposes of community engagement for this project, we have collected personal information from individuals, such as email addresses, contact details, demographic data and feedback. This information is stored on secure servers for the duration of our project.

Notes were made during consultation activities, however, were not attributable to any individuals. Diligence is taken to ensure any comment or sensitive information does not become personally identifiable in our reporting.

### Community Engagement

Unless otherwise stated, all feedback documented in this report was written or recorded during our consultation process, and the views expressed are those of participants, and not the views of facilitators and staff.

Parks Victoria staff, together with our partners, have taken care while transcribing participant feedback, but unfortunately cannot guarantee the accuracy of all notes. We are however, confident that we have captured the full range of ideas, concerns of views expressed during consultation.

### Definitions

**'Parks'** – Parks Victoria manages many sites such as piers, waterways, ports, bays, historic building, trails, urban parks, small conservation reserves, and large national and state parks. For the sake of brevity, these are collectively referred to as 'parks', unless a specific type of site is stated.

**'Community'** – Community can comprise of local residents, visitors and businesses near a project area, of who may have an interest in the project. The term is very broad and used to define groups of people. A community may be defined by a geographic location, a set of similar interests such as an industry or sporting club, or a shared sense of identity such as a culture or a generation.

**'Stakeholder'** – Stakeholder refers to key organisations or individuals who have an interest in the project. Examples include MPs, government departments, industry, peak lobby and interest groups.

**'Engagement'** – Engagement refers to a planned process involving two-way dialogue with the specific purpose of working with communities and stakeholders to encourage discussion or active involvement to inform a project decision.

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# 1. Introduction

Altona Pier is a western suburbs icon steeped in Altona's history. Popular for fishing, walking and swimming, the current pier is nearing the end of its functional life. This project sought community and stakeholder input to inform the design of the new pier.

## Project overview

Altona Pier will be rebuilt as part of the Victorian Government's \$24 million *Better Piers and Waterside Facilities* stimulus program to upgrade piers and jetties.

Working with the Department of Transport (DOT) and the Department, Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria developed three future pier design options for community consultation. Three options were presented to local residents, recreational groups and other stakeholders to provide feedback and help determine the most suitable design.

The feedback received during this process will be used to further refine and inform the rebuild of Altona Pier.

## About Altona Pier

Altona Pier extends from the intersection of Esplanade and Pier streets, Altona, 12km west of Melbourne's CBD. Originally built in the 1880s and most recently rejuvenated in the 1980s, the pier is popular for fishing, walking and swimming, with the occasional recreational boat stopping to visit.

Altona Pier is a focal point for Melbourne's western suburbs. Large sandy beaches, community space, nearby public transport links and a variety of local cafes and shops draw locals and visitors to the foreshore. Year-round anglers enjoy fishing from the pier, taking advantage of the artificial reefs placed within casting distance.

## Purpose of this report

This report summarises the consultation process and feedback received during the Altona Pier community engagement process. This report includes feedback from two online information sessions held on 4 and 5 August 2020 and Engage Victoria survey responses collected between 21 July and 19 August 2020.

Parks Victoria has also received submissions from government agencies including the Victorian Fisheries Authority, as well as from Lifesaving Victoria and the local volunteer Altona Lifesaving Club.

## Report limitations

Limitations of the engagement process that need to be acknowledged are:

- This report does not represent the views of the three Traditional Owner groups who have an interest in this area. Parks Victoria will engage with these groups separately in the next stage of the project.
- The online survey was open from 21 July to 19 August 2020. During this time, Victoria progressed from Stage 3 to Stage 4 COVID-19 restrictions, which may have had an impact on survey responses.
- COVID-19 public safety measures at the time meant there were no opportunities for in-person face-to-face feedback, meaning data collected is potentially biased to people with internet connectivity and the ability to use digital engagement platforms.

## 2. How did we engage

Parks Victoria engaged with community and stakeholders over four weeks from 21 July until 19 August 2020 to gain feedback on three design options for a rebuilt Altona Pier. More than 1,268 people shared their feedback and ideas on the options through the Engage Victoria website.

### Purpose of consultation

The purpose of the consultation was to:

- Seek community and stakeholder input into design concepts for the pier rebuild.
- Gain a clear understanding of the current and future use of Altona Pier.
- Identify a preferred design option for Altona Pier that will be further refined in accordance with planning and heritage considerations.

### Engagement questions

The following engagement questions were presented on the Engage Victoria website:

Q1. Which of the three pier concepts do you prefer? (Refer to Appendix for information on the concepts.)

Q2. Why is this your preferred option?

Q3. Please elaborate on why this is your preferred option.

Q4. Are there any features or facilities you would like to see added or removed from your preferred option?

Q5. Are there any activities or opportunities for future use that you would like to see better catered for at Altona Pier?

Q6. Altona Pier is a significant historical icon. How would you like to see the heritage of the pier maintained?

Q7. Details of Parks Victoria's communication and engagement activities are shown in Table 1.

Supplementary information to assist survey respondents to provide feedback included:

- Plan view of each design option.
- Frequently Asked Questions.
- Project timeline.
- Parks Victoria contact information.

Demographic data collected included age, gender, residential postcode, cultural or linguistic background, disability status and current visitation behaviour.

### Engagement activities

Parks Victoria promoted the Altona Pier engagement opportunity to local residents and targeted recreational groups and peak bodies through a variety of methods as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Communication and engagement activities

Activity	Date	Audience	Purpose
Altona Pier site visit	29/01/2020	Hobsons Bay City Council Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Department of Transport Cardno	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key values of Altona Pier.</li> <li>Identify issues and threats to Altona Pier.</li> <li>Identify current and future opportunities at Altona Pier.</li> <li>Identify key stakeholders associated with Altona Pier.</li> </ul>
Hobsons Bay City Council reference group	Multiple dates Feb-Sept 2020	Hobsons Bay City Council Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Department of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities to align foreshore and pier design.</li> <li>Refine proposed pier designs before releasing to community.</li> <li>Coordinate timing of foreshore and pier engagement.</li> </ul>
Engage Victoria online survey	21/07/2020 to 19/08/2020	Local residents, recreational groups and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community's preferred design option for Altona Pier.</li> <li>Gather input towards proposed designs.</li> <li>Identify additional facilities not captured in proposed designs.</li> <li>Identify future activities that could be facilitated at Altona Pier.</li> </ul>
Engage Victoria survey promotion	21/07/2020 to 11/08/2020	Local residents, recreational groups and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media Release published by Minister Horne.</li> <li>Posters placed on Altona Pier and nearby public areas.</li> <li>Email to promote participation in surveys sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Fisheries Authority;</li> <li>Boonwurrung Land and Sea Aboriginal Corporation;</li> <li>Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation; and</li> <li>Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Media release issued by Victorian Fisheries Authority.</li> <li>Letterbox drop to local postcodes of 10,000 flyers.</li> </ul>
Online information session	4/08/2020 and 5/08/2020	Local residents, recreational groups and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide more detailed explanation of proposed design options.</li> <li>Provide opportunity for participants to ask questions, provide information and comment on the options for Altona Pier, and for Parks Victoria to listen</li> <li>Detail next steps towards rebuilding Altona Pier.</li> </ul>
Life Saving clubs briefing	7/08/2020	Life Saving Victoria (LSV) Altona Surf Life Saving Club (ASLSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preferred option advised by LSV and ASLSC.</li> <li>Identify benefits, issues and concerns with proposed options.</li> <li>Discuss facilities and zoning to promote safe swimming.</li> <li>Detail next steps towards rebuilding Altona Pier.</li> </ul>

### 3. Who we heard from

A significant majority of the responses received came from the local community who walk, socialise, swim and fish from Altona Pier. There was a similar response rate for males and females and a higher response rate from people aged 30-49 year old.

#### Survey respondents

The “Shape the design of a new Altona Pier” engagement survey was hosted on Engage Victoria between 21 July – 19 August 2020. Figures 1 to 7 describe the demographics of the respondents. The number of people who answered each question are show in brackets at the end of each figure title.

Information captured in the survey indicates a broad section of the community shared their views on the proposed designs. Participants were well spread across ages (Figure 1) but with a higher response rate from ages 30 to 49 years old, and 12% of participants identified as culturally and linguistically diverse. In addition, 4% of participants are living with a disability and 1% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander (Figure 2).

Male and female respondents were similarly represented, with 53% and 46% representation respectively (Figure 3).

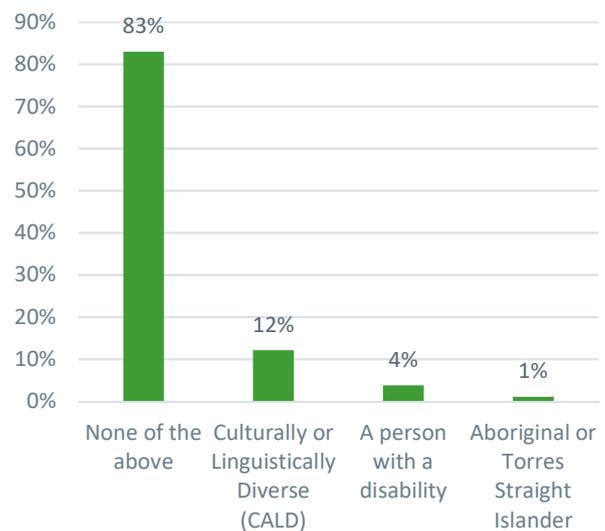


Figure 2: Diversity of survey respondents (n. 1,205)

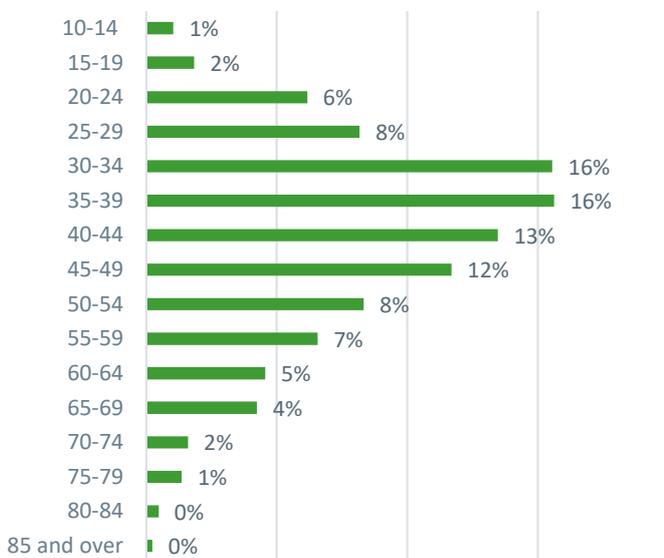


Figure 1: Age range of survey respondents (n. 1,260)

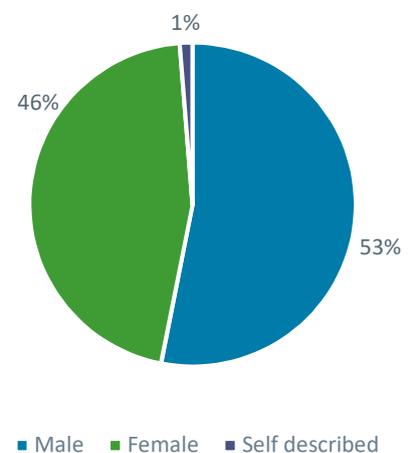


Figure 3: Gender of survey respondents (n. 1,251)

Most respondents indicated they visit Altona Pier weekly (Figure 4) and live in the surrounding suburbs (Figure 5). The primary reason for survey participants to visit Altona Pier is to walk (Figure 6). Survey respondents tend to spend 10 to 20 minutes at the pier each time they visit the pier (Figure 7).

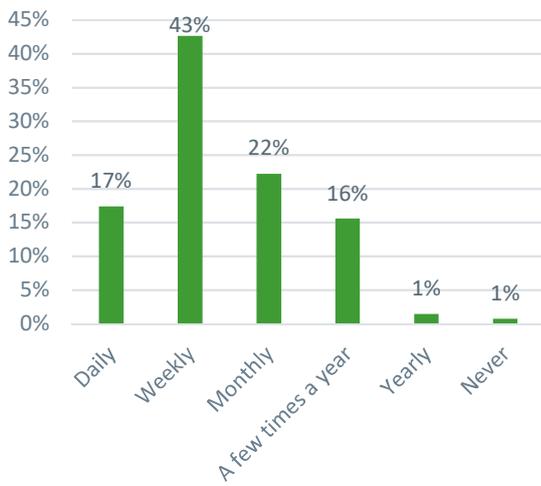
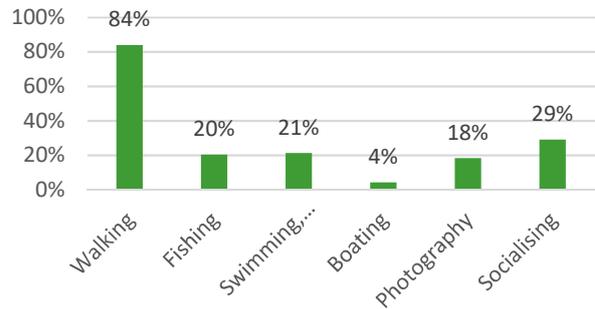


Figure 4: How often respondents visit Altona Pier (n. 1,247)

Figure 6: Respondents' main reason to visit Altona Pier (n. 1,247)

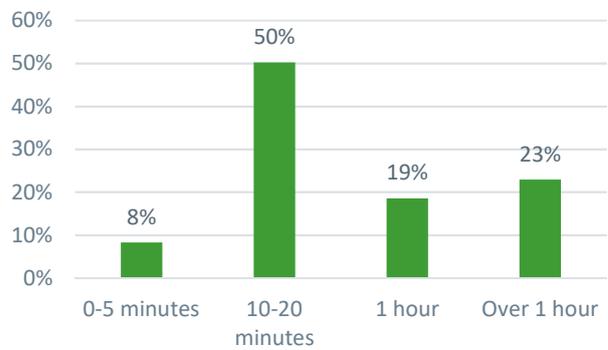


Figure 7: Average length of time spent at Altona Pier each visit (n. 1,242)

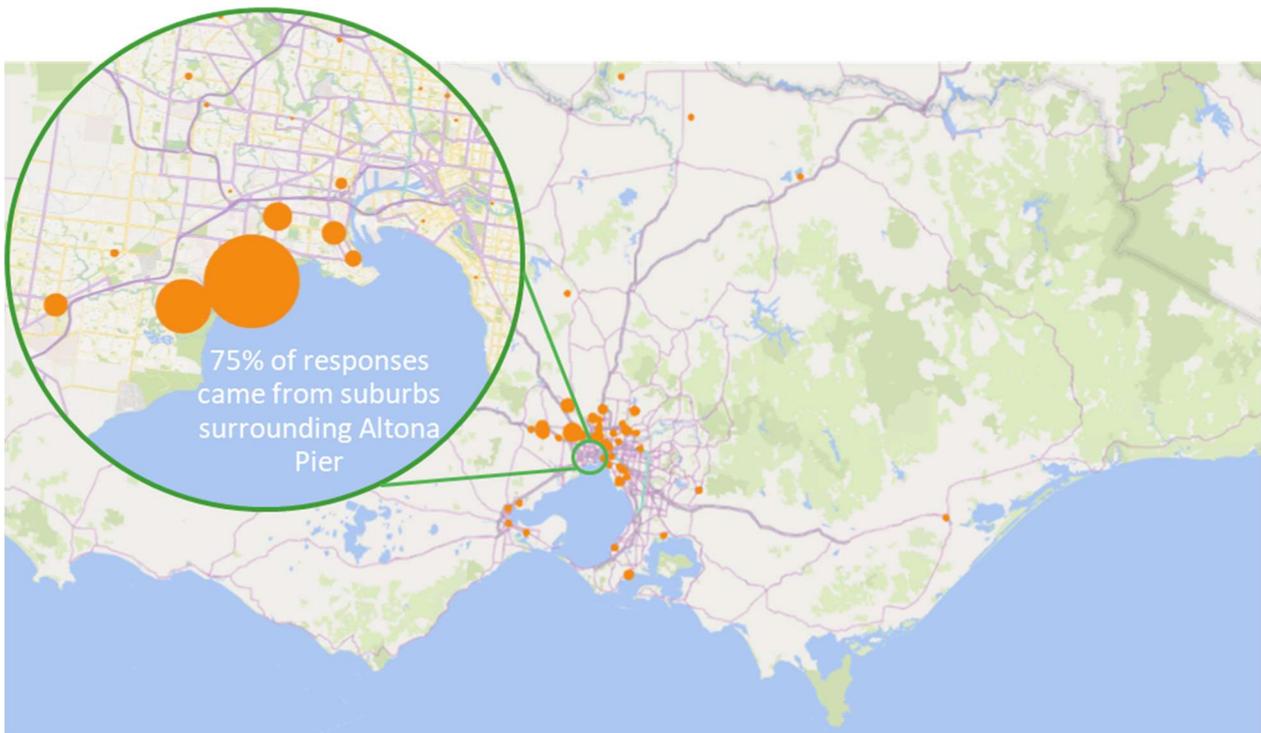


Figure 5: Geographic representation of survey respondents' postcode. Larger circles represent a higher number of respondents in that location. (State-view n.78, Altona inset n. 907)

## 4. What we heard

Respondents told us that Altona Pier is a much-loved landmark which is primarily used for walking, swimming and fishing. An angled pier head on a new alignment is the preferred option for the rebuilt pier. Please refer to Appendix for information on the options.

### Preferred design for Altona Pier

An **angled pier head** on a new alignment, presented as Option 3 in the survey, was the most preferred (62%) of survey respondents (Figure 8).

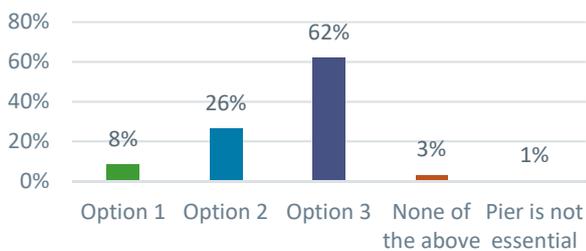
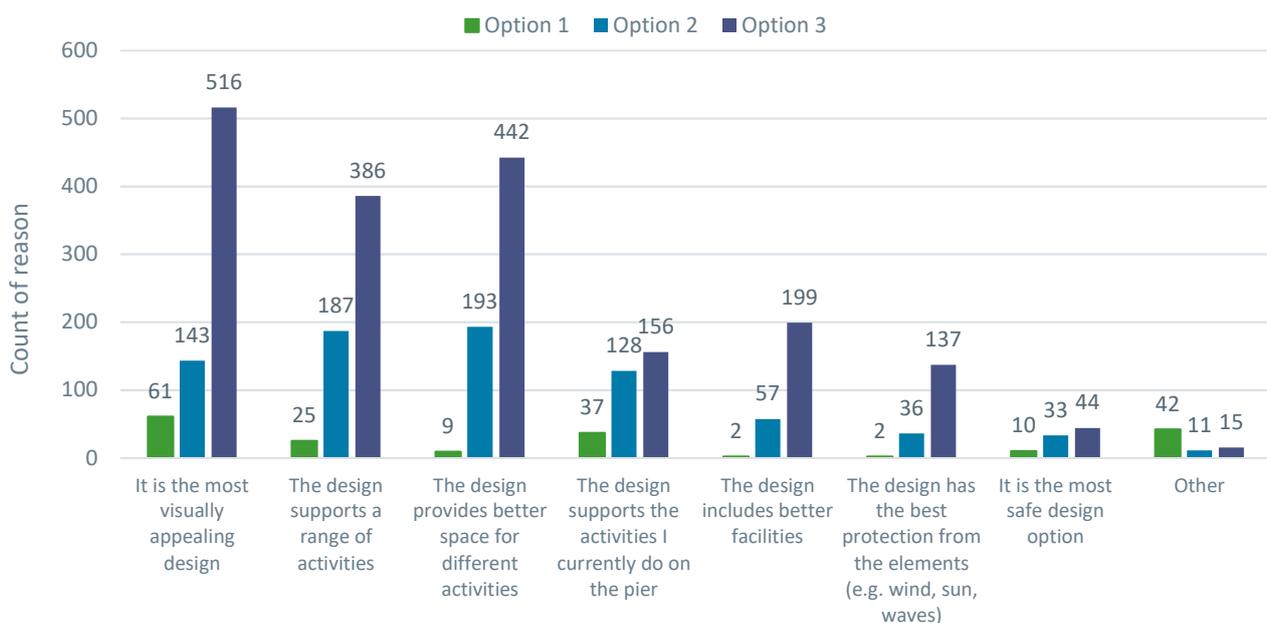


Figure 8: Preferred design option for Altona Pier as indicated by survey respondents (n. 1,268)

Respondents overwhelmingly rated option three as the most visually appealing, supporting and providing space for a range of activities, including better facilities and providing the best protection from the elements. (Figure 9).

A T-shaped pier head on a new alignment, presented as Option 2 in the survey, was also seen to be visually appealing and to provide space for and support a range of activities, but to a lesser extent compared to Option 3.

Rebuilding the existing pier with structural and accessibility improvements, presented as Option 1, was the least popular option.



### Support for improving the existing pier (Option 1)

Rebuilding the existing pier with structural and accessibility improvements was preferred by 8% of respondents; a small representation across all recreational user groups. The primary reasons for this preference include maintaining the historical connection of the original structure and maintaining a timber decking.

*“It retains the timber construction and so the link to the history.”*

*“It is the only design which keeps the swimming platform and timber decking.”*

*“Less of an impact on the visual environment.”*

### Support for a T-shaped pier head (Option 2)

A T-shaped pier was preferred by 26% of respondents, primarily as it provides more room at the pier head for fishing and boating, in turn reducing congestion for other recreational users. A T-shaped pier was preferred for boating, (Figure 10).

*“T-shaped gives a wider area for fishermen to fish out at the end, creating more room and space also for other activities such as lookouts for families, swimming, and people can enjoy fish n chips and have ample room at the end of the pier.”*

*“This option means there will be more space for the 3 main users - people walking, people stopped and enjoying the view at the end and also people fishing.”*

*“It will provide great options for anglers as well as divers travelling to the artificial reef. Divers will need to have access from the boat mooring and should be able to swim clear of the anglers from that point.”*

*“The end of the pier is always so congested, it makes sense to have the T shaped end to make it more accessible to everyone not just a small group of fishermen.”*

### Support for an angled pier head (Option 3)

Respondents said the angled pier head was the most inclusive and inviting to a range of pier visitors. While providing more space for fishing, the angled pier head with large format seating also caters for large summer crowds, provides a safe swimming area and offers the most unique design. An angled pier head is slightly more preferred option for anglers, and significantly more preferred for walkers, socialisers, swimmers and photographers (Figure 10).

*“This design is most visually unique and appealing and would give Altona a modern and rejuvenating feel. It still offers increased space for fishing and activities, but also provides shade and areas for relaxation to view the bay.”*

*“The curved pier looks more desirable to swim off, with improved seating options. Consideration must be given to the views of the city skyline from the end of the pier, with seating oriented to face that direction.”*

*“Regular fishing spot for me, I think it will be a good improvement so we can fish from different spots.”*

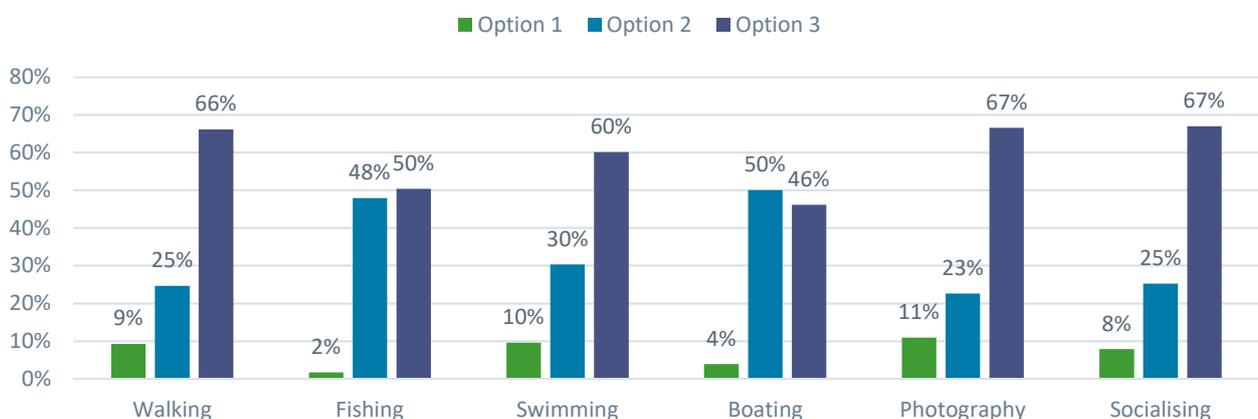


Figure 10: Pier option preference by primary recreational use (n. 2,139)

### No support for proposed options

Survey respondents who did not have a preference for any of the pier options (3% of respondents) shared views that the pier needs to be longer; did not think there was a requirement for change; or did not think any of the proposed options met the aspiration for Altona.

***“Pier only needs to be maintained and fixed. Not destroyed.”***

***“A design that we are proud of for the future. These options are poor.”***

***“Make the pier as long as possible to improve the fishing catches.”***

### Additional facilities for a new pier

To further refine the design options presented, participants were asked to comment on additional facilities that would improve their preferred option. The following list of additional facilities are in order of most mentioned to improve each design option.

#### Additional facilities to improve Option 1

1. More seating, shade and/or shelter
2. Diving platform and/or better water access
3. Rubbish bins
4. Overall larger pier
5. More open space

#### Additional facilities to improve Option 2

1. More seating, shade and/or shelter
2. Overall larger pier
3. Fishing facilities such as rod holders, cleaning station and rulers
4. Diving platform and/or better water access
5. Rubbish bins

#### Additional facilities to improve Option 3

1. More seating, shade and/or shelter
2. Rubbish bins
3. Diving platform and/or better water access
4. Vendor at the pier head, such as a café or kiosk
5. Timber preference over concrete
6. Overall larger pier
7. Fishing facilities such as rod holders, cleaning station and rulers
8. Improved low landings and/or retaining the mid-pier low landing on western side
9. Recreational zones to separate swimming, fishing and walking
10. Improved lighting along the pier

### Future activities to support at Altona Pier

Participants were asked to identify any activities that could be better catered for in future designs for Altona Pier. The most mentioned activities include:

1. Swimming, snorkelling and scuba diving
2. Market, café or restaurant
3. Fishing
4. Ferry transport
5. Recreational boating
6. Entertainment (e.g. performance/theatre)
7. Kayaking
8. Educational activities
9. Viewing
10. Water sports (e.g. surfing, kiteboarding, stand up paddle boarding)

### Preserving the heritage of Altona Pier

Altona Pier has played a role in the growth of the suburb and surrounding region. First built in the 1880s to support steam ship travel to and from Melbourne, the pier has been maintained and rebuilt through time with varying uses, and has persistently been a tourist.

Salvaging materials from the existing structure for use in public art, sculpture or furnishings of the new pier and surrounding precinct is the most favoured option to maintain the historical value of the structure (Figure 11). New interpretive signage detailing the role Altona Pier has played through time was also highly supported.

Other ideas put forward by participants include:

- Maintaining as much timber as possible in new designs.
- Acknowledging Traditional Owners through art, signage, or incorporating traditional names and language.
- Maintain historical layout and repair existing structure rather than rebuilding the pier.

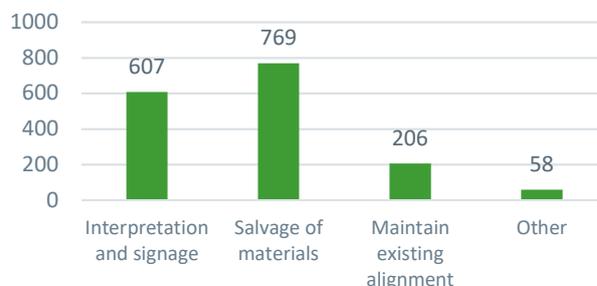


Figure 11: Preferred options for maintaining the heritage of Altona Pier (n. 1,137)

## 5. Next steps

Community input is a key component of project planning and these findings will help to inform the final design of the Altona Pier. A final design for the pier replacement is subject to a heritage impact assessment, geotechnical investigations, statutory approvals and budget. These matters will be the focus for Parks Victoria as we work toward finalising the design.

Further information will be provided by Parks Victoria as this project progresses. For further information visit [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au) or email [engage@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@parks.vic.gov.au).

## 6. Appendix

### Design options for Altona Pier

#### *Option 1: Improve existing pier design*

The existing Altona Pier will be demolished, with a new timber decked pier constructed on the same alignment and length as it is today. Low landings will be designed to ensure that they are accessible, improving swimming and boating opportunities for all. Additional seating will be provided to support fishing and walking.

Facilities and features included:

- Concrete abutment to adjoining seawall
- Timber decking atop concrete and steel structure
- Respite seating along length of pier
- Motion sensor lighting at 30m spacing
- New steps to western mid-pier low landing
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* compliant ramp to fixed low landing on either side of pier head
- Existing pier head to be reinstated
- Existing pier alignment maintained



Graphic visualisation of pier Option 1 Improve existing pier design. *Cardno Victoria*

### *Option 2: T-shaped pier head*

Extending from the foreshore along a new alignment, Option 2 offers a visual continuation of Pier Street, with a concrete T-shaped pier head offering more space for walkers and anglers. New features include a sculptural element at the pier entrance, additional seating and lighting, increased berthing area and improved shelter at the pier head. Large format steps double as informal seating, providing a relaxing space to view the foreshore across the water.

Facilities and features included:

- T-shaped pier head with seating and shelter
- Widened concrete abutment to adjoining seawall
- Entrance public art/sculpture
- Respite seating along length of pier
- Motion sensor lighting at 30m spacing
- Gangway to fixed low landings either side of pier head
- Large format seating on eastern edge of pier head
- Emergency vehicle turning area at pier head
- Alignment of pier to continue on from Pier Street



Graphic visualisation of pier Option 2 T-shaped pier head. *Cardno Victoria*

### *Option 3: Angled pier head*

A concrete pier with an angled pier head creating a visually unique pier that offers more space for recreational fishing, additional shade and improved seating options. This option is aligned with Pier Street, with the pier head angled towards the offshore artificial reef balls to maintain an achievable casting distance.

Facilities and features included:

- Angled end of pier with seating and shelter
- Widened concrete abutment to adjoining seawall
- Entrance and pier head public art/sculpture
- Respite seating along length of pier
- Motion sensor lighting at 30m spacing
- Gangway to 24m fixed low landing on western pier head
- Large format seating on eastern edge of pier head
- Ramp to lower platform on eastern pier head
- Emergency vehicle turning area at pier head



Graphic visualisation of pier Option 3 Angled pier head. *Cardno Victoria*