



Mornington Harbour

Local Port Area Plan

March 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Mornington Harbour is on Bunurong Sea Country. Aboriginal cultural landscapes form the core of Victoria's network of parks and reserves and have been modified over many thousands of years of occupation. They are reflections of how Aboriginal people engage with their world and experience 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 ongoing role in caring for Country.



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Cover image: Mornington Harbour Precinct, July 2023

Executive summary

Located on Bunurong Sea Country, Mornington Harbour is one of Port Phillip's iconic yachting and boating destinations. It plays a significant role in supporting commercial fishing, marine businesses, recreation and tourism.

Parks Victoria has developed a Local Port Area Plan (plan) for the harbour and adjoining water users to ensure it continues to be a safe and thriving maritime destination for years to come.

Local Port Area Plans are delivered under the *Sustainable Local Ports Framework 2021* to help the Victorian Government prioritise investment and deliver critical local port infrastructure that works in a way which is fair for all Victorians. The Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan seeks to celebrate Mornington Harbour as a working port with a diversity of uses, while responding to existing and future demands to create safe and navigable water for all harbour users into the future.

The plan provides direction for the replacement of Fishermans Jetty, and proposes an additional new jetty arm, defines channels within the harbour, improved fairway access to the boat ramp, and changes to the swing mooring ground.

The plan is based on comprehensive technical investigations and studies, along with stakeholder and community engagement. The plan responds to identified aspirations, challenges and provides a place-based response to enhance Mornington Harbour.

The proposals in this plan will inform funding bids and management actions through a future staged implementation approach. This will ensure the plan considers current investment and enables timely response to future changes.

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1 Introduction

Parks Victoria is appointed as the port manager for the local port of Port Phillip and as the Committee of Management for Mornington Harbour (including Mornington Pier). This plan has been developed to address the on-water components of Mornington Harbour.

1.1 Local Port Area Plan

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 a review of existing plans and condition reports, analysis of current and future demand, and further technical assessments (e.g. heritage and marine ecology). Refer to *Appendix – Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan Background Technical Report 2024* for a summary of these reports.

1.2 Study area

Mornington Harbour is located on the eastern side of Port Phillip, situated north-west of the Mornington town centre. It is bounded by Schnapper Point to the west which extends to Mornington Pier. The eastern side of the harbour has beaches including Mothers Beach stretching to Scout Beach and Shire Hall Beach as shown in Figure 1.

The harbour precinct is a bustling hub of various commercial and recreational activities. Figure 2 shows the study area for this plan and the existing features within the harbour. There are several notable features:

Mornington Pier which provides wave protection to the harbour, berthing for large vessels, and access for crowds and events

- Swing moorings
- Car parking which connects visitors to Schnapper Point Kiosk and Fishermans Jetty
- Mornington Yacht Club (MYC) which houses The Rocks restaurant, a slipway, facilities to support the Sailability program (a program providing sailing access for all abilities), and the yacht club's boat ramp
- Public boat ramp and finger jetties connected to a trailer parking area.

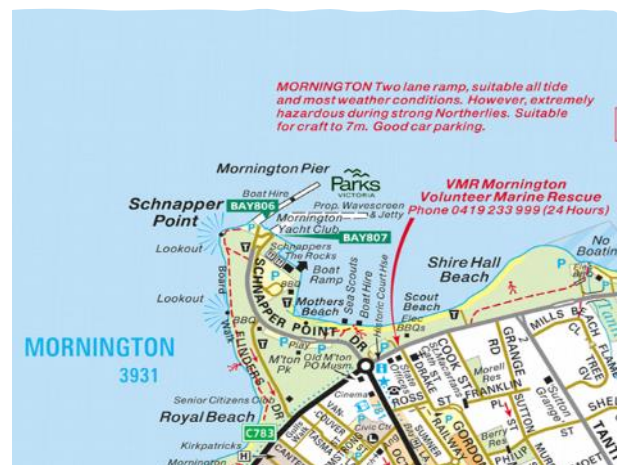


Figure 1- Location of Mornington Harbour (Melway Map 104, 2024)

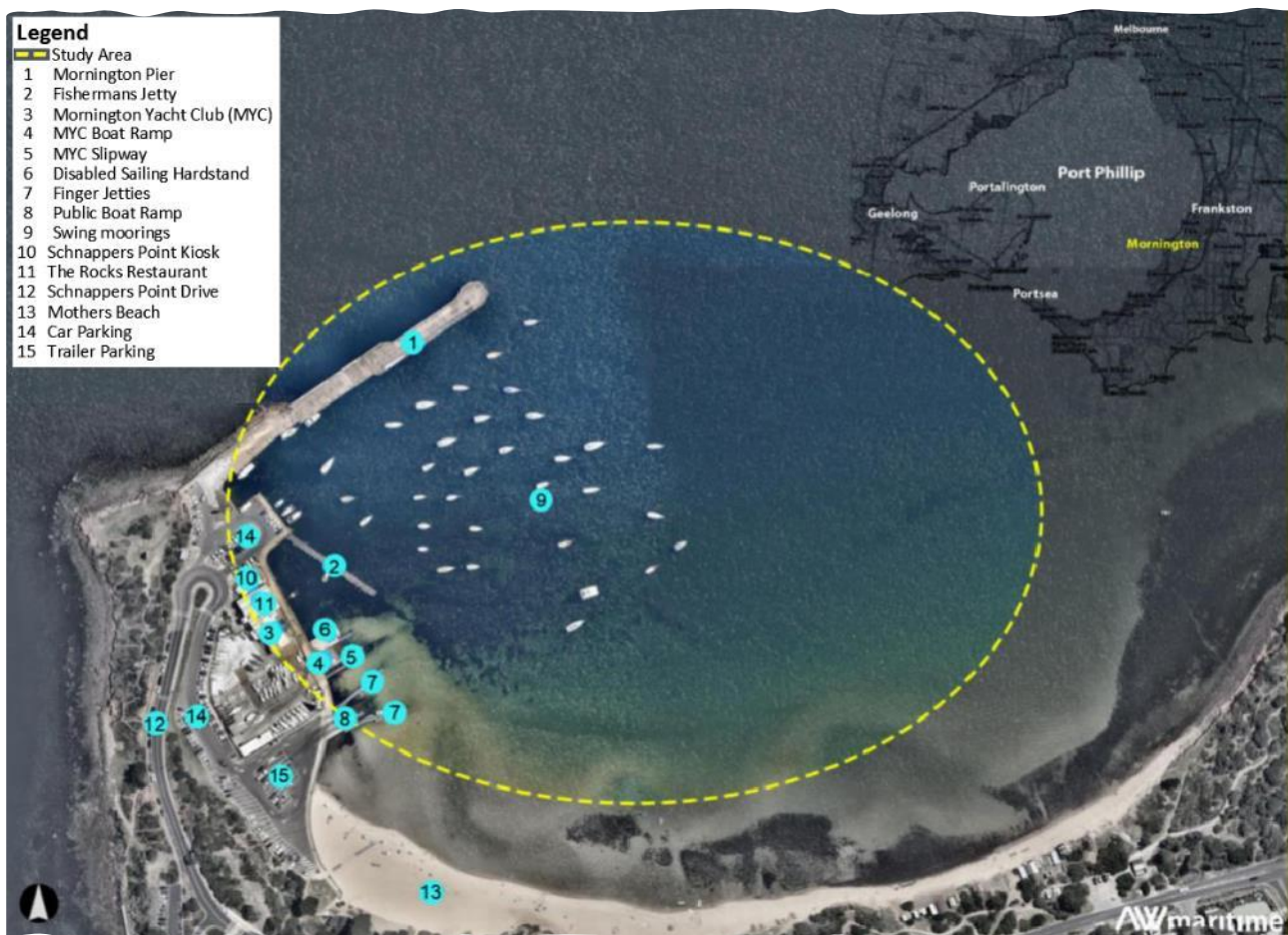


Figure 2- Mornington Harbour Study Area and Context Map of Port Phillip (Aerial image: Nearmap 2022)

1.3 Strategic context

The Victorian Government is dedicated to developing a long-term strategy for the future management and maintenance of local port infrastructure. This is being implemented through the *Sustainable Local Ports Framework 2021* (framework) that will help manage, maintain, and prioritise funding for these assets where it is needed the most.

The framework provides a consistent planning and decision-making pathway to support wider precinct planning through local port area plans. Four principles will be applied to prioritise future upgrades and improvements. These include Local Economy and Job Growth, Tourism and Recreation, Emergency Response Capabilities, and Community and Cultural Value.

1.4 Policy context

The objective and principle of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* centres around the preservation and maintenance of the marine and coastal environment, with a focus on ensuring its longevity for future generations. In line with this, the *Marine and Coastal Policy 2020* (Policy) has been established as a roadmap with a 15-year vision that envisions a 'healthy, dynamic and biodiverse marine and coastal environment that is valued in its own right and that benefits the Victorian community, now and in the future'. It serves as a strategic guide for planning processes, management approaches, as well as decision-making protocols.

Furthermore, the Policy is supported by the *Marine and Coastal Strategy 2022* (Strategy). This strategic framework outlines a series of prioritised actions to be undertaken over the course of the next five years to effectively achieve the objectives set forth in the Policy. The Strategy recognises that formal and informal collaboration is required for effective and integrated delivery. The Victorian Government, Traditional Owners, marine and coastal managers, communities, and individuals all have important roles and responsibilities in the joint implementation of this Strategy.

The Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan utilises both the *Marine and Coastal Policy 2020* and *Marine and Coastal Strategy 2022* as reference documents to lead the management of Victoria's marine and coastal environment.

1.5 Purpose

The Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan sets the vision, direction and opportunities for maritime infrastructure in the harbour. It provides a high-level pathway to realising a range of regional benefits and creating value through balancing recreational and commercial uses for the harbour. The plan has been developed to protect the area's working port identity while celebrating its role in providing significant on-water recreation.

In addition to these on-water considerations, the plan acknowledges the importance of on-land uses to ensure an integrated approach with adjacent land managers. On land management is addressed in the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, *Mornington Coastal Management Plan (April 2015)*.

1.6 Vision

Mornington Harbour will provide a diverse balance of commercial and recreational maritime uses, while building on the rich history of the Harbour as a working port. It will ensure safety for all users with consideration of future needs.



Figure 3 – Moored boats at Mornington Harbour (Parks Victoria, 2024)

2 Local Port Area Plan development approach

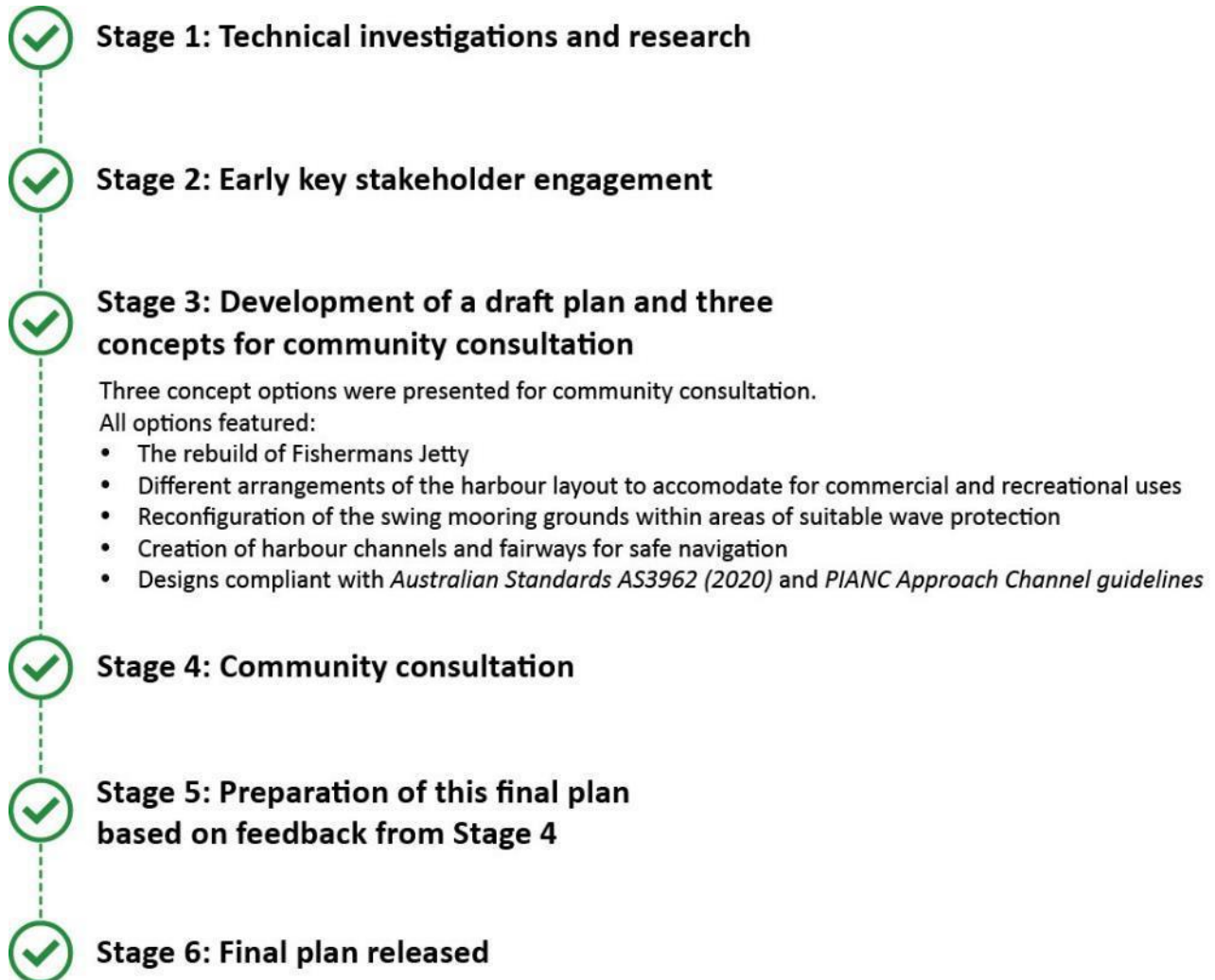


Figure 4 – Project schedule (Parks Victoria, 2024)

2.1 Community consultation overview

The Plan was overseen by a Project Control Group (PCG) and supported by a Project Reference Group (PRG). The PRG comprised of representatives from Parks Victoria, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Better Boating Victoria, the Department of Transport and Planning, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, and Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC). BLCAC was unable to continue providing input into the development of the plan however Parks Victoria will continue to work with BLCAC on future planning and projects in this local port area.

Stakeholder and community input was sought at key stages in the development of this plan.

- Stage 1 (July 2023): Key stakeholders and user groups were engaged to gather insights around current uses, issues, and ideas to help inform a draft plan. The outcomes of the Stage 1 consultation are summarised in the document *Stakeholder engagement key findings (July 2023)*.
- Stage 2 (10 November to 8 December 2023): The purpose of this consultation was to seek community views on three proposed options and the draft plan to inform the final plan. Feedback was captured through survey participation on the Engage Vic digital engagement platform, written submissions, and one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders.

Community feedback showed support and a preference for 'Option 2'. Following a review of feedback, additional changes were made to Option 2 to ensure the final plan reflected community and stakeholders aspirations.

For a detailed summary of the insights and perspectives gathered during this consultation process, refer to the *Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan Community Engagement Summary 2024* via <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects>

2.2 Identifying the existing issues

Based on a review of existing conditions and consultation with stakeholders, the following issues have been identified:

- Issue 1: No defined entrance channel to support navigational safety.
- Issue 2: Multiple-use area including alongside berthing and recreational fishing
- Issue 3: Limited piled berthing alongside seawall
- Issue 4: Fishermans Jetty currently closed due to poor structural condition (loss of berthing)
- Issue 5: Overlapping swing moorings without grid pattern
- Issue 6: Historical mooring area exposed to northerly and westerly waves
- Issue 7: Dolphin piles are a potential navigational hazard
- Issue 8: Boats navigating to boat ramp may conflict with swimmers closer to shore

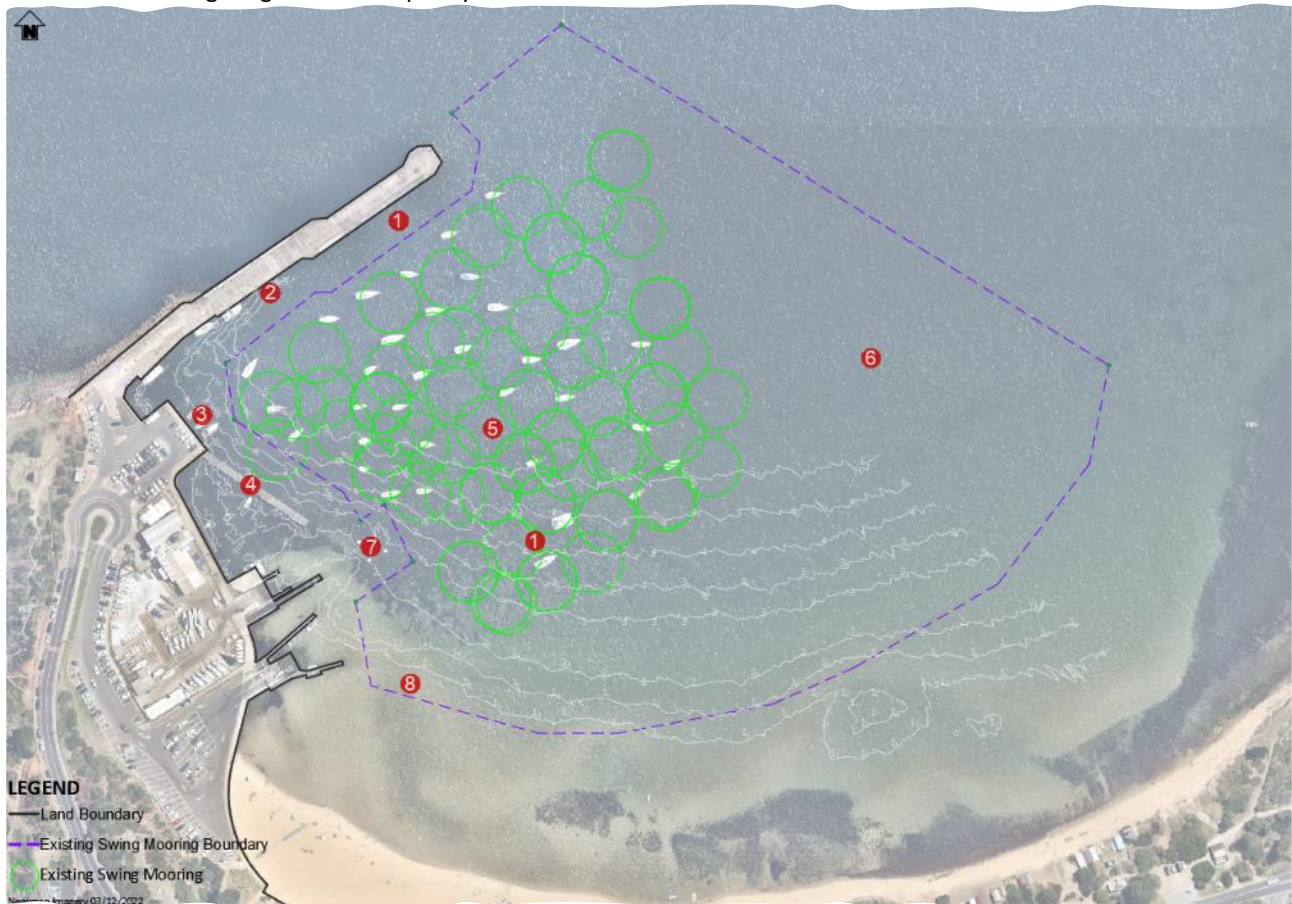


Figure 5 - Mornington Harbour Existing Issues (AW Maritime, 2024)

2.3 The design criteria

The design criteria outlined below was implemented to ensure that the plan addresses current site challenges and considers the future requirements of the primary users in the area.

Fishermans Jetty:

- Reconstruction of jetty on same alignment and length
- Accommodate perpendicular permit berthing as per previous arrangement
- Design vessels shall be based on water depth available – maximum 6m vessels for inside berths and larger vessels with deeper drafts on the outside berths
- Provide areas for pier-based fishing

Berthing:

- Provide capacity for berthing and turning a passenger ferry when required
- Provide berthing for a tall ship, specifically the *Enterprise* (length 27.0m, beam 6.1m, draft 3.0m) and *Alma Doepel* (length 35.4m, beam 8.1m, draft 2.3m) which may visit several times per year for a short stay
- Continue to provide permit berthing for commercial operators as a priority to ensure the longevity of the harbour as a dynamic working port

Channels and Fairways:

- Ensure all channels and fairways meet the requirements of *Australian Standards AS3962 (2002) Marina design* based on the design vessels for each area
- Ensure MYC boat ramp, MYC slipway and public boat ramp have improved on water access

Swing moorings:

- Moorings to have a vessel length limit of 15m
- Powerboats and yachts to be separated within the mooring grid
- Smaller vessels shall be accommodated close to shore and larger vessels further offshore
- Moorings to be provided only in areas where wave climate may be suitable
- Consider environmentally friendly swing moorings

3 The proposed future use and function for Mornington Harbour

3.1 Features of the plan

The design features of the plan includes:

- **A replacement of Fishermans Jetty maintaining the existing alignment and length.** The replacement jetty design allows for 6m and 10m length vessels berthing perpendicular to the jetty and vessels accessible via ladders - the same arrangement as the existing jetty.
- **A proposed jetty arm leading to a fixed height low landing.** The jetty arm designed to meet the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards for gradients. The low landing would accommodate berthing for a commercial passenger ferry and 10m length vessels (on the shore side of the proposed jetty arm).
- **Creation of two entrance channels to enable safe navigation** from the MPSC boat ramp, MYC boat ramp and all existing and new berths to open water beyond the harbour.
- **Improve visibility of the dolphin piles.**
- **Creation of fairways in the harbour in accordance with Australian Standards.** This includes a turning circle in accordance with PIANC (Permanent International Association of Navigational Congresses) Approach Channel guidelines. The harbour layout would be based on the design vessels discussed in the *Appendix – Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan Background Technical Report 2024* including a passenger ferry and Tall Ships.
- **Redefining and re-gridding the current mooring ground.** A depth of more than 1.5m CD (Chart Datum) is proposed for mooring with shallow draft vessels located closest to the shore.
- **Retention of the loading bay** so it can continue supporting the aquaculture industry.

The vessel matrix below outlines the berthing and mooring capacity for each part of the harbour.

Table 1 – Vessel Matrix for Mornington Harbour

Vessel matrix						
	Fishermans Jetty	Proposed Jetty Arm	Main Pier	Seawall	Swing Moorings	Total
6m vessels	15	-	-	-	-	15
10m vessels	11	12	-	-	9	32
15m vessels	-	-	3	4	26	33
Ferry	-	1	-	-	-	1
Tall ship	-	-	1	-	-	1
Total	26	13	4	4	35	82



KEY FEATURES

- 1 Provision for large commercial ferry to berth alongside new jetty arm, possibly the jetty height similar to low landing to explore DDA compliance
- 2 Entrance channel established in accordance with Australian Standards AS3962 (2020) for use by proposed ferry, Tall Ship and Fishermans Jetty vessels
- 3 Secondary entrance channel established for 8m vessels in accordance with Australian Standards AS3962 (2020) for use by MPSC boat ramp and MYC vessels
- 4 Fishermans Jetty like for like replacement (funded) on existing alignment and to existing length

- 5 New lockable jetty (unfunded) for commercial vessels. Initial section of the arm will feature a fixed slope in accordance with DDA compliance.
- 6 Berthing for 6m design vessels
- 8 Berthing for 10m design vessels
- 9 Commercial berthing for 14m design vessels (current arrangement)
- 10 Swing mooring area where depth contour $>1.5\text{m}$ based on harbour bathymetry (Hydrographic Survey, Farren Land Surveys, August 2023). The area is gridded and restricted to areas of suitable wave protection.
- 11 Short-term berthing for Tall Ship alongside Mornington Pier

LEGEND

- Entrance Channel
- Swing Mooring Area
- Fishermans Jetty
- New Jetty
- Land Boundary
- P Swing Mooring (Powerboat)
- Y Swing Mooring (Yacht)

Figure 6 - Proposed future use and function of Mornington Harbour (AW Maritime, 2024)

4 Next steps

Over the last ten years there has been significant investment in the replacement and upgrade of Mornington Pier and landside infrastructure, with further funding for the replacement of Fishermans Jetty committed in the 2022-23 Victorian State Budget. Planning is underway to rebuild the jetty with its removal as a first step taking place in mid 2024.

The remaining proposals in this plan provide direction which will inform future investment and management actions.

Implementation of these proposals will be subject to further consultation with relevant stakeholders and other government bodies, and will be in compliance with planning and other statutory requirements.

The next priority will be progressing the changes to the channels and fairways, through the re-gridding of the swing mooring ground and the creation of a fairway for access to the boat ramp.

Appendix – Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan Background Technical Report

March 2024

1 Background

1.1 Land Tenure and Planning

The land located within the Mornington Harbour comprises Crown land. Mornington Harbour has two different committees of management:

- Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (MPSC): areas covering the public boat ramp, finger jetties, car parking, foreshore and land-based infrastructure including Mornington Yacht Club (MYC) and their buildings, yard, slipway, hardstand and yacht club boat ramp.
- Parks Victoria: Mornington Pier, Fishermans Jetty, swing moorings and the harbour area.

Parks Victoria is appointed as port manager of the local port of Port Phillip, with Mornington Harbour being a key destination within the local port. Parks Victoria is responsible for making sure port operations are safe, efficient and effective, managing port infrastructure, and preparing and implementing Safety and Environment Management Plans.

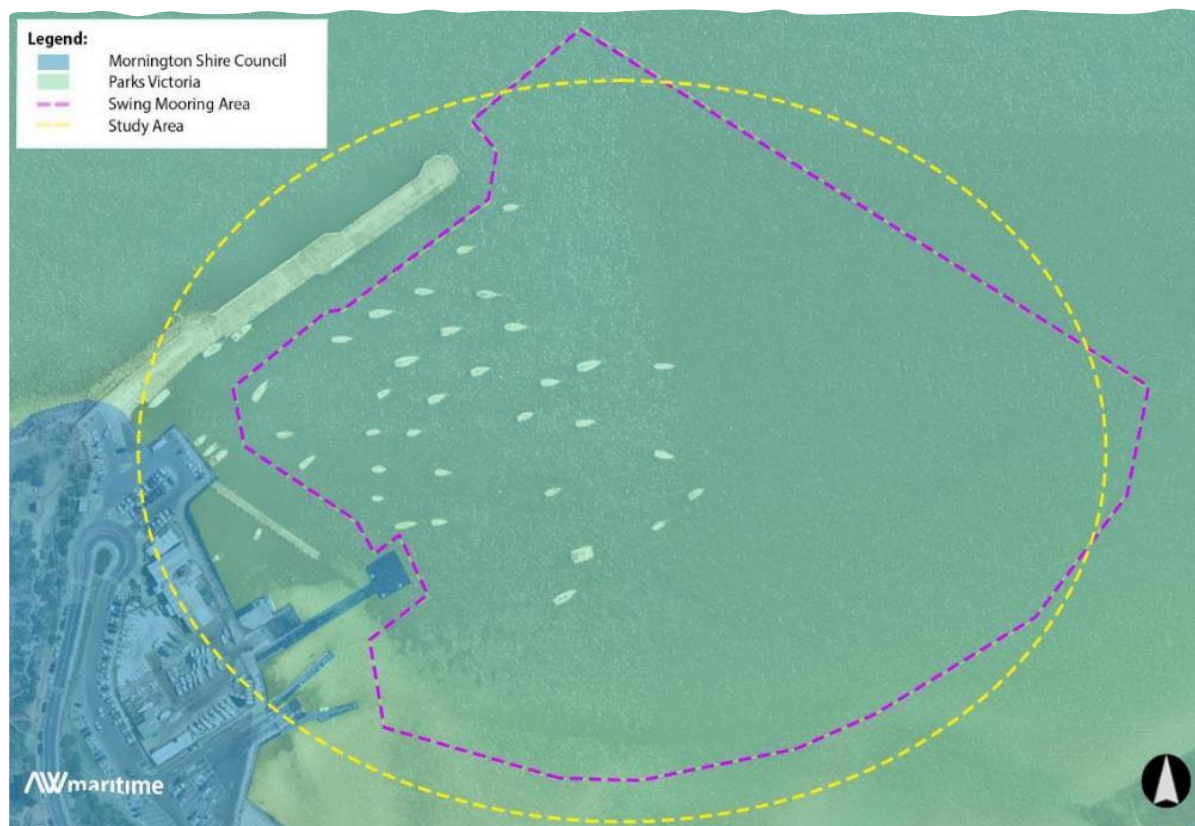


Figure 1 - Committees of Management (Aerial image: Nearmap 03/12/22)

The Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme applies to Mornington Harbour in the following ways:

- The harbour is in the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ).

- The area has an Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 25 – Port Phillip Coastal Area.
- Part of the pier and part of the foreshore are in a Heritage Overlay.
- The area is known as an area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.

1.2 Harbour history

Mornington Harbour occupies the traditional land and water of the Bunurong people of the East Kulin.

One of the first elements of the harbour to be constructed was a stone pier with timber platform in 1857. The pier was the main entry point into the Mornington township until road and rail alternatives were developed. It was used for the transport of people, goods, as well as passive recreational purposes.

A north arm was added to the pier in 1890. An L-shaped arm was added to the pier in 1905 to accommodate large steam ships and support thousands of visitors. By 1908, the pier reportedly became the social and economic heart of the Mornington Peninsula. The 1950s saw the extension of the pier to its current length. The original structure has been modified during the past 150 years and little of the original structure remains intact. However, these modifications do not detract from its historical significance and a heritage overlay covers the pier area. Between 2010 to 2015, the pier was fully reconstructed to provide contemporary facilities for activities including fishing, boating and diving. The closely piled timber wave attenuator has been replaced by vertical concrete wave screens incorporated into the pier which provides some wave protection to the harbour.



Figure 2 - Mornington Harbour's L-shaped Pier (Mornington & District Historical Society)

Mornington Yacht Club (MYC) was established in 1946 and facilities were originally located further north than the current MYC building. The 1960s represented a time of major expansion of the harbour as the MYC building, boat storage and parking areas were constructed through land reclamation works. A rock breakwater was also constructed underneath the shoreward end of the pier in 1964. This provided some protection to the boats moored in the harbour from waves coming from the west and southwest. The present MYC building was built in 1966. Several minor jetties located to the southeast of the MYC building are approximately 50 years old. In 2000, the MYC building and kiosk were completed.

In the early 1900s, a fishermen's jetty and shed existed alongside the Mornington Pier on the site where the yacht club now stands. The jetty supported both professional and amateur fishermen.

2 Existing Conditions

2.1 Local Port Features

Mornington Harbour is a key focus for commercial and recreational pursuits. Figure 3 - Existing Conditions of Mornington Harbour shows the condition of the harbour in June 2023 with photographs captured during a site visit around the harbour.

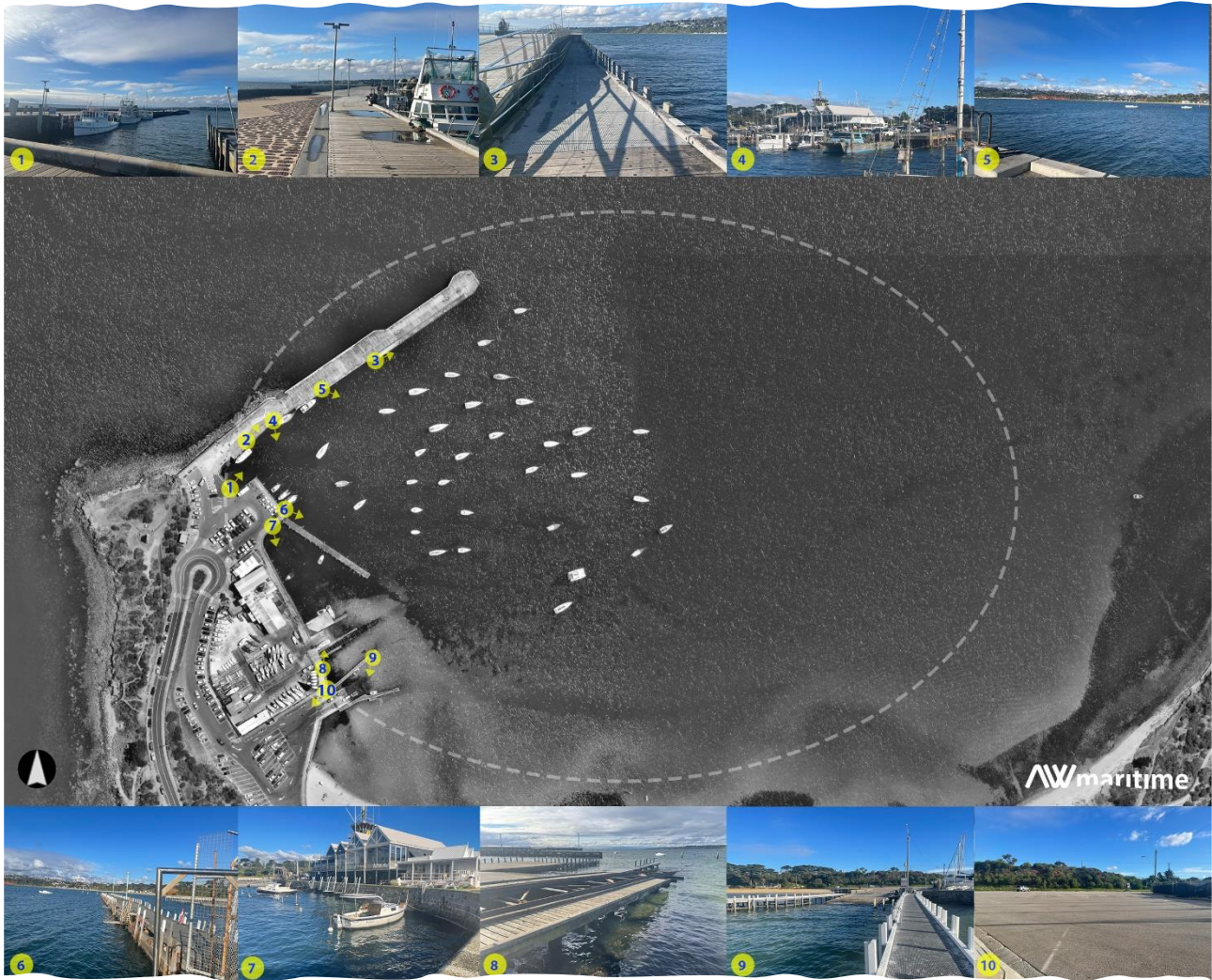


Figure 3 - Existing Conditions of Mornington Harbour (AW Maritime, 2023)

2.2 Metocean Conditions

The wave conditions in Port Phillip originate from wind-generated waves. During summer, the wind at Mornington comes predominantly from the south to southwest direction. During winter, when the wind is stronger, the wind comes predominantly from the north and the west. Prior to the concrete vertical wavescreens being installed along the length of the pier in 2015, the harbour was protected by a closely piled timber wave screen and rock placed under the inner section of the pier. However, this protection was in poor condition and the rock under the pier caused problems as it pushed the wave energy upwards which caused the deck planks to dislodge.

Australian Standards AS3962(2020) Marina design recommend that for small craft harbours to experience a suitable wave climate the significant wave height shall be less than 0.3m within the harbour for waves with less than a 2 second peak period. Wave modelling completed by Water Technology in 2008 showed for the Base Case Pier Wavescreen Option (concrete wave screens) there was great improvement in the harbour wave climate for the 1 year ARI wave height based for different wave directions. As a result of the modelling and the installation of the concrete wave screens, the vessels berthed in the harbour have benefited from the recent wave protection measures.

Sea level variations are caused by tide and meteorologically derived surges. The tidal range varies between 0.2m to 0.8m at Mornington Harbour, and storm surges can cause up to 0.2m-0.3m increases in mean sea level, and in extreme cases up to 0.5m or more.

2.3 Coastal Processes

Water Technology prepared a coastal processes assessment in 2008. They concluded the beach alignment at Mornington Harbour was relatively stable as there has been no trends towards accretion or erosion over the past 60 years. The harbour is bounded by rock and clay headlands which effectively creates a close cell system which prevents sediment from moving more than a few hundred metres in any direction. A modelling exercise concluded that the annual gross eastward sand transport was balanced by the gross westward sand transport, thus the net transport was 0m³/year prior to the installation of the concrete wavescreens.

Water Technology then predicted with the installation of the concrete wave screens and sheltering of the coastline in the harbour, the local sediment transport would result in minor erosion to the eastern end of Shire Hall Beach and accretion to Scout Beach. The beach profile of Mothers Beach was unlikely to be affected.

There have been two dredging programs of the boat ramp. The first dredging program placed the sand from the boat ramp on Mothers Beach on 2011. The most recent program was in March 2023, when the dredging program placed sand on Shire Hall Beach.

2.4 Hydrographic survey

Parks Victoria engaged Farren Land Surveys to complete a hydrographic survey of Mornington Harbour in August 2023. The survey provides the current seabed levels which will be used as part of the options development to ensure infrastructure is positioned with suitable draft for design vessels.

2.5 Marine environment

A marine ecological survey has been undertaken to inform the replacement of Fishermans Jetty. The survey builds on previous ecological assessments completed in the area. The survey noted that coastal processes have been modified since the construction of Mornington Pier. This has created somewhat sheltered conditions which allows the mooring of vessels but has also resulted in the establishment of extensive areas of seagrass, although cover is patchy. The two subtidal species found (*Heterozostera nigricaulis* and *Heterozostera tasmanica*) are listed as Endangered in the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act*.

There is seagrass in close proximity to Fishermans Jetty, but the condition of the seagrass is poor due to the large amount of drift algae amongst the seagrass and above the seabed. The biodiversity of Fishermans Jetty is low, especially when compared to surrounding environments. All future development and works proposed in this plan will require consent under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* to ensure protection of the marine and coastal environment.

2.6 Mornington Pier

The pier is a focus point of the harbour and supports a wide range of users and activities:

- Permit only alongside berthing for commercial operators (fishing charters, trawler and aquaculture)
- Short-term public alongside berthing for recreational users
- Recreational fishing
- Promenading and walking
- Wave protection to harbour

The pier has three distinct zones – the inner rock abutment and wharf, middle section with wharf, and outer section with ramp to fixed low landing. The inner wharf section has three commercial vessels that berth alongside the wharf. The middle wharf and low landing also have opportunities for alongside berthing. Near the entrance to the pier to the south, there are five pile berths in front of the sheet pile wall. Some of the berths are public berths available to use overnight up to 48 hours.

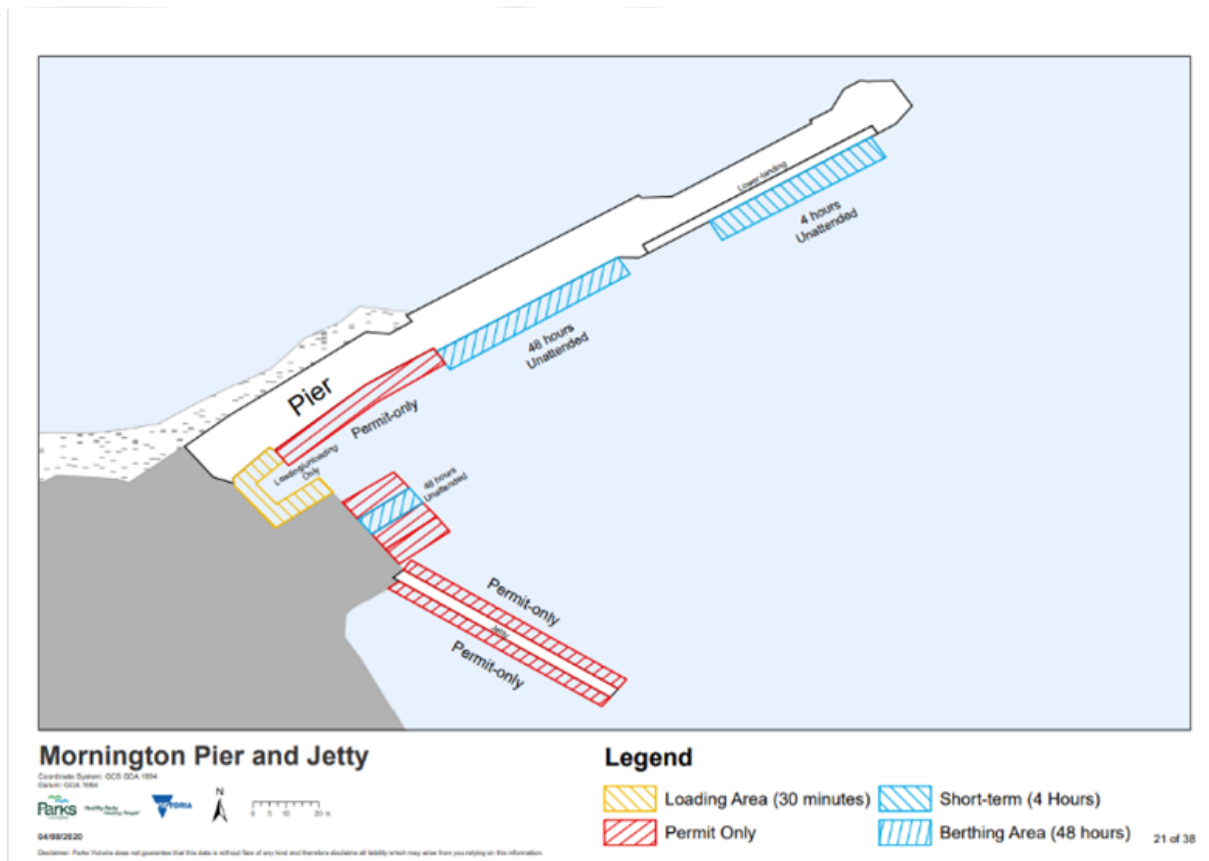


Figure 4 - Mornington Pier Berthing Map (Parks Victoria, August 2020)

2.7 Pier entrance channel

Vessels berthed alongside Mornington Pier and along the seawall access the harbour via a channel parallel to the pier. *Australian Standards AS3962 (2020) Marina design* defines the minimum and preferred widths for harbour entrance channels. The minimum width of an entrance channel should be the greatest of three criteria: 20m, $L+2$ or $5B$, where L is the overall length of the longest boat in the marina (in metres), and B is the beam of the broadest mono-hull boat in the marina (in metres). For Mornington it is $5B$ which governs where B is the beam of the broadest mono-hull boat in the marina, in metres. The preferred width of an entrance channel is 30m or $6B$ m, whichever is the minimum. The current entrance channel of the Mornington Pier is 28.4m based on the swing mooring circles – this means the channel can accommodate vessels up to 18m length. However, the aerial photo shows boats moored outside their circles, so the measured existing entrance channel is 22.3m, which means it can only accommodate boats up to 12m length.

2.8 Fishermans Jetty

Fishermans Jetty extends into the harbour in front of the MYC building. Prior to its closure in November 2020, it provided berthing for approximately 29 berths. The jetty was closed following an engineering assessment which raised concerns for structural capacity of the jetty with several failed piles causing a localised deck collapse.

The Victorian Government announced funding in 2022-23 State Budget for the rebuild of Fishermans Jetty. An objective of this plan is to ensure any modifications to the local port area do not impact on access to Fishermans Jetty which will be rebuilt. This will allow Parks Victoria to reinstate berthing for vessels and ensure the jetty is able to be enjoyed by the community once again.



Figure 5 - Fishermans Jetty (AW Maritime, 2023)

Bryce Raworth completed a heritage review of Fishermans Jetty in August 2023 which confirmed the jetty is not included in the heritage overlay listing for Mornington Harbour however noted that the jetty has been a longstanding component of the harbour dating back to 1885. The significance of the jetty largely rests with its historical values and social value to the local community.

2.9 Swing moorings

Swing moorings have been part of the harbour for many years. Swing moorings offer a low-cost option for people to store vessels on the water. There are currently 65 swing moorings which are managed by Parks Victoria. The mooring permit holder owns the mooring tackle, and the permit allows them to access that site for 12 months. There are challenges with the moorings in their current layout:

Weather Exposure – parts of the swing mooring ground have no wave protection and are not suitable to establish moorings. The northern and eastern sides of the mooring ground are most exposed.

Overlapping – based on the GPS coordinates Parks Victoria has on record, the moorings are near each other and spaced such that swing circles overlap (based on a 10m radius swing circle). This is a poor layout and under certain conditions has potential to cause property damage.

Channel Obstruction – the existing northern and western swing moorings may encroach on the (undefined) entrance channel for vessels arriving and departing alongside the pier, impacting safe navigation.

Channel Blockage – the southern swing moorings restrict access for MYC yachts and public boats launching and retrieving from the ramps, impacting safe navigation.

Mooring Positions - the actual position of the moorings shown on the December 2022 aerial photograph does not align to the GPS coordinates provided with boats seen outside the swing circles.

2.10 Mornington Yacht Club

Mornington Yacht Club (MYC) was established in 1946 and their site is leased from Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (MPSC). The area of lease includes the existing buildings, a fenced area used for yacht storage, and associated boating facilities including a double lane boat ramp, a slipway and series of finger jetties. The end of the slipway has timber piles which are reported by some harbour users as a navigation hazard.

MYC aims to offer yachting to all age groups by providing affordable, family-oriented sailing and social activities. The yacht club is active all year round, with a busy sailing program from October to March and a reduced winter series in the colder months. The fleets are focused on keel boats and trailable yachts, with different off-the-beach yachts and kayaks. The club also offers a Sailability program.

The off-the-beach boats and kayak launch and retrieve from the nearby beaches and from the clubhouse which use the ramp as well as the two cranes. However, based on the existing swing mooring layout it would appear difficult for yachts to navigate in the harbour as there is no defined entrance channel. Current options would include navigating through the swing moorings or on the southern side of the swing mooring ground where depths are -1.5m to -2.0m Chart Datum (CD).

2.11 Mornington Public Boat Ramp

A two-lane public boat launch ramp with finger jetties either side is managed by MPSC. The ramp allows two boats to be launched and retrieved simultaneously from car trailers. The *SKM Planning Report* prepared in 2010 stated that the boat ramp is heavily utilised on weekends and during the summer months with more than 200 boats launched on peak days. Users are predominantly launching powerboats to access the bay for fishing, water sports and recreation. Fish cleaning facilities are located on the northern most jetty.

The public boat ramp is considered unsafe in certain weather conditions and there are issues at peak times with access, safety and trailer parking. Based on the existing swing mooring layout it would appear difficult for vessels to navigate in the harbour as there is no defined entrance channel. Current options would include to navigate through the swing moorings or on the southern side of the swing mooring ground towards Mothers Beach where depths are -1.5m to -2.0m CD.

3 Economic and demand analysis

3.1 Demographics

Mornington Harbour is part of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council. The population in Mornington Peninsula has increased by 37,162 people over the span of ten years (ABS, 2021) and is now home to 169,600 people. The population of the Mornington Peninsula is ageing and the ratio of population aged 55+ has increased markedly with a third of the population in that age bracket (ABS, 2021).

In Mornington, the Health Care & Social Assistance is the largest employer of the region representing 36.3% of jobs. This is followed by Accommodation and Food Services 15.6% and Retail Trade 12.6%. Industries related to on-water activities are much lower with Arts and Recreation Services 1.1% and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing with 0% (Remplan, 2023).

3.2 Current Aquaculture

The MPSC completed an Aquaculture Industry Analysis in 2014. The report confirmed that the area can offer some of the largest and cleanest waters for seafood production, located close to markets, labour and established infrastructure. There are currently three aquaculture reserves adjacent to Mornington Peninsula Shire at Mt Martha, Dromana and Flinders.

The Mount Martha Aquaculture Fisheries Reserve is a 150 ha (approximately 1.9 km by 0.8 km) greenfield area located approximately 0.75 km offshore from Fossil Beach on the Mornington Peninsula as shown in Figure 6. There are five Crown leases allocated at this site of 18ha each. Currently they are leased by

one business who farm a combination of Australian Blue mussels and native flat oysters. The Mt Martha reserve utilises the local pier facility at Mornington to support operations with two commercial boats making daily visits to the farm. Product is harvested and taken to a Mornington based factory for de-bearding, cleaning and vacuum packaging.

The report identified opportunities for action including raised awareness of the aquaculture industry (i.e. seafood festival), branding of Mornington Peninsula produce, local investment in shore based infrastructure to enable efficient unloading and selling of product ('seagate') and enhance of fishing port feel, and marketing of areas as fresh seafood access region.



Figure 6 - Mount Martha Aquaculture Fisheries Reserve (Source: Department Primary Industries, 2005)

3.3 Commercial Fishing

Mornington Harbour is the only option for protected berthing suitable for supporting commercial vessels engaged in fishing and aquaculture on the eastern side of Port Phillip. The western side of the Bay has Portarlington and Queenscliff harbours, whereas there is limited berthing on eastern side despite the large population. This places Mornington harbour in a unique position to be able to provide suitable safe berthing for commercial fishing and aquaculture operators who need to load and unload their vessels.

3.4 On-Water Events

Mornington Harbour hosts on-water events such as sailing races, the arrival of cruise ship passengers by tenders, and visiting tall ships. Supporting such events celebrates the ongoing diversity of uses which contribute to the maritime

heritage of Mornington Harbour while also attracting tourism to the region. Other on-water users will be affected while these events take place. The plan will ensure that the layout and on-water infrastructure enable these activities to occur. Events are managed in accordance with specific requirements under an event permit.

3.5 Future Demand and Commercial Opportunities

Mornington Harbour has an important maritime history and remains a waterfront focal point for the Mornington township. The economic data for the area suggest there is an increasing domestic local visitor economy with day trips very popular in MPSC. The potential opportunities for future consideration are:

- Support commercial fishing (including charters and aquaculture operators)
- Support recreational boating with short term and permanent berths available
- Support the aquaculture industry and creation of 'seagate' enabling the selling of local produce via seafood co-operative or directly off boats
- Protect and celebrate the maritime history and activation of Tall Ships
- Recreational tour operators: sightseeing, fishing, diving, wildlife, etc
- Boat and watercraft hire: self-drive boats, kayaks, stand-up paddle boards
- Commercial passenger ferry service at Mornington Pier
- Education and training (e.g. maritime courses, diver training, stand-up paddle board lessons)
- Sporting events (e.g. yacht regattas, open water swimming and triathlons/fun runs)

4 References

4.1 Reports

No.	Title	Author	Date
1	Mornington Coastal Management Plan	Mornington Peninsula Shire Victoria Smith, Strategic Planner- Coastal	April 2015
2	Mornington Safe Harbour- Planning Report	Sinclair Knight Merz	April 2009
3	Mornington Safe Harbour- Environments Effects Statement	Sinclair Knight Merz	May 2010
4	Mornington Harbour- Wave Investigation for SKM Appendix N	Water Technology	October 2008
5	Mornington Harbour- Coastal Processes Investigation for SKM Appendix R	Water Technology	October 2008
6	Mornington Fishermans Jetty- Timber Condition Assessment- Portion A- Draft	Parks Victoria	October 2011
7	Set aside areas in the Local Port of Port Phillip	Parks Victoria	August 2020
8	Heritage Review- Fishermans Jetty, Mornington	Bryce Raworth	August 2023

9	Australian Standard (AS3962-2020) Marina design	Standards Australia	2020
10	The Effects of Climate Change on Extreme Sea Levels in Port Phillip Bay	McInnes K., O'Grady J. & Macadam I. CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research	November 2009
11	Mornington Peninsula Shire Aquaculture Industry Analysis	Stewart G, Mornington Peninsula Shire	2014
12	2021-2022 Mornington Peninsula Business Survey - Mornington	Economic Development, Mornington Peninsula Shire	April 2023
13	Impact Report December 2022	Economic Development, Mornington Peninsula Shire	December 2022
14	Mornington Peninsula Visitation Data Year Ending March 2023	Mornington Peninsula Shire	March 2023
15	Eastern Port Phillip Bay Aquaculture Fisheries Reserves Management Plan Fisher Victoria Management Report Series No. 33	Department of Primary Industries	2015
16	Approach Channels – A Guide for Design	PIANC	1997
17	Stakeholder Engagement Key Findings Summary	Parks Victoria	July 2023
18	Marine and Coastal Policy	Victoria State Government	2020
19	Marine and Coastal Strategy	Victoria State Government	2022
20	Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme	Mornington Peninsula Shire Council	2023
21	Marine and Coastal Act 2018	Victoria State Government	2018
22	Sustainable Local Ports Framework	Victoria State Government	2021
23	Mornington Harbour Local Port Area Plan Community Engagement Summary	Parks Victoria	2024

