



# Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan

Community Engagement Summary

March 2024



## Acknowledgement of Country

Victoria's network of parks and reserves form the core of Aboriginal cultural landscapes, which have been modified over many thousands of years of occupation. They are reflections of how Aboriginal people engaged with their world and experienced their surroundings and are the product of thousands of generations of economic activity, material culture and settlement patterns. The landscapes we see today are influenced by the skills, knowledge and activities of Aboriginal land managers. Parks Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of these cultural landscapes, recognising their continuing connection to Victoria's parks and reserves and their ongoing role in caring for Country.

**Authorised and published by Parks Victoria**  
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**Cover image:** Mornington Main Pier looking towards the Yacht Club. Credit Parks Victoria.





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## Introduction

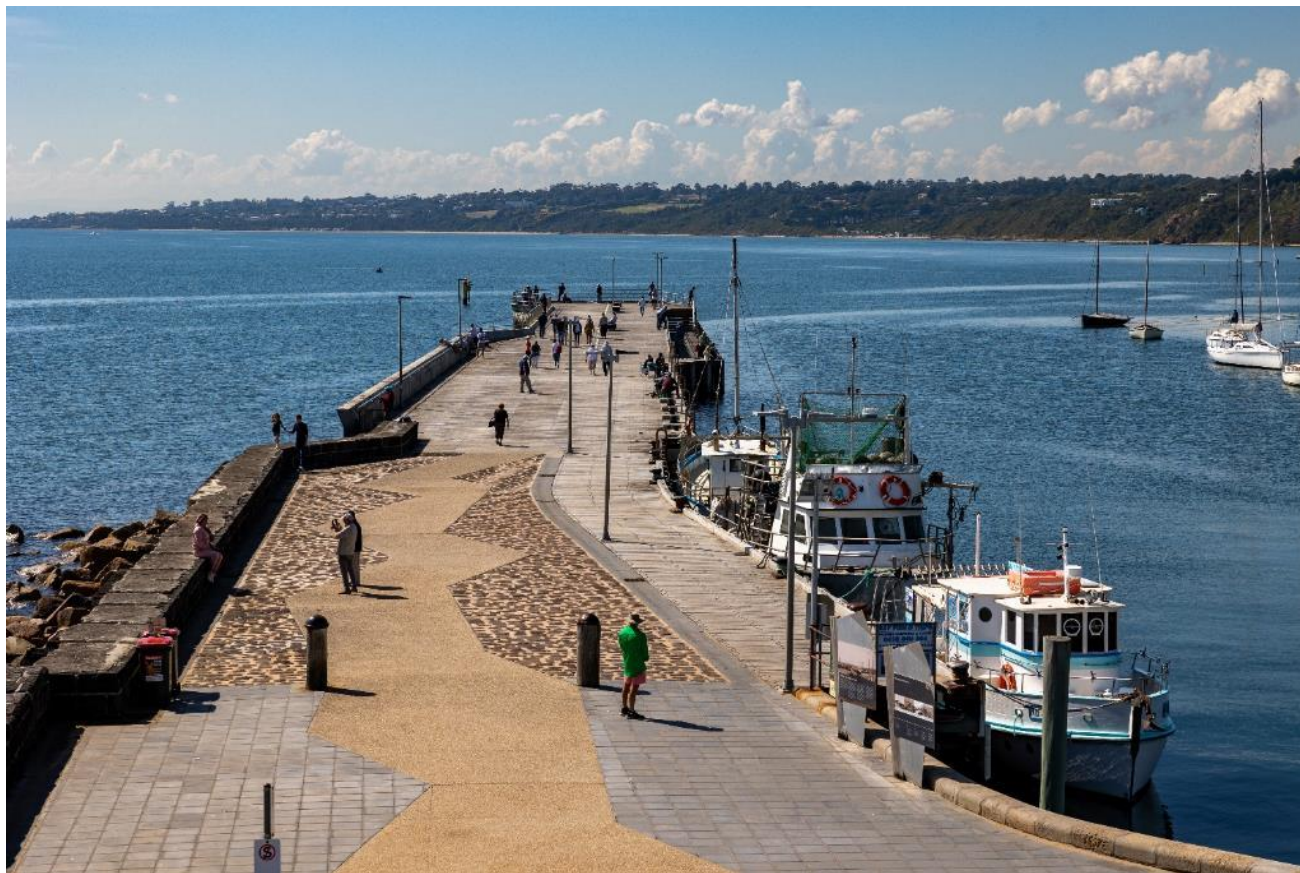


Image 1: People enjoying the pier activities such as fishing, walking, and sightseeing, with boats berthed alongside the pier. Credit: Parks Victoria

The Local Port Area plan focuses on enhancing on-water activities, with consideration for current commercial and recreational demands while anticipating future needs. The preparation of the plan involved the review of existing plans and condition reports, analysis of current and future demand, along with stakeholder and community engagement to identify the key values, themes, and future opportunities for Mornington Harbour.

### Consultation approach

A consultation strategy was developed by Parks Victoria that outlined the ways people could provide input into the local port area plan. The consultation aimed to gather specific feedback on the proposed changes and solutions outlined in the draft plan.

Community engagement was undertaken between 10 November and 8 December 2023.

Participants participated online (via Engage Victoria), via email (to [engage@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@parks.vic.gov.au)) or by calling 13 19 63.

In mid-2023, prior to developing the draft plan, Parks Victoria engaged key stakeholders to understand the current usage, challenges, aspirations, and ideas for the local port area. The conversations were positively received with stakeholders showing interest in the project. Key stakeholder group findings can be found on the

Parks Victoria website  
[www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects).

## Participation

Altogether, there were 2,903 page views to the Engage Victoria page during the consultation period, and 66 survey responses received in person and online.

Four in person meetings were held with key stakeholders and seven written submissions received from stakeholders and community members.

While key stakeholders and online participants were welcome to provide written input, participants were asked to complete a survey. This included demographic questions. This showed mostly local participants, more men than women, and most respondents over 50 years of age.

## About this report

The purpose of this report is to summarise the findings from the 2023 community consultation on the draft Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan.

All feedback and ideas presented in this report were collected during consultation activities or via the Engage Victoria webpage. All input has been given equal consideration and has not been weighted or adjusted. The findings in this report reflect the views of participants.

Findings have not been edited for accuracy and do not necessarily reflect the beliefs or position of Parks Victoria.

## Reading this report - limitations

As with all consultation processes and reporting analysis, some considerations should be acknowledged when reading the report.

People who participated in the consultation process self-selected to take part. Therefore, the feedback in this report does not necessarily reflect the views of a representative sample of the community. Some participants chose to provide feedback via online submission, without providing demographic details. Therefore, we do not have demographic details for all participants.

The graphs and figures in this report are generated from the quantitative survey questions only (selecting from the choices provided). At times they equal more than 100 percent. This is because participants were able to select more than one choice. The total number of participants for each figure or graph is included in the caption using the shorthand 'n='. Where needed, quotations have been amended for spelling and grammar but are otherwise unchanged.

## Ways to participate

Participants could participate online (via Engage Victoria), in person, via email (to [engage@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@parks.vic.gov.au)), by calling 13 1963.

## Promotion

The consultation phase was promoted online and through printed materials. This included:

- Emails sent to people who have subscribed for updates and interested stakeholders
- Project website and media story
- Social media by Parks Victoria
- On-site signage promoting engagement
- Posters about the project



We want to hear your thoughts on a draft plan to guide the future use and management of the Mornington Harbour Local Port Area.

Tell us your aspirations for a better future maritime facility and give us your views on options proposed in the draft plan.

Scan the QR code to view the draft plan and submit feedback – open until 8 December 2023.



Visit [engage.vic.gov.au](https://engage.vic.gov.au)

☎ 13 1963  
[parks.vic.gov.au](https://parks.vic.gov.au)



## Online survey and submission

The engagement survey was hosted on Engage Victoria for four weeks. The survey questions were designed to capture the following information.

1. Sentiments towards the three options proposed and overall feedback on the draft plan.
2. Demographic data including age, gender, residential postcode and reason, frequency, and duration of visits.





Image 2: People meeting at Mornington local port area. Credit: Parks Victoria

## Summary of findings

Through the community consultation we sought specific feedback on the scaled solutions proposed in the draft plan to address key issues and challenges in creating a better future the Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan.

Participants told us they would like to ensure the Mornington Harbour Local Port Area is a cherished gathering place offering stunning views, diverse recreational activities, and a strong sense of connection and well-being. To preserve and enhance this area for future generations is a top priority.

There was also focus on addressing the interests of various user groups, particularly regarding activities like 'walking and sightseeing', using the local facilities (yacht club and restaurant) and swimming.

Participants told us they place high value on protecting the marine environment and wanted to ensure potential impacts of proposed options are carefully considered.

Many participants identified the area is of cultural and historical significance and there is a desire to preserve and enhance ways people can engage with these values further.

Finding a balance between development and maintaining the area's unique maritime character is a challenge for the community, with conflicting views on the level of change that should be implemented.

The commercial ferry opportunity is seen as a positive development by many, but there are concerns about over commercialisation and the lack of supporting infrastructure to accommodate increased pressures on the area likely to arise from this use.

Of the three options presented, Option 2 was the most preferred design with 58% of survey respondents agreeing that it will improve Mornington Harbour. Option 3 follows it closely with 53% support, while Option 1 is considered least likely to improve the area, with only 41% support.

While some participants believe Option 1 maintains the existing features well, others feel it does not go far enough to address issues or meet future needs and concerned about the loss of the swing moorings.

Some people expressed apprehension about Option 3's proposed jetty extension potentially impeding on boat access through the fairway and impacting the overall character and utilisation of the area.

People are excited for the restored access to Fishermans jetty with its rebuild confirmed in all three options.

Boaters are concerned about the safety of users and vessels during strong winds.

Some people are concerned that any significant interventions may solely benefit boaters' interests and do not consider potential impacts on the environment.

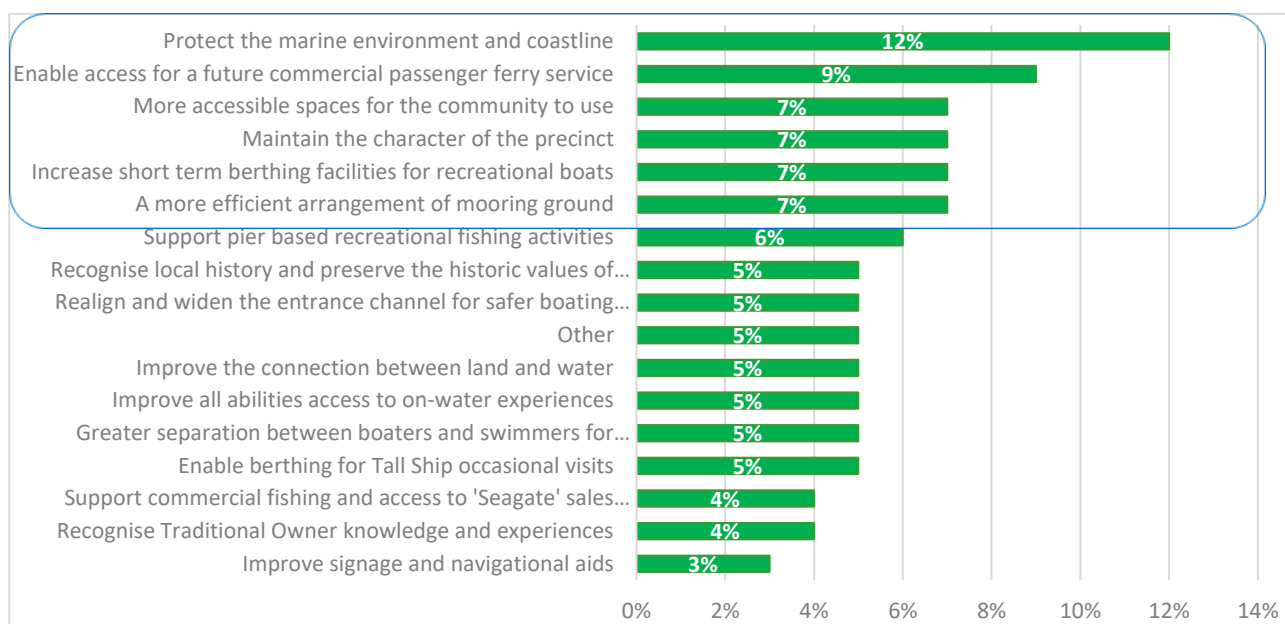
## Survey results

### Community Values

Respondents were asked to tell us what is important to them in creating a better Mornington Harbour, with a specific emphasis on the on-water components. In summary, the need to protect the marine environment was positioned as the top priority (12%). Followed closely by the need to enable access for future commercial passenger ferry service (9%). Improvements to enable more community access, increasing short-term berthing facilities and a more efficient arrangement of the mooring group, along with maintaining the character of the precinct were rated equally third priority for the community (7% for each of these four aspects).

Where people selected 'other' they talked about the provision for scuba diving access (e.g., ramps and greater separation between commercial vessels), the need for a breakwater, improved parking particularly for boat trailers, better berthing for boats and a safer area for all to use.

**Figure 1: Aspects most important to the community in creating a better Mornington Harbour**



### Draft plan feedback

In this section of the survey, we asked people how they felt about the three options proposed in the draft plan to address key issues and challenges in creating an improved Mornington Harbour. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with the statement *"Option X will improve Mornington Harbour"*.

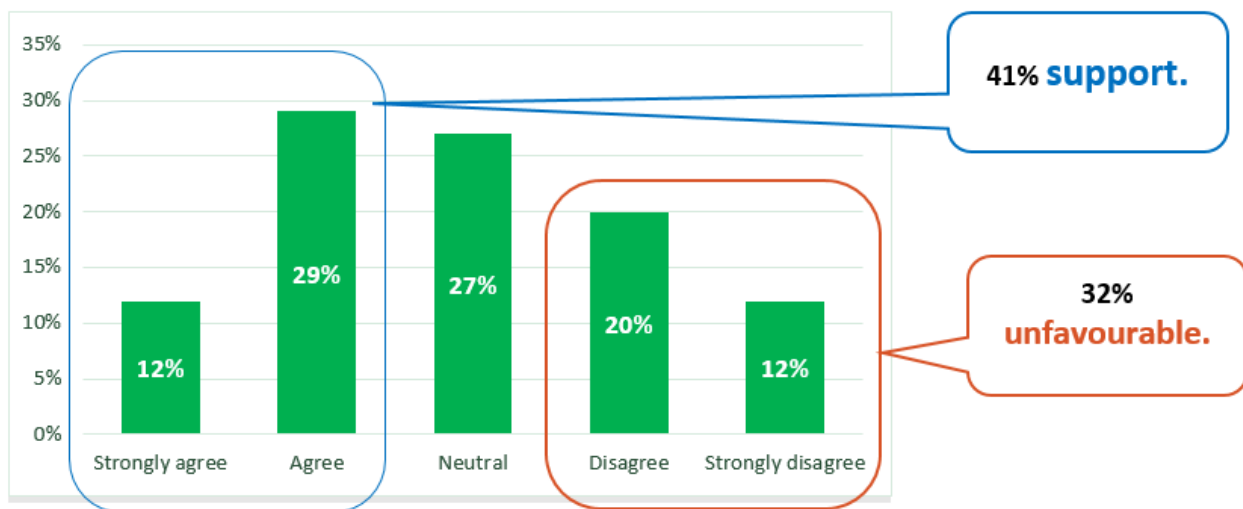
Respondents were able to expand on their selections to help us better understand how they felt about each option, with prompts to explain what they like, don't like or what could be improved. The results are represented in the below graph, along with a selection of comments provided by survey respondents.



## Option 1

When asked to what extent people agree with the following statement “*Option 1 will be a good improvement to Mornington Harbour*” - **41% supported** this statement. While **32% did not** support this statement. Almost one-third (27%) were neutral indicating that this option was considered to have minimal potential improvement value. See Figure 2 and Table 1.

**Figure 2: Level of agreement with the statement - Option 1 will improve Mornington Harbour (n.59)**



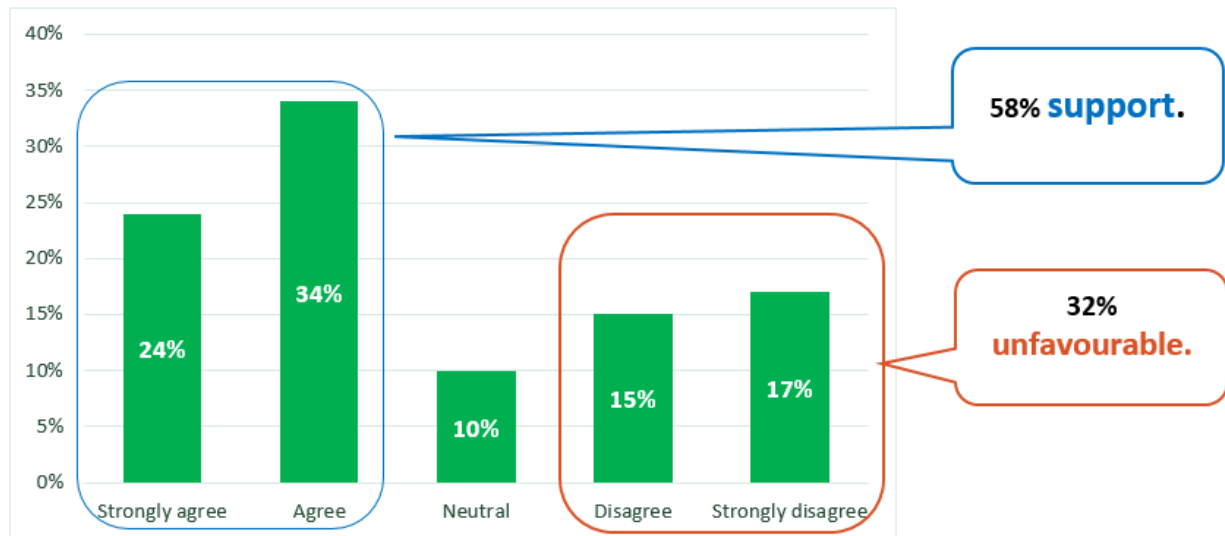
**Table 1: Comments from survey respondents around Option 1**

<b>Agree / Strongly Agree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Maintains existing footprint, does not over commercialise or overdevelop the area.”</li> <li>“This is the most minimalist option that restores use and encourages more activity whilst preserving the look and feel.”</li> <li>“Least expensive option.”</li> <li>“But would like – more consideration of need to integrate ‘on water’ and ‘on land’ components.”</li> </ul>
<b>Neutral</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Insufficient change to improve the problems.”</li> </ul>
<b>Disagree / Strongly disagree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Recreational fishing may become compromised by pier becoming too busy.”</li> <li>“Restores Fishermans Jetty but no further functional improvements.”</li> <li>“To make the harbor safe we need more density in accommodation of vessels.”</li> <li>“Does not address.... protection from north westerly storms.”</li> <li>“Changing like for like does not allow for future needs.”</li> <li>“Ferry will not be able to berth during strong Westerly or Northly winds.”</li> </ul>

## Option 2

When asked to what extent people agree with the following statement “Option 2 will be a good improvement to Mornington Harbour” (page 9 of the draft plan), **58% supported** this statement. While **32% did not** support this statement. See Figure 3 and Table 2

**Figure 3: Level of agreement with the statement - Option 2 will improve Mornington Harbour (n.59)**



**Table 2: Comments from survey respondents around Option 2**

Agree / Strongly Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Like how the new jetty will allow more boats to be kept on moorings.”</li> <li>“The addition of commercial berthing facilities and marine activities is an opportunity to make the best use of the area available.... will be visually rewarding but also commercially positive for business owners.”</li> <li>“Provides more berthing while maintaining character of the area.”</li> <li>“A ferry would be fantastic for tourism and the community.”</li> <li>“Excellent additional capacity and positioning of the second arm on Fishermans Jetty boosts berthing utility and recreational fishing. Would add generally to the 'seagate' feel of the precinct.”</li> <li>“Provides better protection for the public boat ramp.”</li> <li>“This is the best option as it is the most space efficient in terms of consolidating vessel berthing and further there is a reduced cost when it comes to construction.”</li> <li>There is a need for a Wave Screen on the outer arm and a need for pylons for the berths on the inner berths on the Fisherman’s Jetty.</li> </ul>
Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Need to know more information such as estimated cost and schedule.”</li> </ul>

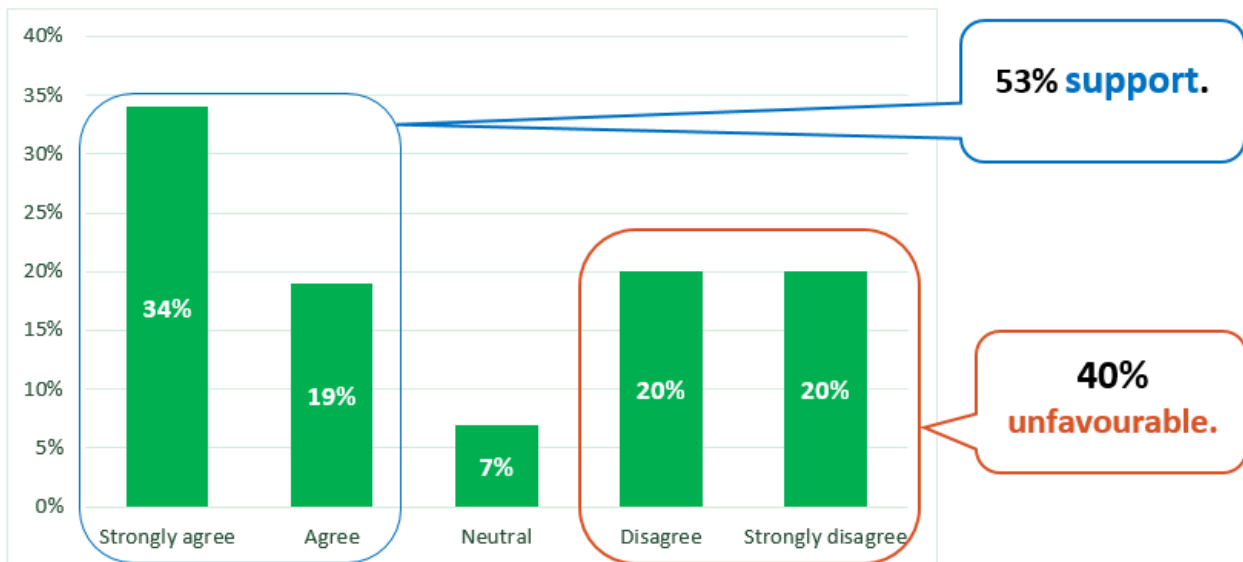


<b>Disagree / Strongly disagree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Overdevelopment of the area and potential to reduce the number of swing moorings.”</li> <li>“Limited space for large boats. Does not expect to accommodate boats that exceed 10 metres.”</li> <li>“Recreational craft to have a defined channel to sea on East side of moorings.”</li> </ul>
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### Option 3

When asked to what extent people agree with the following statement “Option 3 will be a good improvement to Mornington Harbour” - **53% supported** this statement. While **40% did not** support this statement. See Figure 4 and Table 3.

**Figure 4: Level of agreement with the statement - Option 3 will improve Mornington Harbour (n.59)**



**Table 3: Comments from survey respondents around Option 3**

<b>Agree / Strongly Agree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“This accommodates everything – only problem is the increased load on parking and road access through Main Street.”</li> <li>“... position of the new parallel jetty would greatly benefit not only the berth holders but also the general public having greater access to the visiting tall ships.”</li> <li>The alignment of the jetty would reduce damage to the berthed yachts on the northerly gales. This design would make the Mornington Harbor a safe Harbor to seek refuge in not only for the berth yachts but also any boat seeking shelter.</li> <li>“Clearly defines the fairway boundary, accommodates more berths and safe access via walkway to many boats that are currently inaccessible on swing moorings in adverse weather.”</li> <li>“Provided improvements stop removing all the sand on Shire beach and put it all on Mothers Beach.”</li> </ul>
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Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Allows use of the safe space in the harbour ... for smaller ... and larger boats that currently have to use the outer northern and eastern areas of the mooring ground.”</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“The alignment of the new parallel berthing pier would likely reduce recreational fishing utility due to vessels continually interrupting fishing during transit.”</li> </ul>
Disagree / Strongly Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Could change the look and feel of the harbour.”</li> <li>“The new jetty will channel the wind-driven waves to the South West and cause significant damage to infrastructure and vessels.”</li> <li>“Not viable for mooring of sailing vessels. Loss of a significant proportion of the swing mooring grid.”</li> <li>“I am concerned about the environmental impacts of such significant re-development and the flow on consequences to community members and tourists.”</li> </ul>

## Additional feedback

Below is a selection of verbatim comments provided by survey respondents.

- “No mention of diver access.”
- “The impact of North to West winds will not allow safe berthing with any of the options.”
- “Create a defined channel for recreational vessels using the free boat ramp to navigate safely out to sea. Small recreational craft should not be forced towards the Mornington Pier. In the event of a strong SW wind and squalls this area becomes dangerous. .... Small vessels should continue to be encouraged to move alongside the East side of the moorings and be provided a defined channel marked by pilons to separate them from swimmers and kayakers keeping everyone safe.”
- “Do not over commercialise and do not expand and build a marina. maintain the current vibe and amenity of this local harbour”
- “Options 2 and 3 will increase pressure on parking and road access.”
- “I hope that the materials used reflect the natural beauty of this area, flimsy wooden and plastic handrails and walkways detract from an aesthetically pleasing place.”
- “This is a fantastic opportunity to redevelop this beautiful area to build something that will be valued by the future users (my kids and grandkids) as I have valued it.”
- “Please focus on sustainability and environmental improvement. Include education about marine ecosystem and Aboriginal care for Country.”
- “Mornington is one of very few safe havens on the eastern side of the bay and the Harbor needs to accommodate this emergency role.”
- “Suggest the old fishing /boating (mooring) jetty that is to be demolished is replaced with new non timber design such as steel piles on floating walkway – look for more fit-for-purpose materials.”

Comments worth noting that fall outside the scope of this project.

- “The recreational boat ramp needs to be made safe for all weather retrieval of previously launched vessels.”



- *“The existing pier needs to be extended utilising wave breakers to the East to create a safe harbour. Without that anything else especially a large ferry berth and access point is just dangerous.”*
- *“Any future plans need to add safe harbour marina berths.”*
- *“Limited mention of effects on beach of each option.”*

## Written submissions

A total of seven (7) written submissions were received through the Parks Victoria Engage Mailbox or directly to the Parks Victoria project team via email. These were received from groups including:

- Mornington Yacht Club
- Mornington Environment Association
- Port Phillip Ferries
- Mooring holders
- Local community members

## What's next

All feedback collected from the survey, stakeholder meetings and written submissions has been considered by Parks Victoria to inform the final Mornington Local Port Area Plan.

Parks Victoria thanks all those who have contributed their ideas and feedback.

## Further information

For further information about the project or to subscribe to receive email updates visit the dedicated [project page](https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects) [www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects](https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects) or email [engage@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@parks.vic.gov.au). You can also call us on 13 1963.

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