

An aerial photograph of Apollo Bay Harbour, showing a coastal town with houses, a large building complex with a parking lot, and a pier extending into the water. The sky is overcast.

Apollo Bay Harbour Opportunities & Constraints Report

May 2025

ANTARCTICA:ARCHITECTS





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Acknowledgement of Country

Meerreeng, Parreeyt pa Moornong *(Land, Water and Sky)*

Antarctica Architects acknowledge the Eastern Maar as the traditional custodians of the area. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past and present. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and intrinsic connection to their traditional lands, which continue to be important to them today.

We value the contribution their caring for Country makes to the land, coastlines, waterways and seascapes within the municipality. We support the need for genuine and lasting partnerships with the Eastern Maar People to understand their culture and connections to Country.



Introduction



The Apollo Bay Harbour was first developed in the mid nineteenth century following European settlement of the town. The pier was built in its current location in 1892 at which time the town was still called Krambruk, the original name from indigenous origin. Renamed Apollo Bay in 1898 the town and its fishing industry expanded following the construction of the Great Ocean Road in 1932.

The harbour is a working port which generates income for the town and supports the local fishing industry. The Apollo Bay Fishermen's Co-Op was founded in 1948 and they are the primary supplier of Southern Rocklobster to the region and supply 16-20t of lobster a year to Victoria and beyond.

The GORCAPA Port operations depot is a vital building in the harbour and houses the port manager's office and the harbour maintenance team and their workshop.

The Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment Project will revitalise the Apollo Bay Harbour precinct. The outcome will increase the capacity of commercial operations and recreational activity and support the growth of the tourism economy through improving the public realm and visitor offerings in the precinct. The project delivery will also offer improvements to public safety and access in the working port.

The Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct includes the Apollo Bay Fishermen's Co-Operative building, the port operations depot, the slipway yards, Mothers Beach carpark, Point Bunbury boat ramp and carpark, Apollo Bay Sailing Club, commercial moorings, breakwaters, pier, and beacons.

Over the years a range of proposals have been put forward to improve the levels of service and attractions in the harbour precinct. Most recently, the Colac Otway Shire Council sought to bring together a suite of improvements through the Apollo Bay Harbour Development Plan which was completed in 2019. However, the gazettal of the Marine and Coastal Act in 2018 and the subsequent Marine and Coastal Policy 2020 and other guidance resulted in a review of planning alignment and a risk assessment of planning approval success for the Development Plan against MACA.

The proposed redevelopment will include a redevelopment of the existing Apollo Bay Fishermen's Co-Op building to accommodate an approved commercial offering, the redevelopment of the port operations depot, the construction of a public promenade and improvements to pedestrian, cycling and vehicle access around the site as well as of the Mother's Beach carpark and Nelson Street.

Antarctica will work with our team of subconsultants, GORCAPA and the community and stakeholder reference groups to deliver this valuable project for the community of Apollo Bay and The Great Ocean Road.



01: PURPOSE



This report aims to consolidate; site information, background documents, policy, and guidelines to inform guiding principles and identify opportunities & constraints for each site.

The project process has included weekly meetings & consultation with GORCAPA.

Meetings included presentation and review of site analysis, discussion and review of policy and guidelines, and presentation of concept development.

GORCAPA have released a Community Values Survey which will be used to review of the opportunities and constraints that are identified for the project.

The design team have conducted design & site analysis workshops and visited site to inspect and document existing conditions.

The project team have consulted with GORCAPA stakeholders, representatives from the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, stakeholders from the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, the Community Reference Group and the Technical Working Group.

The following consultants have been engaged during this phase by Antarctica Architects:

Sustainable Project Management (SPM)
Marine & Coastal Act Consultant

Enlocus
Landscape Architects

Spectrum Planning Solutions
Planning Consultant

Intrax
Structural & Civil Engineers

Simpson Kotzman
Services Engineers

ACHM
Cultural & European Heritage Consultants

Steve Watson & Partners
Regulations Consultants



APOLLO BAY, FROM CAPE PATTON.

Background Documents

The following documentation has been reviewed and informed the development of the Opportunities & Constraints report:

- Apollo Bay Harbour Development Plan Final, TRACT Consultants, 22.12.20
- Apollo Bay Harbour Development Plan Review & Assessment, Coastal Planning and Blue Sense Consulting, 30.01.2024
- Review of the Apollo Bay Harbour Development Plan Review & Assessment, Sustainable Project Management, 08.12.2023
- Eastern Maar Country Plan, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, 01.07.2015
- Eastern Maar Nation Statement, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, 13.07.2024
- Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment Design Review, Victorian Design Review Panel, 01.03.22
- Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment Planning Advice, Claire Scott Planning, 20.10.23
- Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek & Marengo CIP Issues & Opportunities Paper: Coastal, Water Technology, 23.06.19
- Apollo Bay Harbour, Coastal Hazards Vulnerability Assessment, Water Technology, 11.06.13
- Coastal Hazard Management Plan Skenes Creek to Marengo, Water Technology, 26.10.12
- Geotechnical Desktop Study, Apollo Bay Harbour, YTTUP, 14.11.19
- Geotechnical Site Investigation Report Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct, Provincial Geotechnical, 24.11.21
- Geotechnical Assessment Report Apollo Bay Harbour, St Quentin, 01.12.21
- Pavement Investigation Report Apollo Bay Harbour, Ground Science. 13.07.21
- Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct Investments Scenarios Assessment, MacroPlan Dimasi, 26.09.18
- Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment -Stage 1, Cultural Heritage Management Plan, ACHM, 01.12.21
- Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment -Stage 2, Cultural Heritage Management Plan, ACHM, 03.12.21

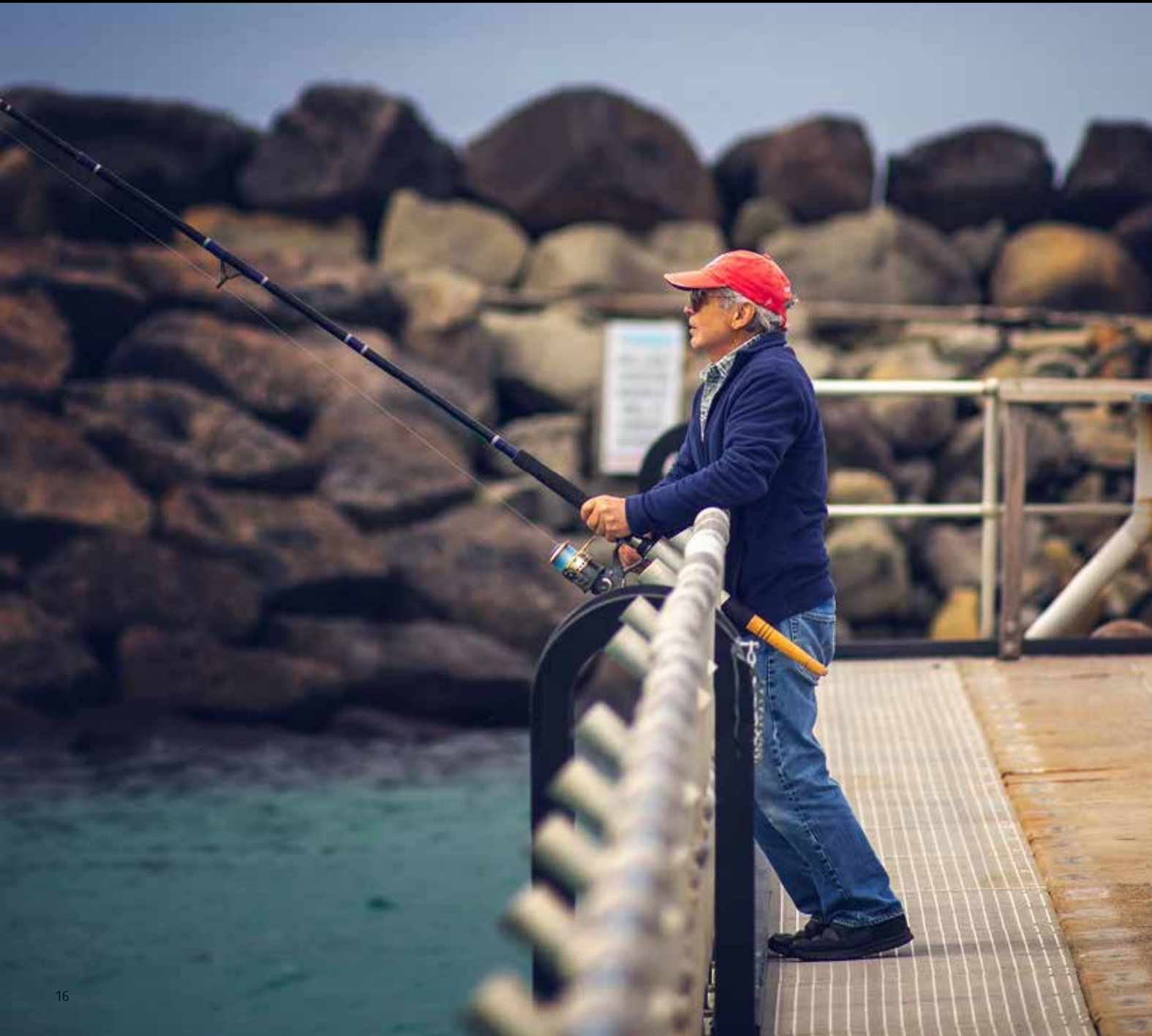
- Apollo Bay Harbour Development Native Vegetation Removal FINAL, Biosis, 06.02.22
- Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment: EPBC Act Significant Impact Self Assessment, Biosis, 20.07.21
- Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment Stage 1&2, Pre-Tender Estimate Rate Review, Muller Partnership, 19.09.23
- Colac Otway Planning Scheme, (including:) Schedule 2, Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone, Colac Otway Shire, 20.05.21

Key drivers of a changed approach

A number of legislative and policy changes have affected the redevelopment of the Apollo Bay Harbour. The key drivers of our current approach include:

- 2020 Gazettal of the *Marine and Coastal Act* (MACA)
Gazettal of the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act*.

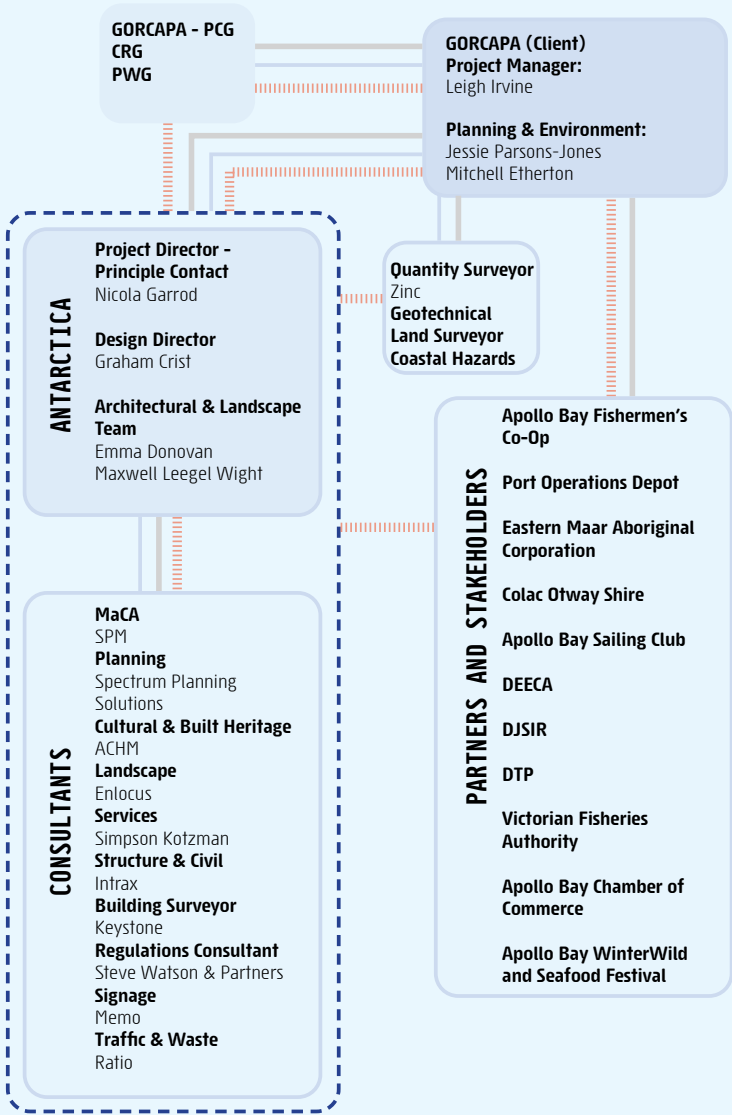
Release of the *Marine & Coastal Policy*
Publication of revised *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast*.
- 2022 Interpretation and application of the Marine and Coastal Policy in *Baker v Surf Coast VCAT 257* at Point Grey, Lorne by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.
- 2023 Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation receives formal recognition of Native Title through the Federal Court.
Release of *Victoria's Resilient Coast, Adapting for 2100+* to guide coastal hazard responses.



Project Objectives

The following fundamentals from the *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast* developed through the Marine and Coastal Act 2018, have been used by our team to develop project opportunities and will allow us to develop guiding principles for the concept designs.

- **Purpose and Need**
Improve the amenity, aesthetic, operational and cultural value protection elements of the harbour.
- **Climate Change and Adaptation**
Avoid vulnerable areas of the harbour and ensure development incorporates best practice environmentally sustainable principles.
- **Aboriginal and Cultural Heritage**
Ensure the development helps protect and acknowledge tangible and intangible cultural heritage values and has no negative impact on aboriginal cultural heritage places.
- **Coastal Processes**
Assess and ensure design of structures avoids areas subject to coastal hazards and does not interfere with or impede coastal processes.
- **Geology**
Respond sensitively to the underlying geology and ensure the structure responds to the geological character of the area.
- **Morphology**
Ensure the form and character of the development is sensitive to the surrounding landscape and context. Ensure scale is appropriate and does not interfere with existing landscape features.
- **Hydrology**
Ensure any new structures respond to and accommodate natural drainage patterns. Manage water locally where appropriate and ensure water is retained and reused on site wherever possible.
- **Vegetation and Ecology**
Respond sensitively to the native vegetation on site and ensure regeneration/planting of indigenous species is incorporated into the development wherever possible.
- **Safe and Effective Port Operations**
Ensure operation of safe and effective port.
- **Climatic Conditions**
Site and design the development to maximise sun wind and weather protection. Ensure provision of places of refuge from climatic conditions.
- **Views**
Ensure the design of the development enriches and improves views to and from the coast and maintains existing public views, vistas and sightlines.
- **Public Open Space**
Create a clear, uncluttered and safe public environment.
- **Local Character and Sense of Place**
Ensure the design of the development compliments the local coastal character.
- **Heritage**
Ensure the design responds to existing heritage character and reuses and integrates existing heritage features in the design. Ensure archeological heritage remains undisturbed due to the siting of the design.
- **Public Access**
Enhance public access and minimise loss of open space. Ensure connections to and from the site are created and public access to the coast is improved.
- **Increased Function and Adaptability**
Create adaptable and flexible shared spaces to make efficient use of the site. Ensure wherever possible that the design considers the adaptability of the structure for future use.
- **Sustainability**
Ensure the design optimises energy considerations including passive environmental design. Ensure material selections are sustainable and resilient in a coastal environment.
- **Materials and Finishes**
Ensure materials colours and textures are suitable for the marine environment and that the buildings are designed to be sensitive to the character of the local coastal environment.



Ongoing consultation with project partners and stakeholders including; Apollo Bay Fishermen's Co-Op, the Port Manager and Port operations depot staff for the Port of Apollo Bay, the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, and the Apollo Bay Sailing club. In addition, ongoing engagement with the PCG, PWG and the CRG will assist in informing the parameters and functional brief for the project.

In addition there will be ongoing engagement with DEECA and DTP to ensure the project is aligned with MACA and its consent framework.

Geelong City Deal Funding

The project is funded by the Geelong City Deal. This outlines the scope to be met in order to achieve the deliverables required by the funding.

This scope must be prioritised within the project and reviewed against legislative requirements.

Specific projects that have been identified within this scope are listed below:

- ❶ Mother's Beach car park upgrade
- ❷ Harbour precinct entry road upgrade
- ❸ Provision or upgrade of pedestrian and bicycle paths connecting the harbour precinct with the township including historical and interpretive signage
- ❹ Extension of the Fishermen's Co-Op building
- ❺ Upgraded Port Operations Depot with public change room and amenities
- ❻ Replacement of fencing in the harbour

