

St Leonards Boating Facility Upgrade

Report of Feedback from Community Consultation through an on-line survey conducted 5th April 2022 to 26th April 2022 (inclusive).

Community consultation took place from 5th December 2022 to 13th January 2023 (inclusive)

As part of the government's commitment to improving recreational boating, boaters and members of the wider community have had their say on plans for a proposed upgrade to the St Leonards boat ramp.

In December 2022, Better Boating Victoria and Bellarine Bayside Committee of Management held a public drop in session. Throughout December 2022 and January 2023, Better Boating Victoria also used an online public survey to seek feedback on a draft concept plan.

The feedback received through the survey and other consultation will be used in the development of the final concept layout design and progress into construction ready designs.

What was asked?

- What is your interest in the St Leonards boat ramp and car park?
- Do you support the installation of wave screens to reduce the impact of waves on the ramp?
- Do you support the proposed jetty refurbishments?
- Do you support the provision of a seasonal overflow car park?
- Do you have other feedback that you would like to provide?



People Reached



286 people responded to the online survey



147 respondents were boat ramp users



130 respondents were local residents
2 respondents were commercial operators
7 other uses/no response

Do you support the installation of wave screens to reduce the impact of waves on the ramp?



71% supported the installation of wave screens

Respondents requested the wave screens be suitably designed and constructed, and that the designs consider issues relating to sedimentation, erosion and impacts to the natural marine environment.

Several comments were also received regarding the installation of a harbour. Due to coastal processes at St Leonards, the development of a harbour is not a feasible option. This is why the Better Boating Victoria team looked at other options to reduce the impacts of waves on launching and retrieving.

Do you support the proposed jetty refurbishments?



85% supported the proposed jetty refurbishments

Respondents requested design consideration for those with restricted access. Other feedback included avoiding hard surfaces, installation of ladders and ensuring cleats don't protrude from the jetty.

Do you support the provision of a seasonal overflow carpark?



60% supported the provision of a seasonal overflow car park and 40% opposed it.

Respondents raised concerns with the proposed removal of large mature trees on the foreshore and the impact on amenity and environmental values. Support for the carpark was not overwhelming and progression of an overflow car park will not be pursued.

Do you have other feedback that you would like to provide?



In addition to the feedback regarding a harbour and opposition of tree removal, other feedback included provision of floating pontoons, fish cleaning tables, lighting, carpark flow, signage, softer fenders on jetties and more tie up options.

Next Steps

Better Boating Victoria will finalise the concept layout based on the feedback received throughout the consultation period and begin work on the development of construction ready plans for the future upgrade.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the St Leonards boat ramp getting an upgrade?

St Leonards is one of the most popular ramps on the Bellarine Peninsula. It has been identified for a future upgrade due to increasing demand and the age of the facility.

What's happened already?

Civil and maritime engineers were engaged to undertake concept and detailed design in 2022.

Better Boating Victoria held an online survey to better understand the current issues with using St Leonards ramp and what was valued as part of future improvements.

Based on the outcomes of the survey and other consultation with management agencies, a draft concept plan was prepared for public consultation.

In December 2022, Better Boating Victoria released the draft concept, supported by an on-line survey, which received 286 responses. Majority supported the proposed waterside upgrades but didn't overwhelmingly support the proposed seasonal carpark upgrade options.

Better Boating Victoria has now considered the feedback received and will finalise the concept layout for the future upgrade.

What are the key features of the proposed upgrade?

The final concept layout features provision of wave screens along the central jetty extending seawards as well as an extended 'T' on the end that will also incorporate wave screens to provide shelter from onshore wind and waves.

Some minor changes are proposed to the existing carpark layout which are expected to assist with launching and retrieving. However, an overflow car park will not be progressed.

What is being done to reduce the impacts of waves?

The provision of wave screens along the central jetty and the extended 'T' on the end will provide shelter from onshore wind and waves, under most conditions.

Customised wave screens specifically tuned to the waves have been used effectively around Australia and provide an effective way of managing wind driven waves whilst also respecting the natural coastal processes and sand movement along the coast.

Why isn't a break wall or enclosed harbour being considered?

A break wall or harbour would have significant impacts on sand transport along this stretch of coastline likely leading to significant erosion along the shore elsewhere. A break wall or harbour would also have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the area. It is therefore not a feasible option at St Leonards.

Will there be any lanes added to the ramp?

No new lanes are being proposed at this time. The ramp is currently serviced by four lanes and consultation earlier in the project confirmed no additional lanes were deemed necessary.

Will there be any changes or upgrades to the jetty?

Yes, the main jetty extending seaward will be upgraded and the 'T' on the end of the jetty will be extended out further on both sides.

Detailed design stages will inform the height of the jetty to ensure that it isn't too high for boaters to access vessels. Fenders will also be included on the new jetty to protect boats which are temporarily moored alongside. Options for improved access will also be considered, such as a low landing option.

Why aren't floating pontoons being considered?

The wave climate at this ramp isn't suitable for floating pontoons which would be quickly damaged or dislodged by the wind-driven waves along this stretch of coastline.

Will I be able to continue to fish from the end of the jetty?

Land based fishers will be able to continue to fish from the end of the jetty. However, the primary function of the jetty is to support access to vessels. Therefore, fishers are advised give way to vessels.

Are there plans to increase the number of car and trailer parks?

There are no plans to extend the existing car park.

Are there any plans to remove the fish cleaning table?

No. There are currently no plans to remove the fish cleaning table.

Are there any plans to remove the large cypress trees along this section of the foreshore?

No. Following public consultation, there are no plans to remove any of the large cypress trees as part of the proposed upgrade.

Will the cultural and environmental values be protected?

Better Boating Victoria is actively engaging with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. Better Boating Victoria and Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management will undertake a cultural heritage due diligence assessment and will ensure the cultural values of this area are protected and respected as required.

A *Marine and Coastal Act* consent application will also be developed which will outline how the coastal and environmental values of this area will be maintained.

What's the future of the overflow carpark in St Leonards Lake Reserve adjacent to the boat ramp?

The City of Greater Geelong's St Leonards Lake and Charles McCarthy Reserve Masterplan incorporates provision for overflow car parking within the reserve. There are no plans to review the Masterplan or the provision of overflow car parking within the reserve.

I'm not a boater but I regularly walk/ride along the along this section of coastline. What impact will the proposed upgrade have on me?

Very little. The coastal trail which runs along this section of coastline and through the boat ramp facility will be maintained enabling unrestricted access for pedestrians. Some minor alterations may be made to the crossover such as provision of zebra crossings at the boat ramp to ensure boaters give way to pedestrians using the trail.

What are the next steps and when will construction begin?

Better Boating Victoria and Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management will progress detailed designs and approvals to facilitate future construction. Construction will be subject to approvals.

How can I keep up to date with updates on this project?

Updates will be provided on the Better Boating Victoria website: www.betterboating.vic.gov.au