



Nepean Historical Society
Sorrento

12 January 2016

Point Nepean Master Plan Comments
Parks Victoria
Level 10 535 Bourke St.
Melbourne 3000

Dear Sir/Madam,

Response to the 2016 Point Nepean Master Plan

The Nepean Historical Society is very pleased to receive P V's Discussion Paper and welcomes the resumption of work by the Victorian Government and Parks Victoria in reviewing and implementing the 2016 Master Plan for Point Nepean.

This Society has long been keenly interested in the Quarantine Station and its development.

- NHS has been involved for some decades in historical research, public tours, preservation of artefacts and displays there.
- In recent times its interest in development at the site has extended to active participation in the Dept. of Defence's Point Nepean Community Reference Group whose report led to the gifting of Point Nepean to Victoria as a National Park.
- In the next step NHS was represented on the State Advisory Committee for Point Nepean.
- The Society prepared the successful nomination of Point Nepean to be placed on the National Heritage List.
- NHS was closely involved in the public consultation leading to the finalisation of the 2009 Management Plan and 2010 Draft Master Plan.

Since then, NHS has been concerned about certain new directions being attempted at Point Nepean.

In particular we questioned the proposals to lease out the QS to a private developer for 99 years; to rezone the site to Special Use category for the purpose of removing planning controls considered essential for this significant public estate; and the absence of satisfactory arrangements for the promotion of heritage and education at the Quarantine Station.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE DISCUSSION PAPER

1. Heritage:

It is pleasing to note statements in the Discussion Paper which indicate a good appreciation of the heritage considerations at the site.

The Paper rightly points out how the recent failed Expression of Interest process for the QS has highlighted the challenges for the site and the delicate balance required in finding adaptive re-uses compatible with the scale, fragility and significance of the heritage buildings.

Especially welcome are the assurances given that protection of this significant piece of Australia's heritage is regarded as being of primary importance to Parks Victoria and also that PV wants to ensure that its beauty, heritage and stories are conserved for future generations.

It is to be hoped that the final draft of the Master Plan will include commitments that PV have the necessary capacity and resources to realise these intentions.

2. The Guiding Principles.

NHS notes with approval the restatement of the underlying Guiding Principles from the 2009 Management Plan.

We point out that there is a strong case on heritage grounds for accessibility from the water. A jetty is a necessary element in the story of the Quarantine Station and its relationship to the Bay and the crucial arrival point at Port Phillip Heads for the overseas immigrants pouring into Victoria in the nineteenth century.

We note (page 9) the need for careful management to minimise impacts on eco systems.

3. Results of Earlier Consultation

NHS confirms its support for the findings from the previous round of public consultations had at the time of the 2010 Master Plan. We especially reaffirm our strong support for the following findings in the Discussion Paper:

‘Of greatest importance to most people was the necessity to protect and conserve the natural and cultural values of Point Nepean, its bio diversity, its history and heritage, its stories, sense of remoteness, natural scenery, landscape and views. Nothing should compromise these.’

‘Most people saw it as crucial to restrict any future development opportunities to within the existing footprint.’

‘High quality interpretation was seen as an important priority.’

The Society re endorses generally all of the reported findings from the previous community consultations as listed on page 9 of the Paper.

We look forward to the consultative and next stages of the 2016 Review.

Yours sincerely,

Joy Kitch
NHS President

Frank Hindley
Convenor
NHS Heritage and Planning Group