



Rye Community Group Alliance

PO BOX 489 Rye 3941

Joining as one voice to benefit the Rye Community

Comments on the Our Peninsula 2021: proposed Council Plan 2017-2021

The Rye Community Group Alliance (RCGA) congratulates the MPSC for developing a strategic plan based on the views and concerns of the Mornington Peninsula's various communities. RCGA was particularly taken with the values underpinning the proposed Plan and looks forward to experiencing the reflection of these values in Shire to Community interactions.

There is no doubt the vision statement is one that the large majority of ratepayers wholeheartedly support. The challenge to the Council, the Shire and the community will be actualising the ideal of valuing and protecting the Peninsula.

The RCGA believes the role of the Council and the Shire is to both serve (ie listen, reflect and act in accord with community views) and work (ie Shire Officers) in partnership with the rate paying communities within the shire of the Mornington Peninsula. We believe the proposed mission statement reflects this strategic service role.

There is much to like about the Plan and we believe the four strategic areas have been well chosen. The areas of *Connectivity, Prosperity and Wellbeing* are quite adequately dealt with, so we make no comment on these. However, we do have suggestions for strengthening the strategic area of *Our Place*, though not in the area of climate change or water. It will be the consequence of actions taken under this strategic arm that will achieve (or not) the MPSC's proposed vision. The following comments are based on the stated outcomes of the 2021 survey.

Our Place: comments

1. **More appropriate development:** RCGA is concerned about the rate of development resulting in the loss of town character and streetscape, which is happening now! The proposed investigations into residential character are important, however by the time the investigations are completed (it has been promised for years) the character of the Peninsula will be destroyed.

We request that consideration be given to reviewing the MPPS within the next 12 months to ascertain if it is meeting the stated goals of the planning scheme as well as community aspirations. That is to keep the Peninsula separate from Melbourne and to conserve the Peninsula's unique characteristics.

RCGA suggests the *review of the MPPS become a major initiative under strategic objective 1 and the completion of the review by mid 2018 (including recommendations) is inserted as a strategic indicator.*

2. **Preservation of the Environment – coastal & land:** there is no mention of the Shire's role in managing foreshores on behalf of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and

Planning. Sustainable management of Shire managed foreshores is critical to protecting the marine eco systems and coastal land based indigenous flora and fauna.

RCGA understands there is a hierarchy re the maintenance of the foreshore areas so that some areas (eg Rye) receive a lower level of maintenance for garden and bush areas while others receive a high level of maintenance. All Shire managed foreshores should be regarded as priority areas and contracts worked according to the needs of foreshore areas at particular times. No foreshore under MPS management should fall into a state of neglect or be overtaken by environmental weeds.

RCGA suggests that a major objective under 3 is a review of the current maintenance contract criteria and its effectiveness assessed against the state of each shire managed foreshore. The outcome of the assessment should be reflected under strategic indicators – by 2018 foreshore areas requiring an increased level of maintenance have been identified and a schedule of work compiled.

- 3. Tourism Sustainable Management:** the Plan is silent on how tourism can be managed not only sustainably but in way that ensures the land and marine environment is not put at risk of damage¹. *RCGA believes it important that the sustainable management of tourism is included under objective 3 and an outcome reflected under the strategic indicators.*
- 4. Coastal Experience:** *we ask MPSC to include under objective 3 the encouragement and support for passive water sports (eg SUP, snorkelling and diving) and those active water sports (eg wind surfing) that do not pollute the environment or put other beach and water users at risk. An outcome under strategic indicators could be the Mornington Peninsula is widely known as a holiday place where passive water sports that don't impact on the coastal environment are supported and encouraged.*

On a sour note, the RCGA (and others) believe it is inappropriate to list the *Rye Recreational Boating Precinct Plan* as a document to support the work to be undertaken *within the our place strategy* (see p18). Once again, this is not an endorsed plan. It was approved in 2013 ***in principle*** and under certain conditions. Those conditions have not been met and the *in principle Plan* was superseded by the draft Rye Foreshore Landscape Master Plan, which has now been superseded by the proposed Rye Township Plan! *Can we please put this inappropriate plan (for Rye) to bed?*

Finally the RCGA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the strategic plan and hopes the comments made above will be reflected in the final version. Well done, Council.

Mechelle Cheers

Chair
Rye Community Group Alliance

¹ At the Rye Sea Scavenge Festival in January 2017, volunteers picked up 668kilograms of rubbish and nearly 10,000 cigarette butts from Rye town beach. Most of this rubbish would have gone into the Bay & caused harm to the marine eco system. The Shire had for this period done their bit by putting on extra rubbish collections